

Local MSP encourages support for Constitution Street businesses on #SmallBusinessSaturday

BEN MACPHERSON MSP CALLS ON SHOPPERS TO SUPPORT BUSINESSES AFFECTED BY TRAM WORK DISRUPTION

SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY, 7 DECEMBER

Ben Macpherson MSP for Edinburgh Northern and Leith has called on Leithers and people across the city to support the excellent shops, bars, cafés and restaurants that are open near the tram works on Constitution Street. The local MSP asks people to visit Constitution Street and Bernard Street on 'Small Business Saturday' on 7 December 2019, and throughout the tram works, to enjoy all that the businesses have on offer.

Affected businesses have also created the #StrongConstitution campaign, to promote themselves during the disruption. Working together, Ben Macpherson and the businesses in the area are emphasising that though the roads might be closed to traffic, Constitution Street and the surrounding area is very much open for business.

The City of Edinburgh Council have committed to support businesses affected by the tram works, with their own marketing campaign and other measures, which will be fully implemented in the New Year. Together with the #StrongerConstitution campaigners, the local MSP urges the Council to implement these measures as soon as possible.

Speaking in support of the businesses on Constitution Street and Bernard Street, Edinburgh Northern and Leith MSP Ben

Macpherson said: "There is an excellent and diverse range of local businesses on and around Constitution Street – I know this not just because my constituency office is on the street but also because, like many others in Leith, I regularly shop in the area.

"The Council's support package for businesses affected by the tram works is in the process of being implemented, and I encourage the Council's various initiatives to be brought forward as quickly as possible. In the meantime, on 'Small Business Saturday', this weekend, there's a great opportunity for all of us to show our support for the affected businesses on and around Constitution Street – by visiting the area for a drink or a coffee, to buy some Christmas presents or for something to eat. I will be and hope many others will too.

"Leith is well known as a place where there is an abundance of excellent small businesses; and Leith is also well known as a place where local people come together to support each other. Despite differing views about the Council's decision to extend the tram line to Newhaven, I know that the community is unified and passionate about supporting local businesses throughout the tram works. On Saturday, and over the coming weeks and months, I encourage Leithers and people from across the city to come and enjoy everything that's on offer, because Constitution Street and the surrounding area is very much open for business!"



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Garry Clark representing the Federation of Small Businesses in Edinburgh said: "Whilst the eventual completion of the tram works in Leith may result in a long-term benefit to many local businesses, it is already clear that the significant disruption caused by the closure of Constitution Street is causing many businesses along the street much in the way of lost trade and distress. I have visited Federation of Small Business members and other local businesses in the affected area and I know just how much they need the support of the people of Leith and Edinburgh to get through this disruptive period.

"It is great news that local MSP Ben Macpherson has taken the opportunity provided by Small Business Saturday to send out a clear signal that Constitution Street is very much open for business and I hope that as many people as possible make a point of visiting the area, exploring the great range of local businesses and making a purchase that will support local jobs and local businesses. It's time to rally round and back the

businesses that help make Leith the vibrant community it is.”



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Karen Greig, owner of gift shop Destined For Home, 98A Constitution Street, said:“Leith has some great hidden gems – independently run cafes, pubs and shops. It’s going to be a long 3 years of tram works and we need the city’s support to keep businesses trading. Leith is definitely worth exploring, so come down and linger in Leith – you won’t be disappointed.”

Niall Taylor, owner of Nobles Café Bar and Restaurant, 44A Constitution Street, said:“In the ten years that we’ve been on Constitution Street we’ve seen a lot of change – it’s an ever evolving place and the tram coming down is just another part of that. Of course, I would love it if people continued to visit despite the disruption – customers are being very supportive, which is encouraging. I think that it would be truly saddening if any of these fantastic businesses didn’t survive to reap benefits of the trams when they finally start operating.”



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