

# **Possible new lease of life for Ross Bandstand**

**The Ross Bandstand could see a renewed lease of life if councillors choose to fund a new programme of events at the site – but not all residents are on board.**

Edinburgh councillors will consider spending £264,000 per year to help host community events there, which would be free for residents to attend.

The funds would help local and community groups with the steep costs of running events at the bandstand, which often starts at £10,000.

Labour councillor Val Walker said: “We want to see a new series of performances in place for the Ross Bandstand to help revitalise Princes Street Gardens.

“These events would be truly free to the residents of Edinburgh.”

Funding for the scheme has been allotted in the Labour administration’s budget motion. However, a final budget could see this funding put somewhere else.

Councillor Walker envisioned local arts and community groups using the funding to host events in the space, breaking from the trend of large festival and music acts using the bandstand.

However, the Edinburgh festivals and other large private

groups would still be able to hire it.

The council conducted a survey of local residents to get opinions on how the bandstand should be used.

A vast majority of those surveyed said that they enjoyed attending events at the bandstand, and over half supported the suggestion that new, major events should take place there in May and September.

However, slightly over 50% of respondents also said that they did not want to see money spent on refurbishing the venue.

And, 67% of respondents said they wanted a third-party organisation to coordinate events at the space.

The council report notes that the bandstand, given its lack of modern amenities, inherently requires acts performing there to bring large amounts of kit with them, driving up the cost of hosting an event there.

It also notes that the bandstand faces some barriers to its use by acts, including the long-running closure of King's Stables Road limiting access to the space and its nature as an outdoor venue, facing closure when inclement weather hits.

Further, it says that new counterterrorism legislation set to go into effect this year could increase costs by placing a requirement on event organisers to have plans in place for if terror attacks occur.

By Joseph Sullivan Local Democracy Reporter