

Thursday is national Clean Air Day

Edinburgh will mark the UK's Clean Air Day tomorrow Thursday, 21 June 2018 by closing off parts of the city centre to traffic.

There will be activities such as yoga on the Mound, dancing, a chance to try out an electric bike and somewhere to sit relax and enjoy the fresh air.



The City of Edinburgh Council is organising the event which will also mark the first part of Edinburgh Summer Summit, a two-day event designed to raise public awareness for the need to improve the city's air quality.

The summit will focus on the social and health benefits that better placemaking in the capital's centre can achieve through reducing congestion and pollution caused by traffic.

Minister for Transport and the Islands Humza Yousaf, Council leader Adam McVey, and Council Transport Convener Lesley Macinnes will lead a procession of residents, local business owners, and school children from the top of the Mound towards George Street on Thursday morning which is the second annual Clean Air Day.

Edinburgh Summer Summit is designed to inspire and position the capital as a thought-leader in city place-making and is linked to the overall aspirations of the City Centre Transformation Project.

On Clean Air Day, you are invited to take part in activities staged around the Mound, Hanover Street and George Street. There you will have the opportunity to get involved in events ranging from yoga and cycling classes to dance sessions and health walks.

Temporary landscaping and seating will be installed along the Mound and George Street providing a place for people to sit, relax and unwind.

Meanwhile, school pupils will be invited to put their own stamp on a piece of street art reflecting the history of Edinburgh and how the city's streets could be reclaimed by the public. You will also have the opportunity to try out electric bikes, while electric cars and taxis will be on display along with information on how people can do their part to improve the city's air quality.

The Mound and the southern section of Hanover Street will be closed to cars and public transport from 9.30am -12.30pm on 21 June. The east section of George Street will be closed from 9.30am on 21 June to 12pm on 22 June before reopening to vehicles, allowing local businesses to extend out onto the street and take full advantage of the summer solstice.



Lesley Macinnes
Transport and
Environment
Convener

Transport Convener Councillor Lesley Macinnes said: “Improving the quality of the air that we breathe is a top priority for the Capital. The fun and engaging activities we’ve planned for Clean Air Day will highlight the simple steps that can be taken to help reduce emissions and make the air cleaner and healthier for everyone.

“Over the two days we will be monitoring the impact the road closures have on the environment, in particular air quality and noise. We’re also looking forward to raising awareness of the wider City Centre Transformation project, which is about creating an action plan for an Edinburgh that is sustainable, healthy and safe for our future generations.”

Minister for Transport Humza Yousaf said: “It is our vision for Scotland’s air quality to be the best in Europe and we are working closely with the City of Edinburgh Council to tackle congestion and improve our urban environments. As part of this, the City of Edinburgh Council is in the process of drawing up plans for a Low Emission Zone and we welcome their intentions for this to be in place by the end of 2019.”

John Lauder, National Director of Sustrans Scotland, said: “Clean air has never been more important, and the need for action never more urgent. Walking and cycling are all steps people can take to do their bit in reducing emissions, while

improving their health. In contrast, poor quality air has been shown to cause a whole range of health problems. The best and easiest way to deal with air pollution in cities is to reduce the number of cars in congested urban spaces.”

“Funding for the event has been provided by the Smarter Choices, Smarter Places Programme, administered by Paths for All on behalf of Transport Scotland.”

John Bynorth, Policy and Communications Officer at Environmental Protection Scotland, which is co-ordinating Clean Air Day in Scotland, said: “I know from speaking to the deputy headteacher of one Edinburgh school how thrilled her pupils are to be taking part in the festivities. This flagship event is going to be a huge success in contributing to Clean Air Day’s aims.”

Summer Summit programme

Thursday 21 June – Celebrating National Clean Air Day

The Mound

9.30-10am	Public procession
10.30am-12 noon	E Bike demos
11am-12 noon	Mass open-air yoga

South Hanover Street

10am-12 noon	Breeze Cycling
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East George Street

11am-5.30pm	Mural painting
11am-5pm	Stalls, secure bike marking
11am-2pm	Play on pedals
12noon-10pm	Urban garden space
12noon-5pm	Outspoken Cycles
12noon-5pm	Walk this way – meet Living Streets
6pm-8pm	Edinbop dance performance

St Andrew’s & St George’s West Church

11am-11.30am Refreshments and music performed by local schools
11.30am-12noon Speeches by Transport Convener Cllr Lesley Macinnes and Katie Robins, Climate 2050

Assembly Rooms, George St (City Forum: Air Quality, Public Health & Transport)

12.30pm-1pm Registration
1pm-2.30pm Keynote speakers:
Tom Bell, Royal Institute of Environmental Health & Prof Tom Rye, Director of Transport Research Institute, Napier University
Q&A, refreshments and info stalls
2.30pm-3pm Morten Kabell, Chief Operating Officer, Copenhagenize and former Mayor of Technical & Environmental Affairs, Copenhagen. Q&A.

Friday 22 June – Placemaking in the city

Assembly Rooms, George St

9.15am-10am Registration, refreshments, information stalls
10am-10.45am Welcome by Ian Findlay, Paths for All (Chair for the day)
Keynote speakers: Malcolm Fraser, architect & Shannon Donoghue, Young Scot
10.45am-11am Tea and coffee
11am-1pm Workshops – Transforming Edinburgh: creative session through drawings, films, plans

To register for any of the sessions, email: summersummit@edinburgh.gov.uk.