EDINBURGH MAGAZINE



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DIGITAL EDITION

August 2026

Compiled from stories published online in August 2026

EDINBURGH MAGAZINE

DIGITAL EDITION

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On the cover: Scottish Folk Icon Aly Bain Honoured with Edinburgh Award, page 6. Photo: Greg MacVean.

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

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Your turn

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Princes Street Set to Fully Reopen After Former Debenhams Fire

Princes Street is set to fully reopen on Saturday 29 August, following a major fire at the former Debenhams building last month.

Lothian Buses and Edinburgh Trams are working to resume services, while pedestrian access between Castle Street and Frederick Street will be restored for the first time since 9 July.

Subject to successful testing overnight on Friday, trams will run to their full route from the Airport to Newhaven and all city centre bus diversions will end.

Passengers are being encouraged to continue planning ahead and checking for the latest travel updates and information on the Council's website. Operators will publish updated timetabling information ahead of the weekend.

The three eastbound bus stops between Castle Street and Frederick Street will remain closed, with westbound bus stops unaffected.

Remedial work on the site will continue, which requires the pavement on the north side of Princes Street to remain closed. One lane of the eastbound carriageway will be used as a temporary pedestrian walkway.

Significant work has been carried out over the past seven weeks to make the building safe, including:

The front façade of the building has now been fully stabilised with supporting steel beams

The eastern gable of the building has been secured and made safe. This involved reducing it in height by approximately two metres and supporting it with scaffolding

Several tonnes of bricks and unsafe stonework, some weighing as much as 850kg, from the upper levels of the façade have been carefully removed and stored for reuse

Several tonnes of debris and dangerous materials have been removed from the building.

The closure has had a significant effect on the city, particularly on businesses on the northern section of the tram route, including Newhaven, Leith and The Shore. Ongoing work to support these businesses includes:

The development of a promotional campaign More By The Shore to drive footfall to businesses in the area

The campaign will involve special offers, a voucher scheme, events and more, with more details to follow in the coming weeks

Direct Engagement and Communications, officers will continue speaking directly to businesses in the area over the next few weeks, holding online briefings and issuing information and other advice.

Council Leader Jane Meagher said:

The reopening of Princes Street is a significant step in the city's recovery from, what was, a devastating fire, and I'm sure it will come as a great relief to many. This has been an incredibly difficult few weeks for the city, not least given the timing, and I'm pleased that we can now turn our attention to getting Edinburgh back to normal as helping those businesses most affected to get back on their feet.

"A great deal of effort has gone on behind the scenes to make this possible, and my thanks go to our council teams and engineers who have carried out painstaking work to make the building secure as quickly and safely as possible. I also want to thank Lothian Buses, and their drivers, for keeping the city moving and our residents and visitors for their patience.

"I think it's fair to say that this period has further underlined the critical importance and popularity of our tram network, not just to the north of the city but to the whole of Edinburgh.

"With that in mind, I'm pleased that our business support campaign 'More by the Shore' is taking shape, and will soon be encouraging more residents and visitors to explore Leith, the Shore and Newhaven, and visit the fantastic local businesses there. This activity is planned to run well beyond the reopening of Princes Street, over the festive period and into the new year.

Sarah Boyd, Chief Executive for Lothian and Edinburgh Trams said:

We welcome the news that Princes Street is due to reopen on Saturday 29 August.

"Our teams are now focused on reinstating bus and tram services along one of the city's most important transport corridors and we encourage customers to check the latest service updates and allow extra time for travel.

"I would like to thank our customers for their patience, understanding and support throughout this period of continued disruption. We are also grateful to our colleagues, whose professionalism, flexibility and commitment continued to keep Edinburgh moving during a particularly challenging time.

By Catherine Wilson Online 28 August 2026
Continued at **edinburghmagazine.com/princes-street-set-to-fully-reopen-after-former-debenhams-fire**

EDINBURGH

Scottish Folk Icon Aly Bain Honoured with Edinburgh Award



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Photo: Greg MacVean

Aly Bain has been getting ready to receive the prestigious Edinburgh Award. Impressions of Aly's famous hands have been cast in clay, pictured, by Leigh Bradley of the Colin Braid Stone Workshop, ready to be carved into stone.

The handprints will be gilded and laid outside the City Chambers next to the prints of previous Edinburgh Award recipients including Doddie Weir, Ann Budge, Sir Chris Hoy, Elizabeth Blackadder and Sir Geoff Palmer.

As Aly Bain celebrates his 80th birthday this year, his contribution to Scottish culture and music remains unparalleled. Widely recognised as a Scottish icon, he has proudly called Edinburgh home since his early twenties, establishing the city as the base for an outstanding international career. His deep connection to Scotland has been reflected throughout his life and work, including performances at the opening of the Scottish Parliament in 1999 and at the funeral of Scotland's First Minister, Donald Dewar, in 2000.

In his early years he performed with The Humblebums which included two then-emerging talents, Gerry Rafferty and Billy Connolly. He later became a founding member of the influential folk group Boys of the Lough, touring extensively across the world and recording more than 20 albums.

Alongside these achievements, he developed a distinguished solo career through collaborations, recordings, and acclaimed television projects including the creation of the internationally renowned Transatlantic Sessions.

