

# **Mural on North Bridge will include a portrait of the Transport Convener**

**An image of The City of Edinburgh Council's Transport Convener will be included on a new North Bridge mural which is hoped will make ongoing roadworks there 'look a lot better'.**

It comes just days after the latest estimate revealed repair work to the historic bridge could continue until 2025 – five years later than originally planned.

In an effort to spruce up the construction site where workers have been carrying out essential repairs since 2018, a huge new mural is set to appear at the south end near to the Royal Mile.

The artwork by artist Chris Rutterford, 'Hogmanay at the Tron', depicts crowds enjoying new year's celebrations at the Tron Kirk. Painted over a month at the former parish church in 2013, the piece will make a return to the city centre this week but in a new setting – and with some new faces.

One of them is the city's Transport and Environment Convener, Cllr Scott Arthur, who said his portrait was added as a thank you for pulling strings within the council to bring the 15-metre mural to the bridge.



Cllr Scott Arthur Transport and Environment Convener PHOTO ©2022 The Edinburgh Reporter

Cllr Arthur said: “Chris got in touch a couple of weeks ago to say that he’s working with businesses on the North Bridge who have been affected by the closure there.

“But there were some bureaucratic hurdles to really make the construction site there look a lot better. I was able to connect him with a few key people inside the council and they got things moving quite quickly.

“As a small thank you for that – and unsolicited I have to say – he’s done a little portrait of me on the North Bridge.”

Cllr Arthur added he hopes the piece of art can “become a bit of an attraction in its own right”.



Last week it was confirmed extensive repairs to the 140 year-old crossing will now not be completed until June 2025 – adding another year to the previous estimate which was already four years behind schedule.

It followed an announcement from the council that restrictions on northbound traffic over the bridge will be extended into spring 2023.

Costs of the major project rose by £25.7million to £62million earlier this year when it emerged that parts of the bridge which had not been inspected since construction in the late 1800s were in need of significant attention and investment.

Cllr Arthur said further investigations uncovered “previously concealed” issues.

He added: “This is an extremely complex project to refurbish Edinburgh’s iconic North Bridge and to ensure its longevity as



a key link from the north to the south of the city.

“The historic nature of the project, the age of the structure and its heritage value finds the team uncovering elements of the bridge which require significant specialist work.

“We’re communicating with local residents, businesses and stakeholders, as well as Lothian Buses.”

## by Donald Turvill Local Democracy Reporter

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This was the scene on North Bridge in May 2021