

Exploring Edinburgh With Just Eat Cycles – Episode 3

Active travel is a fantastic way to get around the city if you're able, and with the city's cycle hire scheme it has never been easier. In this series I am exploring Edinburgh from the Just Eat Cycles' stations.

This time I am focussing on the area around the City Chambers' bike station, which is located in the quadrangle of the City Chambers building on the Royal Mile. I don't bike here that often – [though I did recently to attend the Edinburgh Open Streets earlier in May](#) – but I like exploring around here.



Just Eat Cycles station in the quadrangle at the City Chambers
PHOTO Martin P McAdam

Edinburgh's High Street is a unique urban environment, and is linked to other parts of the Old Town by narrow wee side streets known as closes. I've spent the last few months on my walks to work cutting down closes on both sides of the Mile, curious to see what secrets they might hold.

There's something about these winding, sloping streets that transports me back in time. Edinburgh is an old city, but the hobbled and cobbled streets around the City Chambers, in particular, make me feel like I'm in a time when people wore cloaks, feet booted up to their knees, traded in gold coins, and ale was considered a good breakfast.

It's a place of pure fantasy and feels steeped in lore – [Riddle's Court](#) in particular looks like a set from Game of Thrones' King's Landing. If you're into Game of Thrones or novels of that ilk, take the time to explore Edinburgh's closes. Go on your own and go in the early morning around 7.00am, it is imagination realised.



Riddles Court, near the top of the Royal Mile.

Exploring Edinburgh's closes in the early morning has allowed me to discover some quite beautiful things. I found an old stone plaque that marked the entrance to an 'out school' for girls who attended George Heriot's dated 1839. I found a lock,

so rusted I thought it was trying to age itself to catch up with its surroundings. I found an actual Sinclair C5, the personal electric vehicle that was unfortunately way ahead of its time. In this setting, it looked like something from the future!

There are some genuinely excellent things to discover down a close. One thing, in particular, was an answer to a question I've sought for a long time.

You can find out what that question was, and its answer, by [clicking here](#) to read the full post on my own blog.....



At the Just Eat Bikes official launch in Edinburgh with council leader Adam McVey and Mark Beaumont *Photo Greg Macvean*