

Lighting up The Causey this month

This month the Causey Development Trust (CDT) is to host a one-off event and community art installation inspired by local school children when artworks will be animated and projected across historic buildings in South Edinburgh.

On Tuesday 28 February the event is the culmination of a community art project carried out by CDT steering group members Kate Leiper (artist and illustrator) and Robert Motyka (projection artist) working with Preston Street Primary School. The event, which is free and suitable for all ages, is being staged in collaboration with Southside Community Centre.

After years of consultation and campaigning The Causey Development Trust confirmed last year that a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) and Road Determination Order (RDO) promoted by The City of Edinburgh Council had been approved. The traffic flow will be reversed at the junction of West Crosscauseway and Chapel Street and parking bays will be removed to make this a place for active travel as well as a new area of public realm.

'Where will the Flight take Us' will take place from 7.30pm on 28 February at The Causey, an area at the junction of West

Crosscauseway and Chapel Street. This is the area which after years of campaigning and grassroots engagement, CDT hope will be transformed into a place which makes walking and cycling easier, will prioritise people over vehicles, and will create a new communal space.

Kate and Robert, who both enjoy weekly 'sit oots' at The Causey, worked with teachers at the local primary, just a stone's throw from West Crosscauseway sparking the creativity and imagination of P7 pupils, tying into and building on their creative writing coursework.

The event is inspired by the meaning of birds, both real and imaginary – what they can tell us about ourselves, the environment, community, migration, climate collapse. Preston Street Primary School children worked with their teachers and with Kate to put their ideas onto paper, both in the form of words and drawings, and it is these images, collated by Kate and digitised by Robert, that will appear brightly strewn across the Casey on 28 February accompanied by a specially created soundscape.

Kate Leiper, local artist, illustrator and steering group member, said: "It was an absolute pleasure and honour to work with these young people and I hope that by taking part and contributing each child had a sense of being appreciated. I also hope that when they see their work projected on the walls and buildings that comprise their own neighbourhood – with the community, their family and friends gathered to see it –that each and every one of them feel celebrated. The past few years have been tough, obviously with Covid and lockdown, and it's our hope that the children would feel that they are being embraced by their community and that the project will leave a lasting memory to be treasured."

Robert Motyka, a local resident and steering group member, said: "We really wanted to undertake a project that involved the whole community – from myself and Kate who live and work

locally, to school children from Preston Street Primary – while also drawing attention to our work around pedestrianizing The Causey and transforming it from an unused traffic island into an attractive space for all.

A grassroots organisation founded in 2007 by local architect by the late Alison Blamire, The Causey Development Trust is run by volunteers and you can find them on Saturday on the traffic island at The Causey for their weekly ‘sit outs’ and planter caring sessions.



The Causey / West Crosscauseway



Artist's impression: Aga Mietkiewicz / Wee Dog Media



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