

Santa's doing his bit to bring festive cheer to Edinburgh this Christmas

To help keep the Edinburgh's Christmas spirit alive, Santa Claus will be bringing some magic to each day of Advent, by reading a free, festive story every evening before bedtime on Edinburgh's Christmas website each day of Advent providing families with a daily dose of comfort.

Edinburgh's Christmas (and Santa Claus, who needs some help as his elves are busy making toys) are calling on budding writers of all ages, from within Edinburgh and the Lothians to send in a story filled with festivity, hope and fun. Santa Claus himself will select the winners and will read them out, and Edinburgh's Christmas will publish them on the website. Full details can be found at www.edinburghschristmas.com. Entries open today and should be submitted by Sunday 22nd Nov.

Supported by the team at Forth 1, Boogie In The Morning hosts, Boogie & Arlene will be among the presenters who will encourage listeners to enter the competition and will support Santa in reading some of the stories from his grotto in the North Pole.

In addition to Santa's input, Edinburgh's local businesses will be the focus of a new online campaign and virtual shop window in a new online neighbourhood market.



Santa having a cuppa... ©Ian Georgeson Photography

From today (10th Nov.) a sign up portal on www.edinburghschristmas.com will open for local, independent

businesses to enter their information to be part of the Edinburgh's Christmas Neighbourhood Market. The Market is expected to showcase artisan producers, makers, local retailers, bakers, gift companies, accessory and clothing businesses, hotels and restaurants – putting the focus on supporting and celebrating local, independent businesses and will open to customers on 19 November.

The Market is entirely free to sign up to. It will act as a directory to direct people to a fantastic range of local suppliers where they can purchase and interact on the supplier's own site.

Throughout the campaign, the neighbourhood market will put a spotlight on a range of selected local businesses each day, showcasing the wealth of product and produce on offer in Edinburgh. In addition to featuring on the Edinburgh's Christmas website, the promotion and marketing support will extend to the official Edinburgh's Christmas channels. These include 126,000 followers on Facebook, 9,300 on Instagram and 13,300 on Twitter.

The platform will also highlight activity that is already happening in the city, with information and a location map highlighting each of the local farmers markets in the city.

On hearing about the Christmas Neighbourhood Market, Ashley Harley, Events Manager at Mimi's Bakehouse said: "We have always loved being part of Edinburgh Christmas and as a local Edinburgh business we love helping to ensure there is local presence so this digital platform is such a fantastic idea.

"Giving Edinburgh businesses a chance to showcase the amazing gifts, produce, food and drink the city has to offer and utilise to Edinburgh Christmas platform will be sure to generate some sales at a time when the retail and food and drink has taken a real blow. We encourage everyone to shop local this year and support your independents whilst having a

safe and happy Christmas.”

Ruth Fisher, Producer of Edinburgh’s Christmas for Underbelly said: “Edinburgh’s Christmas is a hugely important event for the city and this year’s digital programme has been designed to put Edinburgh’s residents and businesses first. The new Christmas Neighbourhood Market is designed to shine a spotlight on the wealth of products and produce that we have here in Edinburgh and encourage residents to shop locally this Christmas.

As a key worker, Santa is very much at the heart of our plans. We look forward to reading the story submissions and working with Santa and his elves to produce a great series of Advent Stories. In what has been an unprecedented year for Edinburgh, we hope that the Edinburgh’s Christmas programme brings some cheer and enjoyment to everyone this festive season.”



... before getting on with a story ©*Ian Georgeson Photography*
Edinburgh’s Lord Provost Frank Ross said: “The festive season is a very special time for our city and our communities and,

as Edinburgh's Christmas goes digital this year, our residents and local businesses will be at the heart of it all. What an honour to have Santa Claus himself reading bedtime stories every night leading up to the big day.

"The new online Neighbourhood Market promises to be an exciting and convenient outlet for Christmas shopping and a fantastic opportunity for local businesses of all kinds. This year, more than ever, it's essential to support our local businesses and through the Neighbourhood Market we can do this while at the same time staying safe and having some festive fun.

"I'm glad that although we can't be together at our usual popular events this year, this digital programme ensures that the Capital will still have plenty of Christmas spirit."

Boogie, Presenter of Forth 1's Boogie In The Morning show said "Forth 1 has worked with Edinburgh's Christmas & Hogmanay for many years so we are delighted to be involved in Santa's Advent Stories. We all know that Christmas could be very different this year so anything at all that Arlene and I can do to help bring some festive cheer to the fantastic people of Edinburgh and beyond, then we are very keen to support it where we can. We love the Santa's Advent Stories idea!"