

Looking ahead to 2024 with the Lord Provost

The Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh, Robert Aldridge takes a view on the year ahead.

As the dust settles on what has been another exciting year, I have been looking ahead to what the next year holds for our city.

In 2024, we mark Edinburgh 900 which represents almost a millennium of shared history centred on our fantastic and fascinating city. I'm delighted that work is now underway to prepare for next year's anniversary as the working group continue to meet over the coming months. I look forward to a great programme of events which will examine how Edinburgh came to be over the centuries, celebrate where it is now, and reflect its future ambitions and aspirations.



St Giles Cathedral. Photo: Martin P. McAdam
www.martinmcadam.com

St Giles, one of our most famous landmarks, will also celebrate its 900th year as a working church in 2024. The Cathedral plays a central role in the city's history and is a huge asset to both the Old Town and the nation. As a quiet space, it provides an important place to find peace and solace but also as a centre for civic services for which I am very grateful.

At the end of June, I'll welcome His Majesty the King to the city for Royal Week where we'll undertake the historic Ceremony of the Keys.

With Armed Forces Day also in June and Remembrance Sunday in November, these are two key annual events in 2024 when I will reconfirm my commitment to our veterans and the significant service community here in Edinburgh.

The Edinburgh Fire Brigade will celebrate another important anniversary in 2024, marking 200 years since the first

municipal fire service in the world was created. It was a pleasure to welcome HRH The Princess Royal to the McDonald Road Community Fire and Ambulance Station earlier this year, to mark the opening of the Museum of Scottish Fire Heritage. I would like to express my gratitude to all the emergency services in Edinburgh who do such a fantastic job keeping us all safe.

Edinburgh truly is an innovative global city, and we are privileged to enjoy such close relationships with cities across the world. In 2024, we will celebrate the 70th anniversary of our very first twinning with Munich. We have since gone on to twin with thirteen other cities around the globe, including Dunedin who we will celebrate fifty years with, and Florence who we will mark sixty years with. I look forward to marking these milestones in 2024 and fostering these valuable relationships in the years to come.

Like Edinburgh, the Polish city of Krakow is a UNESCO City of Literature and one of our partner cities. We have enjoyed a strong partnership with the city since 1995 and I look forward to renewing our friendship in 2024. I am similarly thrilled that the UNESCO Cities of Literature Conference will be held in Edinburgh next year, reaffirming our place as a world leading literary city.

Marking twenty years since the creation of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network when Edinburgh received its designation as the very first UNESCO City of Literature, we will welcome representatives from over forty other Literary Cities to celebrate the achievements of the past twenty years and plan for the future.

Finally, I'd like to draw attention to the fantastic volunteers and voluntary sector in the city. Alongside my Deputy Lieutenants, Volunteer Edinburgh and the Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations Council (EVOG), I have made several nominations from the community for a King's Award for

Voluntary Service in 2024. I look forward to seeing the results when they're announced next year.

These are just a few of the exciting things that are in the pipeline for the year ahead.

As Lord Provost, it was my privilege to represent our wonderful city in 2023. I look forward to continuing to deliver on this work in 2024.



The Rt Hon Lord Provost Robert Aldridge and Lord Provost Consort Colin Cunningham



The Rt Hon Lord Provost Robert Aldridge at the Edinburgh Riding of the Marches © 2023 Martin McAdam