EDINBURGH MAGAZINE



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DIGITAL EDITION

July 2026

Compiled from stories published online in July 2026

EDINBURGH MAGAZINE

DIGITAL EDITION

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On the cover: Blackhall Library Reopens in New Temporary Home Near Davidson's Mains Primary, page 6. Photo supplied by City of Edinburgh Council.

This is a look-back edition, put together in November 2026 from stories that appeared online in July 2026. Edinburgh Magazine's first digital edition was published in November 2026.

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Photo supplied by City of Edinburgh Council

EDINBURGH

Edinburgh Visitor Levy Comes into Effect for Overnight Stays

The UK's first city-wide visitor levy scheme will officially come into effect in Edinburgh from Friday 24 July 2026, applying to paid overnight stays across the city.

The levy is expected to raise up to £50 million each year, with funds to be invested in sustaining, supporting and enhancing Edinburgh's global appeal as both a place to visit and a place to live.

A 5% fee will now apply to the cost of all paid overnight accommodation in Scotland's capital city, capped at five nights in a row. The levy is charged at the same rate every day of the year.

The scheme was formally agreed in January 2025 and has applied to all advance bookings made since 1 October 2025 for stays taking place on or after 24 July 2026.

In February, councillors agreed the first full set of investment programmes using funding raised by the levy. Worth over £90 million over the next three years, the initial programmes fall under three well-defined themes: City Operations and Infrastructure; Culture, Heritage and Events; and Destination and Visitor Management. The Council will receive the first levy receipts in October and November of this year.

Several 'early win' projects have already started, including:

A £132,000 contribution towards Edinburgh's Festival Carnival and Mardi Gras events, which took place over the weekend of 18/19 July, providing an early demonstration of the Council's intent to reinvest the levy's funds into experiences that everyone can enjoy, whether they are visitors or residents.

Funding ten festival city ambassadors to help visitors find their way around the capital this summer, and work alongside the Council's partners to make sure Edinburgh remains a vibrant and inclusive place.

Partnering with Police Scotland to create a City Centre Policing Unit, increasing public safety in the city centre and freeing up existing resource for frontline officers to be more present across other areas of the city.

Other key initiatives to be delivered in the next three years include, but are not limited to:

A £2m Participatory Budgeting (PB) programme to fund local neighbourhood projects in all 17 of the city's electoral wards, chosen by residents via a new online voting portal, while also encouraging visitors to explore Edinburgh's many hidden gems.

Funding to ensure the city's streets and open spaces are clean and kept to a high standard, including a £100,000 per year upgrade and replacement programme for bins in high footfall areas, £500,000 per annum to expand work to tackle graffiti through extra support for private businesses and £1.3m on additional operations services for the city centre (waste, cleansing, patrols).

Ambitious projects to renew and restore principal areas of Edinburgh, including investments in town centre high streets, £3m for public realm improvements in Hunter Square and £2m and £2.5m respectively towards transforming the city's key coastal visitor attractions at Cramond foreshore and Portobello Promenade.

£5m contribution to restore Leith Theatre and create a year round culture and live music space, expanding cultural opportunity beyond the city centre.

£3m towards transforming the iconic Old Royal High School into a world class, national centre for music open to all.

£3.85m to speed up the setted streets renewal programme and £3m for new and upgraded public toilets to maintain Edinburgh's streets, public spaces and public infrastructure to an accessible and world-class standard.

Investing in premier parks across the city to create improved spaces where the highest footfall and impact on the environment is experienced, and increases to the parks repairs budgets, while doubling the number of park rangers across the city.

Programmes to green the city with additional investment in planting, such as floral gateways, to improve the look and feel of the city's green spaces as well as the overall visitor experience.

A full list of the projects set to be funded in the first three years of the scheme is available on the Visitor Levy section of the Council's website.

In the run up to the levy's formal introduction, the Council has been providing ongoing support to businesses in the visitor economy. This has included providing materials to help businesses communicate the scheme to their guests, summarising key information on how it's paid and the benefits it will bring to the city.

By Zoe Online 23 July 2026

Continued at **edinburghmagazine.com/edinburgh-visitor-levy-comes-into-effect-for-overnight-stays**

EDINBURGH

Blackhall Library Reopens in New Temporary Home Near Davidson's Mains Primary



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Photo supplied by City of Edinburgh Council

Blackhall Library has reopened in a new temporary facility next to Davidson's Mains Primary School.

The service previously operated via a mobile library bus, following the closure of the original Blackhall Library building on Hillhouse Road in 2023 due to the discovery of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC).

The new temporary building is providing access to library services while work continues on a long-term plan for the library and other community services in the area.

The library sits within the school's grounds, but has its own dedicated entrance and is separated from the school by fencing. Signage has been installed at the gates to help guide people to the new building.

The new library is open 10am to 8pm Monday-Wednesday, and 10am to 5pm Thursday to Saturday.

Regular events and activities for adults include:

By Zoe Online 8 July 2026

Continued at **edinburghmagazine.com/blackhall-library-reopens-in-new-temporary-home-near-davidsons-mains-primary**

Your turn

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Edinburgh Floral Clock Reveals Trellis Anniversary Design



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The Lord Provost today (Thursday 30 July) officially unveiled Edinburgh's world-famous Floral Clock in West Princes Street Gardens, revealing a striking new design celebrating the 20th anniversary of Trellis.

Joined by representatives from the charity, the Lord Provost marked the completion of the display, which took a team of three gardeners six weeks to create.

Comprising around 35,000 colourful flowers and plants across a 200-square-metre display, this year's Floral Clock has been co-designed with Trellis to celebrate the charity's work improving mental and physical wellbeing through gardening, plants and connecting with nature.

