

Car-free ‘Open Streets’ set to Return for Autumn

‘Open Streets’ is set to return to the Capital this weekend with a packed programme of activities planned to bring the Old Town to life.

Edinburgh made history in May when it became the first city in the UK to join the Open Streets movement, which has seen cities around the world temporarily opening streets to people by closing them to cars, vans and other motorised vehicles on a regular basis.

On the first Sunday of every month a number of streets in the Old Town, including the Canongate, Cockburn Street and Victoria Street, are closed to motorised traffic, letting the public enjoy the historic area on foot or by bike.

This Sunday, the event will return from a two-month break for the busy summer festival season with a range of attractions including Just Eat cycle hire e-bike trials on the Canongate, knitting in Dunbar Close Garden and the chance to spot men of the Town Guard patrolling the Royal Mile and ‘Canon Gait’ (as it was formerly known) on the lookout for Jacobite spies.



Traffic-free Cockburn Street

Transport and Environment Convener, Councillor Lesley Macinnes, said: “Our vision for Edinburgh is clear – we want to create a people-friendly, sustainable city, where the public feel safe and welcome to stroll, cycle and interact with one another.

“We’ve already seen from the first three events what a difference closing streets to motorised traffic can make, encouraging active travel, play and an appreciation of Edinburgh’s unique historical environment, and I’m delighted that more people will be able to experience this as we welcome Open Streets back for autumn.”

First approved by Transport and Environment Committee in February, the scheme aims to replicate the success of similar events in cities like New York, Paris and Brussels, where regular car-free days have revolutionised the way people use their streets, encouraging healthy, active travel, inclusivity and cultural appreciation.

Open Streets is also helping to reimagine how spaces can be shared and re-configured in the future, in line with City Centre Transformation, a long-term vision approved in September to create a connected, sustainable and people-

friendly centre.

After 12 noon on 6 October a series of diversions will be put in place for motorised traffic, though access will be maintained throughout for blue badge holders, with events staff on hand to ensure people with disabilities can enter the closed streets without difficulty.

The following streets will be closed to cars and other vehicles between 12pm and 5pm:



Blackfriars Street (between High Street and New Skinner's Close)

Canongate (between St Mary's/Jeffrey Street and the west side of Reid's Close)

Cockburn Street

Cranston Street

Grassmarket (pedestrian zone between West Bow and King's Stables Road)

High Street

Lawnmarket

New Street

Niddry Street

Old Tolbooth Wynd
St Giles' Street
Victoria Street
West Bow

Full details of road closures and event activities on 6 October are available on the [Open Streets web page](#).