

Hanover Street phone boxes to be removed

City centre councillor, Finlay McFarlane, asked at the last full council meeting for some answers on the damaged and disused phone boxes which are littering our streets.

And he got a positive reply. The phone boxes on Hanover Street are eventually to be removed.

Cllr McFarlane said: "It is good news to hear that finally the broken phone boxes will be removed from Hanover Street, but I was disappointed to learn that was the sum total of the council leader's negotiations with BT.

"Whilst ultimately BT are a private company, the council leader has confirmed on previous occasions that the council can make requests for the removal of phone boxes if required. It is very much my opinion, and I suspect shared with the majority of residents, that we can and should be requesting nothing short of all ancillary phone boxes be removed as soon as possible.

"Since Ofcom legislation around public phone provision has been relaxed there are no longer any excuses to hide behind. We all know that pavement is at a premium in Edinburgh and therefore if there is more than one phone box in an area within 400 metres walking distance from the next they should go."

The Council Leader, Cammy Day said in a written reply that a

final meeting with BT is arranged for later in the month.

And he reminded members that if they would like to get in touch with BT directly, they (or members of the public) can do so at customer.serv.payphones@bt.com

Cllr Day continued: "Council officers continue to discuss phone boxes in the city with BT. As noted in my response to a similar question in October 2022, the Council has limited powers to instruct BT to undertake any work or removals.

"Where phone boxes that are in a dilapidated condition or are considered dangerous are identified or reported to the Council, these are reported to BT Defective Apparatus.

"Council officers are organising to meet with BT to discuss the ongoing repair and/or removal of redundant phone boxes around the city. These discussions will also cover the process for removal of phone boxes and BT's programme of works for this.

"In certain circumstances where a phone box is deemed to be a hazard or danger to the public, the Council will make a request for removal. Council officers have requested that the phone box on Hanover Street that has been damaged be removed and BT are making arrangements for this now."



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