

Edinburgh will light up for Christmas

There will be more festive lights than ever in Edinburgh this Christmas with the help of a one-off funding boost aiming to spread some cheer at the end of a challenging year.

Thanks to savings identified in the council's Culture budget due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on festivals and events, there will now be Christmas lights in every ward of the city, with the new provision being used to dress living trees.

The traditional Christmas centrepiece is already illuminated following the switch on of the 2020 Christmas Rainbow on the Mound to accompany the traditional Norwegian tree last Friday. The 18m wide rainbow pays tribute to frontline workers who have given so much during the pandemic. The programme of citywide installation has begun.

Culture and Communities Convener, Cllr Donald Wilson, said: "This has been a very tough year for all of us and as we now look ahead to a very different Christmas, it's important to show that Edinburgh's festive and community spirit is alive and well despite the challenges we're facing.

"Along with our usual provision of Christmas lights and trees around the city we're also making sure that we spread the Christmas sparkle where we can to parts of Edinburgh that have

not previously had festive lighting provision and to make sure that is the case for several years. I'm delighted to confirm that from 2020 there will be lights in every ward of the city.

"With this one-off spend we'll be ensuring all 17 wards have festive lights for around five years – the life span of the new lighting."

Culture and Communities Vice Convener, Cllr Amy McNeese-Mechan, said:"To keep everyone safe we unfortunately weren't able to have our usual community light switch-on ceremonies this year, but I hope this extra splash of festive sparkle across the city will boost spirits and can be enjoyed by residents safely.

"Our thanks to the team who had to work so quickly and explored ways to add lights to previously unlit areas. The task of plotting the best spots is not as easy as it sounds and I want to congratulate the team for researching the city and making sure we could find living trees that are suitable for lights. They had to be on Council land, big enough to accommodate lights without harming branches, in a visible spot or in area of high footfall and near a suitable power supply.

"The installation of the festive lights has started across our communities and I hope citizens enjoy the extra Christmas cheer they'll bring to local neighbourhoods."

New Christmas lights for 2020

Rainbow on The Mound

Nativity Scene (East Princes Street Gardens)

Granton

Gracemount

Longstone

Currie

Balerno
Liberton
Sighthill
Oxgangs
Kirk Brae
Craigentinny
Portobello High School
Leith Walk
Duddingston
Meadowbank
Canongate
Leith – Bernard St Bridge
Meggetland Bridge

