

#Edinburgh2050 – A vision for young people

Michelle Fenwick, Programme Manager for Developing the Young Workforce at Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce reflects on the opportunities and challenges for the City on the road to the year 2050...



“A city full of opportunity and innovation with no barriers to achievement,” states the initial findings in the search of an ambitious vision for Edinburgh. A short statement, yet to me and many others is profound in its meaning and potential impact, holding strong connections to what I believe in and do in the City.

My Edinburgh story started back in 2002. I fit within the non-Scottish contingency of the city yet I call Edinburgh home, where my heart is, where my family lives and where I enjoy a very full and busy life. I have two little ones, both in school, and I couldn't think of a better place than Edinburgh for them to grow up. In 2050, my children will be approaching 'middle aged' – not sure I want to think too much about what I will be approaching – but I ask myself: what would I hope for them?

And amongst other parental priorities, hopes and wishes sits opportunities and no barriers to achievement. My job, Programme Manager for Developing the Young Workforce, amplifies this focus – not only for my own children but for all young people in the city. And not just because it's my job, but because it's the right thing to do.

We could say that we live in a city with so much opportunity already; low unemployment, a strong economy, culture and

heritage, festivals on our doorstep, some of the best learning institutions in the world, a beach (had to get that in) and so much more diversity. Yet opportunities are still heavily influenced by socio-economic status and where we live in the city. This inequality needs a shift. A huge shift.

As a city we may take comfort to know that we don't face this challenge alone, but we need to face it head on, and the city's businesses, educators, funders, communities and decision makers need this at the heart of their thinking. Developing the Young Workforce makes an ask of businesses to get involved in shaping, inspiring and recruiting young people, enhancing the work of The Edinburgh Guarantee, and over time it is hoped that this dual focus will support the shift required. It is reassuring that the recently announced Edinburgh and South East Scotland Regional City Deal, the Economic Strategy for Scotland, and a recent report on 'The Life Chances of Young people in Scotland' encompasses this thinking, offering recommendations on inclusiveness.

It is exciting and a privilege to be part of creating a vision for Edinburgh, one that from the start echoes national direction yet has the potential to create its own ripple. Creating the vision is the exciting part, what we need is the city to work together on delivering the ambitions, and I'm on board for that.

You can still have your say on the vision for our capital.

To help build this vision for Edinburgh, explain your vision for:

- **Edinburgh's people: you, your family and your community**
- **Edinburgh's economy: your job, your business and your money**
- **Edinburgh's environment: your home, your street and your planet**

Be part of the conversation – answer three simple questions:

- What is great about Edinburgh as a city in 2017?
- What could be better?
- What should Edinburgh be like in 2050?

Email your thoughts to edinburgh2050@edinburgh.gov.uk or get involved on social media using the hashtag **#Edinburgh2050**.