

Edinburgh retains reputation as 'Home of Hogmanay'



Edinburgh's Hogmanay has once again been a major success and the event has retained its prestigious, world-wide reputation as the 'Home of Hogmanay'.

According to organisers Unique Events, who have produced Edinburgh's Hogmanay for 23 years on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council, a capacity crowd of 75,000 revellers celebrated the New Year at the world famous Street Party, Concert in the Gardens and The Old Town Ceilidh, where party-goers from far and wide enjoyed top class music and entertainment.

Performing their only live date of 2015, Biffy Clyro delivered an exhilarating headline performance at Concert in the Gardens, kicking off what promises to be another huge year for the band. Special guests Honeyblood opened the show, followed by a crowd pleasing set from Edinburgh band Idlewild, who celebrated their 20th anniversary in 2015 with the release of their first album for five years, the critically acclaimed *Everything Ever Written*.

The world famous Street Party entertained party-goers with a stellar line-up across four stages. Maximo Park, Mercury Prize nominees Slaves, and Glasgow band White lit up the Waverley Stage, while on the Castle Stage, Celtic music stars Shooglenifty, Peatbog Faeries and Rura welcomed in the New Year with a bang. Revellers throughout the Street Party danced to Funk and Soul classics provided by BBC 6Music's Craig Charles, who manned the decks on the Frederick Stage, while festival favourites Guilty Pleasures brought their non-stop cabaret party to the Mound Stage.

New for 2015, The Old Town Ceilidh saw around 4,000 people enjoying Scottish roots artists including Sporrán Again, Cask Strength Ceilidh Band, Whisky Kiss and Ceilidhdonia, who played across two stages in Parliament Square. Ceilidh lovers literally danced their way into the record books, as they participated in a successful attempt to smash the Guinness World Record for the Largest Scottish Country Dance. Final numbers will be verified in a few days.

Councillor Richard Lewis, Festivals and Events Champion, City of Edinburgh Council, said: "Yet again, Edinburgh's Hogmanay celebrations have been the envy of cities across the globe. With one of the most impressive fireworks displays against the most stunning of backdrops, to the soundtrack of our most home-grown artist line-up yet, this was a fantastic way to ring in 2016. We've brought 75,000 revellers from all over the world to discover our great capital city and tonight has truly been an international celebration of Scotland. I would like to thank all the Council staff and our partners who have made this event such a success."

Pete Irvine, Director, Unique Events said: "Biffy Clyro rocked the Concert in the Gardens, and revellers across the Street Party enjoyed a superb line-up across the four stages – and we broke the Guinness World Record at the Old Town Ceilidh – 'Edinburgh: at Hogmanay: the only way...'"

Temporary Assistant Chief Constable Mark Williams said: "Edinburgh has once again welcomed in the New Year in style. I would like to thank everyone who turned up for supporting officers and stewards to deliver a safe and hugely enjoyable event.

"We have worked for many months with the City of Edinburgh Council, Unique Events and other emergency services to plan for the Street Party and I am delighted that it passed with no arrests."

Free Hogmanay NightBus Services ran throughout the capital once again, supported by sponsors Diageo and Lothian Buses as part of the global Join the Pact responsible drinking initiative from Johnnie Walker, which has secured over one million personal commitments from people across the world to never to drink and drive.

The skies and buildings around the city centre were turned blue at 10.00pm for Unicef's New Year's Resolution for Children, and British Astronaut, Tim Peake, sent a special message to revellers at the Edinburgh's Hogmanay Street Party wishing everyone a happy Hogmanay

The entertainment continues today with a programme of activities for all the family: For the hardy, the sold out Stoats Loony Dook – the annual New Year's Day dip in the River Forth which celebrates its 30th anniversary – will start off with a communal warm-up and fancy dress competition, before Dookers Parade through South Queensferry at 2.30pm. The brave (or daft) Loony Dookers will then take to the water, while those not quite brave enough to take the plunge can watch the action from vantage points along the beach and through the town.

First footers are also invited to come and enjoy some of the very best art and culture from across Scotland, brought to Edinburgh's Old Town at Scot:Lands. Visitors can take a journey around eleven atmospheric venues in the Old Town, each curated and customised by notable artists and arts organisations from all over the country. Scot:Lands is supported by the Scottish Government's Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund.