

# **Conservation work completed on Spence's Canongate buildings**

**Edinburgh World Heritage (EWH) has just led a range of conservation work which will reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions at the buildings designed by renowned architect, Sir Basil Spence, on Canongate.**

In partnership with The City of Edinburgh Council the work to ensure the post war tenements are sustainable was funded by SP Energy Networks' Green Economy Fund and The Scottish Government's Energy Efficient Scotland programme.

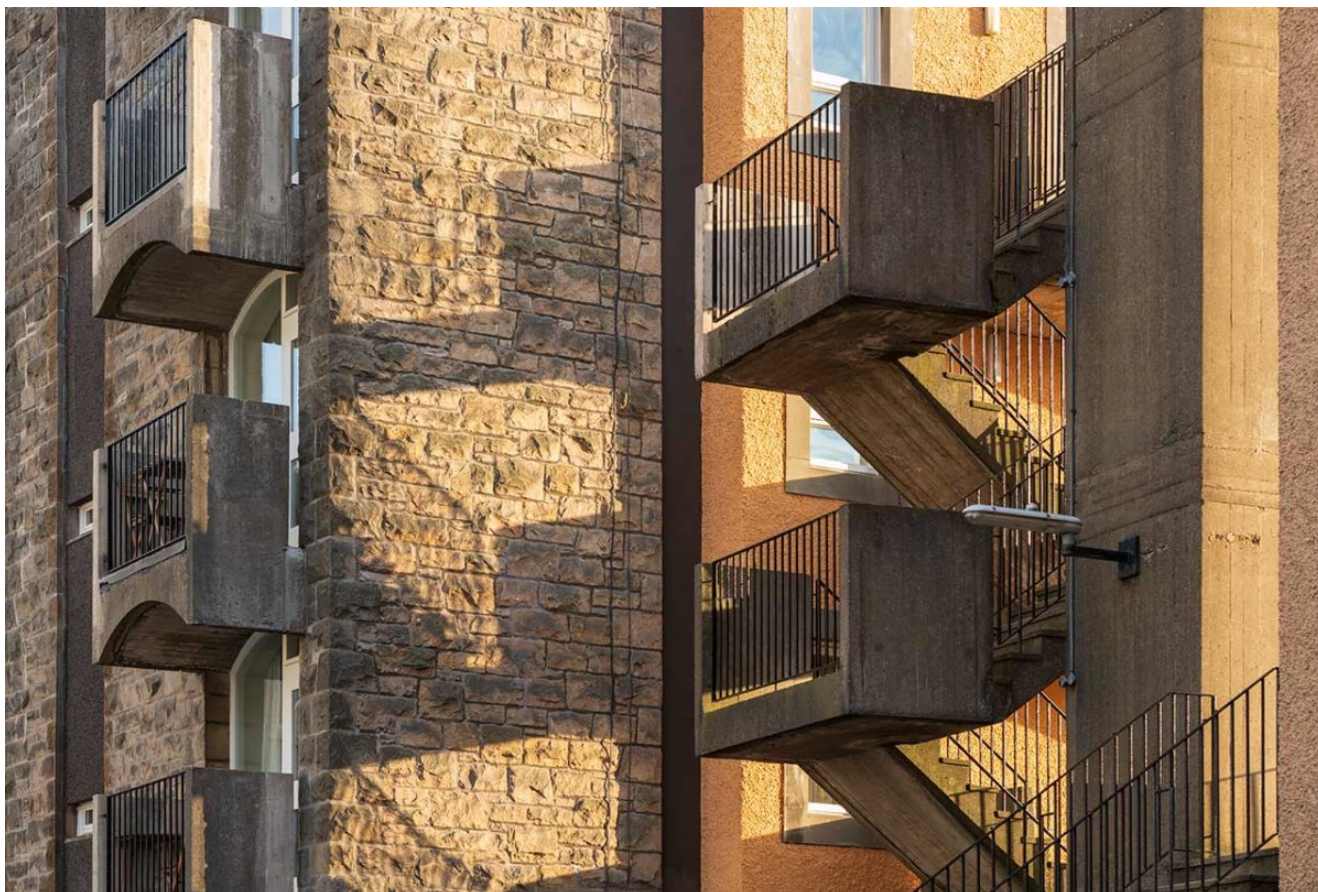


Canongate buildings designed by architect Sir Basil Spence  
PHOTO Tom Duffin

The £1.2 million works will mean that the Category B Listed building produces less carbon emissions in future, with a decrease of 28 tons in a year, which is the equivalent of planting 3,000 trees. The windows have also been reinstated to

original including balcony windows which enhances the architectural integrity of the area.

Double-glazing, attic insulation, roof and cavity wall insulation, LED lighting and upgrading to heating and ventilation will improve living conditions for the residents in the 12 flats and for those working in the two ground floor commercial units.

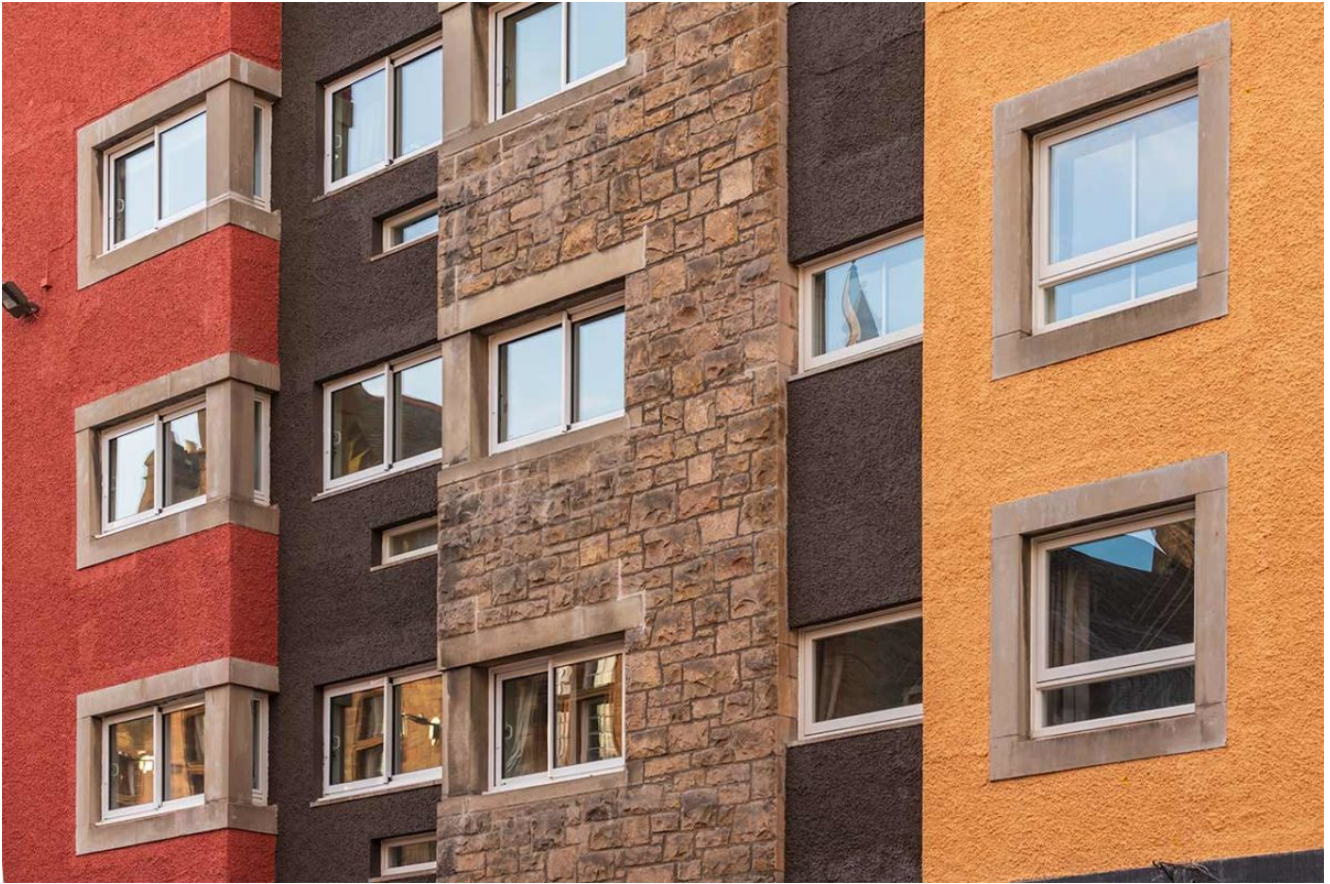


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EWH supported the tenants and property owners with their Funding Programme funded by Historic Environment Scotland providing expertise and advice. Neighbouring tenants and property owners attended workshops run by EWH on energy efficiency in their homes. More than 50 local companies were employed in the project over three and a half years with staff learning new skills about historic buildings including specialist conservation techniques.

The works will help ensure the success of The City of

Edinburgh Council in achieving net zero carbon by 2030. The government's target for Scotland is net zero carbon by 2045.



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Just Transition Minister Richard Lochhead said: “Removing greenhouse gas emissions from heating our homes and buildings is one of the most important things we can do to help end Scotland’s contribution to climate change. We also recognise that many of our historic buildings and places have special characteristics and significantly enhance our built environment.

“It is vital that our approach to reducing emissions in buildings has the principle of just transition at its heart, and I am pleased that the Scottish Government could support this innovative project, which demonstrates how we can reduce emissions whilst protecting our historic environment and, critically, do so in a way that ensures that our fuel poverty objectives and our commitment to tackling climate change work together, ensuring a fair and just transition to net zero

emissions.”

Christina Sinclair, Director of Edinburgh World Heritage said: “Thanks to our community-led approach, and experience in championing high-quality conservation, we have been able to make a success of combining conservation and energy efficiency work. Ultimately, these measures represent a significant contribution towards the improvement of the Canongate area as a whole. It is vital that this kind of work be continued, not only because of the contribution it makes to the City of Edinburgh Council’s carbon emissions reduction targets, but also to ensure that Edinburgh’s historic buildings are fit for modern living now and in the future.”

Cllr Neil Gardiner, Planning Convener, said: “These homes are of historical importance to the city and so it’s great that they have been so beautifully preserved while making sure they are now energy efficient for those living in them. The improvements made will help prepare the buildings against the effects of climate change in Edinburgh and partnership projects like this are an important first step in the city reducing its emissions to meet its target of net zero by 2030. These improvements help demonstrate that taking action on climate change not only delivers environmental benefits for the city but helps to support wider health and economic benefits for residents, by reducing heating bills and improving living conditions. Improving historic buildings such as these will positively impact on all of us and help unlock opportunities to reduce inequalities as we build back better and greener.”

Frank Mitchell, CEO at SP Energy Networks, said: “Scotland has ambitious plans to have Net Zero emissions by 2045 and Edinburgh targeting 2030, but we must ensure that no community is left behind. Helping communities establish low carbon infrastructure and build their own green economy is at the heart of our Green Economy Fund. We are delighted to be funding the Canongate project that will significantly reduce

energy consumption and carbon emissions whilst also improving living conditions for residents. We're proud to fund a project that can be used as a blueprint for other historic and listed buildings in the future – this is just the start.”



Historic Environment Scotland archive