For the past 20 years, Trellis has supported people to recover from ill health, overcome adversity and build confidence through therapeutic gardening. In the last year alone, the charity has helped more than 1,000 people across Edinburgh and the Lothians improve their health and wellbeing, while supporting communities to create green spaces in hospitals, GP surgeries, schools, prisons, and other community settings.

The 2026 design highlights the positive impact of gardening for wellbeing, inviting visitors to pause, reflect and connect with nature in the heart of the city.

Lord Provost Robert Aldridge said:

The Floral Clock is one of Edinburgh's most treasured landmarks, delighting residents and visitors alike for more than 120 years. Every year, it showcases the incredible talent and dedication of our Parks team while celebrating the people and organisations who make a positive contribution to our city.

It is particularly fitting that this year's design recognises Trellis and the life-changing work they do to improve health and wellbeing through gardening.

I hope everyone visiting West Princes Street Gardens takes a moment to enjoy this beautiful display and reflect on the power of nature to bring people together.

Fiona Thackeray, chief executive at Trellis, said:

By Albert Nelson Online 31 July 2026
Continued at **edinburghmagazine.com/edinburgh-floral-clock-reveals-trellis-anniversary-design**

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Edinburgh School Residency Gives Pupils Rare Insight Into Professional Art



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Pupils at Merchiston Castle School in Edinburgh have spent the past year working with acclaimed Scottish artist Robbie Bushe RSA as part of a unique artist-in-residence programme, giving them a rare insight into the creative process of a professional artist.

The year-long residency culminated in the unveiling of a major new artwork inspired by the school community at a special exhibition attended by pupils, parents, alumni and leading arts patron Richard Demarco, founder of the Richard Demarco Gallery.

By Zoe Online 2 July 2026
Continued at **edinburghmagazine.com/edinburgh-school-residency-gives-pupils-rare-insight-into-professional-art**

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Edinburgh's Dynamic Earth Transforms into Festival Fringe Venue



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Dynamic Earth, Edinburgh's world-class Science Centre and Planetarium, has unveiled its full programme for the Edinburgh Festival Fringe at Venue 315.

This August, the educational charity will bring together scientific discovery and the creative arts, transforming its landmark building and 360° digital dome into a vibrant space for inspiration, music and performance.

By Zoe Online 16 July 2026
Continued at **edinburghmagazine.com/edinburghs-dynamic-earth-transforms-into-festival-fringe-venue**

EDINBURGH

Rare Copy of Burns' First Collection Shared with Museum Visitors



9

The works will be on display from Monday 20 July until Friday 31 August 2026 to mark the 240th anniversary of publication.

Printed in Kilmarnock by John Wilson during the summer of 1786 and published on 21 July 1786, the Kilmarnock Burns is regarded by many as one of Scotland's most important books. The collection introduced readers to many of Robert Burns' best-loved poems and songs, including the enduring classic To a Mouse.

By Zoe Online 22 July 2026

Continued at **edinburghmagazine.com/rare-copy-of-burns-first-collection-shared-with-museum-visitors**

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City Art Centre Exhibition Explores Story of Edinburgh's North Bridge



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As part of the City Art Centre's free Summer Exhibition programme, the story of Edinburgh's iconic North Bridge is being explored through film, historic artworks and objects uncovered during its recent restoration.

Running from Saturday 18 July until Sunday 13 September 2026, Study for North Bridge is a new film by artists Rachel McBrinn and Jonathan Webb. Created during the bridge's restoration, it offers a fresh perspective on one of Edinburgh's best-known landmarks ahead of its reopening in August.

Commissioned by the City of Edinburgh Council as part of the North Bridge restoration programme, the film explores not only how the bridge has been repaired, but also how we care for and remember the places that shape our city.

By Zoe Online 20 July 2026

Continued at **edinburghmagazine.com/city-art-centre-exhibition-explores-story-of-edinburghs-north-bridge**

In brief



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EDINBURGH

Edinburgh Audiology Team Launches Partnership To Help People With Hearing Changes

A leading audiology team in Edinburgh has launched a new partnership with charity Deaf Action after seeing first-hand the challenges many people face when their hearing changes.

By Zoe Online 11 July 2026
Continued at **edinburghmagazine.com/edinburgh-audiology-team-launches-partnership-to-help-people-with-hearing-changes**



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EDINBURGH

Council Confirms Temporary Street Changes Ahead Of Edinburgh Festivals

With the summer festival season fast approaching, temporary changes will be made to how some city centre streets operate between Sunday 19 July and Monday 7 September 2026.

By Zoe Online 6 July 2026
Continued at **edinburghmagazine.com/council-confirms-temporary-street-changes-ahead-of-edinburgh-festivals**



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EDINBURGH

Best-Selling Author Brings Seattle's Forgotten Founding Mother to Edinburgh Fringe

A best-selling American author will bring the overlooked story of one of Seattle's most influential women to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe this August.

By Fiona MacLeod Online 23 July 2026
Continued at **edinburghmagazine.com/best-selling-author-brings-seattles-forgotten-founding-mother-to-edinburgh-fringe**



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EDINBURGH

The Van Gogh Shogh Brings Colour, Chaos and Comedy to Edinburgh Fringe

Edinburgh Fringe audiences are being invited to paint the town red, green, blue and yellow this August as The Van Gogh Shogh arrives at the Assembly Rooms.

By Fiona MacLeod Online 6 July 2026
Continued at **edinburghmagazine.com/the-van-gogh-shogh-brings-colour-chaos-and-comedy-to-edinburgh-fringe**

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