

# Breaking records at Edinburgh's Christmas

More people than ever before visited Edinburgh's Christmas during its first week. During the first 9 days (first Saturday to second Sunday) the number of visitors was recorded as 522,000 which is 13% up on the same period last year.

The first weekend was the most popular ever opening weekend for the capital's festive markets when a third more people enjoyed the first Saturday of the event than last year.



Yeti and the Star Flyer Photo: Martin P. McAdam  
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In total, the first festive weekend was enjoyed by 177,070

people which includes the 12,000 who attended Light Night.

Saturday's Christmas market footfall rose 30%, from 68,230 in 2018 to 88,971, with overall weekend footfall to the markets up by 11%, from 148,056 to 165,070.

There has been much talk about the current layout of the festive markets in East Princes Street Gardens, even before the build started. The Council's Culture committee announced in June 2019 that the shape of the winter festivals will be consulted upon during next year.

Council Leader Adam McVey said: "Today's figures are positive for Edinburgh's Christmas, confirming the appeal of the event is still exceptionally strong with families and residents in the Capital. Bringing footfall to the city centre during the winter months is vital and supports local jobs and the wider economy.

"Edinburgh's Christmas brings many advantages to our city and we shouldn't be afraid to celebrate that. This year's layout has helped provide a better flow to the event and made it more accessible. Going forward, I'm keen to see a far greater discussion around how our Christmas Looks in future and we've committed to a conversation with the City next year to help shape the Edinburgh's Christmas offer from 2022. I'd encourage residents and businesses to share their thoughts on this year's events with us now so we can work with the organisers to make further improvements as the celebrations continue."

Depute Council Leader Cammy Day added: "Edinburgh is one of the best places in the world to celebrate Christmas and Hogmanay and we have an incredible event on our doorsteps which more than 500,000 people have enjoyed already.

"I've been along to our Christmas festivals and it was great to see so many people of all ages enjoying the festivities. The new layout has improved the flow of people through the market and makes for an enjoyable atmosphere for everyone

including families, busy shoppers and the whole event is now accessible . We've received feedback from many who share my view. My thanks to our hardworking public safety team, Police, Underbelly and others behind the scenes who will continue to work collectively to ensure that our Christmas festivals are some of the best in the world "

An Underbelly spokesperson said: "Edinburgh is voting with its feet – again. We've had over half a million people through in 9 days and despite the rain, it's great to see that the event is more popular than ever. The new layout and increased space for people to flow is benefiting everybody: particularly those with mobility issues and adults with young children. The increased numbers of visitors will hopefully be positive for local businesses. There's much more to come over the season and through to Hogmanay and we're looking forward to sharing it with the people of Edinburgh."

This year, Waverley Bridge is closed to vehicles during the busiest times (between 11.00am – 5.00pm on Saturday and Sunday) to improve accessibility.



Edinburgh Christmas Market. Photo: Martin P. McAdam  
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