

Elm Row pigeons flock back home

They may not be back to exactly the same place where they were before, but the pigeons on Elm Row are back.

It is almost two decades since the work of sculptor Shona Kinloch was removed for safekeeping. Now the seven pigeons are back (one lies separately and the other six flock together). There is also another one going solo although it is not yet in its final position.

The bronze birds have been to Powderhall Bronze for some TLC.

Other public realm works will be completed by the end of August on Elm Row and Blenheim Place.

The pigeons – more properly called A Leith Walk – by sculptor Shona Kinloch are back on Elm Row where the public realm works continue pic.twitter.com/IBv5Mm0kCH

– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [July 27, 2023](#)

Councillor Scott Arthur, Transport and Environment Convener, said: “I’m so pleased to welcome the Elm Row pigeons back to their rightful home. They’re an iconic part of the Leith Walk streetscape and their return is fitting as we put the finishing touches to the public realm along the tram route.

“Improvements in areas like Elm Row, as well as walking and cycling infrastructure along the line, are helping to create a

much safer, more welcoming environment, where people can relax, spend time and support local traders. This will complement the new tram service, which has gone from strength to strength since launching, with passenger numbers doubling in the first few weeks and remaining high since then.”

Sculptor Shona Kinloch said: “It has been a very long time since the pigeons were removed for the tram works so I’m looking forward to seeing them back on Elm Row.”

John Lawson, City of Edinburgh Council Archaeologist, said: “It’s very exciting to see the Elm Row pigeons back where they belong. I love them – they’re an iconic piece of art for Leith and a bit of fun. It’s also a big milestone for the cultural and archaeological side of the Trams to Newhaven project.

“Specialists from Powderhall Bronze have renovated existing statues, involving sandblasting and applying ‘patina’, which creates the familiar green colouring, as well as casting three brand new pigeons. To do this, wax replicas were created using the original moulds for the sculptures, before pouring in molten metal to produce a finished product.

“The pigeons have been installed alongside the London Road Pillar Clock, which was returned to Leith Walk in August 2022, following its full restoration. In addition the Robert Burns Statue on Bernard Street has been refurbished as part of the project as were the Pilrig Wheels that were discovered during construction and are now on display on the new public realm at Iona Street.”



“A Leith Walk” comprises the seven pigeons on the pavement in Elm Row created by sculptor Shona Kinloch and replaced as part of Trams to Newhaven (one of them is off to the left of our photo as it sits alone... PHOTO ©2023 The Edinburgh Reporter





