

New lighting for the Scott Monument



The City of Edinburgh Council has fitted new lighting on the Scott Monument, completed in time for the anniversary of Scott's death today, and which will light up the Gothic spire every night.

There was lighting on the monument before but this new LED system – designed by KSLD – is the first bespoke lighting to be installed. The design will highlight the intricate architecture with a soft warm glow, allowing the landmark to shine as part of Edinburgh's night skyline.

Edinburgh's Culture Convener Councillor Richard Lewis said: "As the world's first UNESCO City of Literature we are proud to bring the largest monument to a writer in the world out of the shadows and into the night skyline.

"The Scott Monument is an iconic and imposing memorial in the heart of Edinburgh and the new lights are in keeping with the 170 year-old structure. The scheme has been carefully created by a local Edinburgh firm to provide a soft night-time glow I'd like to think the original architect George Meikle Kemp would have approved of."



Natalie Redford, Associate Lighting Director, KSLD, said: "We were chosen to provide this beautiful Gothic structure with the lighting that both it and the city of Edinburgh deserves. The detailed statues and features of the monument provided the main inspiration and focus for the lighting scheme, which brings out the sparkle of the stonework.

"The majority of the luminaires used have been locally

designed and fabricated and watt per watt, the new scheme has lower energy consumption. Already, the project has been shortlisted for a major design award and as the nights draw in, residents and visitors will get the chance to see the lights shine.”

The decision to light the Edinburgh landmark forms part of the Council’s citywide project to install and upgrade lighting at some of the city’s key structures and buildings.

Edinburgh World Heritage has supported the project with a £10,000 grant. Adam Wilkinson, Director of Edinburgh World Heritage said: “We were delighted to be able to support this project, enabling a bespoke lighting design to be commissioned for this important monument. Carefully executed lighting schemes can do so much to enhance how we appreciate our city’s extraordinary architecture, defining and revealing key features.

“The Scott Monument is one of the most recognisable features on the city skyline, but by night this new project will also bring to life its mass of superb sculpture and soaring beauty.”



The Scott Monument remains the tallest memorial in the world dedicated to a writer. Built by public subscription in memory of the novelist Sir Walter Scott after his death in 1832, it was completed 170 years ago in August 1846.

Today visitors can see an exhibition on Scott’s life inside and climb 287 steps to the top for spectacular views of Princes Street Gardens and much of the city.

The monument is often the first glimpse visitors have of Edinburgh as they arrive at Waverley train station, named after Scott’s famous Waverley novels.

Eleanor Pender from the Edinburgh City of Literature Trust, added: "We are delighted that the Scott Monument is being lit up ahead of autumn and darker nights. It is an iconic city landmark celebrating celebrating one of the world's greatest literary figures and a great visual reminder of Edinburgh's status as the world's first UNESCO City of Literature."

Photos by David Octavius Hill courtesy of Capital Collections