

Treasures at the City Chambers – the mace

No, by treasures we are not talking about councillors here. But there are some real treasures at the City Chambers both old and new.

The City Chambers as a building is fascinating since it ranges over 11 storeys right down to Cockburn Street where you could see the Marvel crew last year creating a very different scene.

The views from the north facing windows are tremendous, looking right over Princes Street and the Scott Monument.



In the cabinets and safes across the City Chambers there are many very interesting objects both on display and also in use.

One of the most important of these is the City Mace, a symbol of authority. Although the city has had a mace since 1554, the one that is in use now was made in 1616 by a city goldsmith George Robertson. It was presented to the city in the reign of James VI and I, the son of Mary Queen of Scots. It is

inscribed with the letters **I R** which stand for the Latin words, Jacobus Rex or King James.

It is probably the case that maces were used to protect monarchs when they were first used, but now they are ceremonial and ornamental.



The Edinburgh Mace represents the Monarch and when it is used in the presence of the Monarch it is turned upside down.

It is used at the meetings of full council in the City Chambers and is placed by the city officers behind the Lord Provost's ceremonial chair. It is also used at twelve church services which take place in the city and at the Ceremony of the Keys at the Palace of Holyroodhouse.

This is the ceremony when Her Majesty the Queen arrives in Edinburgh. The Lord Provost who is also Lord Lieutenant of the City of Edinburgh goes to greet her and hands over the massive keys of the city.

Her Majesty then returns the keys saying : **"I return these keys, being perfectly convinced that they cannot be placed in**

better hands than those of the Lord Provost and Councillors of my good City of Edinburgh.”

