

Melville Crescent set for major public realm improvements

Work will begin on 22 April at Melville Crescent in the West End as a significant £2.1 million public realm upgrade commences.

The City of Edinburgh Council has secured funding from Transport Scotland to carry out improvements to transform the public spaces along this part of the street where two years of work has just been completed on the City Centre West to East Link (CCWEL). Segregated cycle lanes have been introduced on each side of the street and central parking removed.

The major works will include:

- Widening and resurfacing pavements with traditional sandstone slabs suitable for the heritage location
- Reintroducing setts on the road surface, by uncovering and reusing setts currently hidden under asphalt
- Installing improved and additional pedestrian crossing points
- Creating new lawn areas and planting street trees
- Adding cycle parking facilities and benches

Work will be delivered by Balfour Beatty who built CCWEL (and had to redo some parts) and it is expected this will take until December to complete. Walker Street North will be closed and one-way northbound traffic only will be allowed access to

Walker Street South from William Street to Melville Street.

The council says these improvements will complement the recently finished CCWEL scheme, which has provided a safer, more direct cycling route from Roseburn to Leith Walk via Haymarket and the West End, while also improving the streets for pedestrians.

The designs for the Melville Crescent public realm project were originally developed as part of the CCWEL plans, with input from local stakeholders and the Edinburgh World Heritage Trust to ensure the upgrades celebrate and are in keeping with the unique World Heritage Site setting.

The Edinburgh Reporter wrote about a previous iteration of the plans in 2017 following a public consultation event. [Read more here.](#)

There will be temporary disruption during the construction period, but the council hopes the improvements will significantly enhance the historic crescent as an attractive public space to pass through and spend time in.

Councillor Scott Arthur, Transport and Environment Convener, said: “I’m delighted that we’re now able to press ahead with these improvements on Melville Crescent thanks to this significant funding secured from Transport Scotland.

“Not only will the changes create a much more welcoming environment, but they will restore some of the historic features unique to the street’s World Heritage status.

“As well as street trees and wider sandstone footways, I am delighted the setted street carriageway throughout Melville Crescent will return – using the setts which currently lie hidden under the existing asphalt surface.

“What’s more, the project will also benefit people travelling by foot, wheel or bike, complementing the fantastic, world-

class CCWEL route, which I helped celebrate the opening of last week.”

CCWEL will not be fully complete until the section along George Street ([George Street and First New Town project](#)) is constructed to link up to the cycle lanes on York Place and Leith Walk, built as part of [Trams to Newhaven](#).

The cycle ways will also link to [Roseburn to Union Canal route](#) which will be completed this year and [Meadows to George Street](#).