By Zoe Walker Online 7 August 2026
Continued at **edinburghmagazine.com/scottish-folk-icon-aly-bain-honoured-with-edinburgh-award**

EDINBURGH

Edinburgh International Festival Poll Highlights Power of Culture



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Photo supplied by Edinburgh International Festival

12 August Edinburgh: A major new poll of 35,000 people across 34 countries, commissioned to coincide with the inaugural Global Ideas Stage at the 2026 Edinburgh International Festival, has found that more than two-thirds of people worldwide have relied on the arts to keep them hopeful.

The poll, the largest of its kind ever undertaken on this subject, was revealed at the Global Ideas Stage, the International Festival's new flagship event held in collaboration with Panmure House, the last home of Scottish economist and philosopher Adam Smith. Seeking to demonstrate why the arts matter in today's world, it found that 68% of people say an individual cultural moment, whether a live music performance, a book, a work of art, a film, or a piece of theatre, has helped them feel more hopeful in the face of an uncertain future.

Among people who say a piece of culture 'definitely' made them feel more hopeful, 26%, (nearly one in four), say people in their community always pull together in a crisis. That is more than double the rate among people who say culture helped only "a little" (12%), and almost three times the rate among those who say culture did not help at all (9%).

Conducted by Focaldata, the research found that people whose sense of hope is inspired by culture are twice as likely to believe humanity can keep building a better world for the next generation. The same group is also twice as likely to say people in their community will pull together in a crisis.

By Albert Nelson Online 13 August 2026

Continued at **edinburghmagazine.com/edinburgh-international-festival-poll-highlights-power-of-culture**

EDINBURGH

Princes Street Reopening Plans Discussed at Edinburgh Summit



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The Council Leader has met with business representatives, heritage organisations, community groups and Councillors to provide an update on efforts to reopen Princes Street, and on the Council's wider response to the disruption.

Cllr Meagher hosted the summit in Edinburgh's City Chambers last night, which saw officers set out in detail the complexity of making the former Debenhams building safe to allow the thoroughfare to reopen.

Initial proposals for a communications campaign to promote those businesses and communities most affected by the disruption were also presented and discussed. This will also include resident and visitor spend incentives, events and other promotions.

By Zoe Walker Online 16 August 2026
Continued at **edinburghmagazine.com/princes-street-reopening-plans-discussed-at-edinburgh-summit**

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Edinburgh's New Sustainable School Designed for Future Generations



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Cutting-edge building replaces existing Liberton High School as part of new community, lifelong learning and sports campus

Staff and pupils at Liberton High School have started the new school year in their brand new state-of-the-art learning and community campus this week, after the building was handed over to the Council.

Balfour Beatty was appointed by the Council to deliver the new building, which has been designed by jmarchitects. The new campus has been formed with the needs of learners in mind. To encourage collaborative learning, the school building features breakout and retreat spaces to offer pupils choice on where they want to work, socialise or take time out.

By Catherine Wilson Online 18 August 2026
Continued at **edinburghmagazine.com/edinburghs-new-sustainable-school-designed-for-future-generations**

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Edinburgh University Raises Over £250,000 for Teenage Cancer Trust



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Medical students at the University of Edinburgh have raised over £250,000 for Teenage Cancer Trust by holding their 12th annual charity dance show-Edinburgh Medics' Reveal.

This year's Medics' Reveal took place at Usher Hall, Edinburgh and raised over £45,000.

Edinburgh Medics' Reveal is a variety dance show produced, choreographed and performed by medical and nursing students from the University of Edinburgh.

The money raised from the show will be used by Teenage Cancer Trust to fund specialist hospital units, nurses and youth workers across the UK that provide outstanding age-appropriate care and emotional support to those in need.

By Charlotte Gilbert Online 25 August 2026
Continued at **edinburghmagazine.com/edinburgh-university-raises-over-250000-for-teenage-cancer-trust**

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£5m Support Package Announced to Boost Edinburgh Businesses and Transport After Princes Street Fire



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Following talks with the Council Leader, the Scottish Government has announced up to £5m in funding to support the city's recovery from the Princes Street fire.

Council Leader Jane Meagher said:

This is a significant step in our city's recovery from the Princes Street fire, and I wholeheartedly welcome the Scottish Government's announcement today.

"Whilst I remain acutely aware of the impact that this is having across the city every day, I hope that this news can bring some comfort to our residents, businesses and visitors. The city is very much open, and I'd encourage everyone to support our fantastic local businesses as the festivals begin later this week.

By Edinburgh Magazine Online 6 August 2026
Continued at **edinburghmagazine.com/5m-support-package-announced-to-boost-edinburgh-businesses-and-transport-after-princes-street-fire**

In brief



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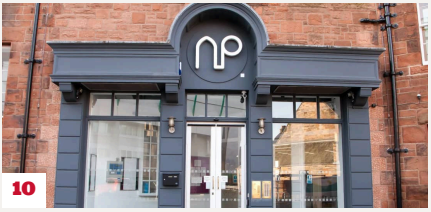
EDINBURGH

Edinburgh Exam Results Show Improved Attainment Across Key Measures

Levels of attainment for learners across the city have improved from last year across almost all key measures.

By Zoe Online 4 August 2026
Continued at **edinburghmagazine.com/edinburgh-exam-results-show-improved-attainment-across-key-measures**



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Norton Park Invites Views on Future of Conference Centre

Community organisations, charities, social enterprises and local residents are being invited to share their views on the future of Norton Park Conference Centre.

By Zoe Walker Online 27 August 2026
Continued at **edinburghmagazine.com/norton-park-invites-views-on-future-of-conference-centre**



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EDINBURGH

Royal Astronomer Helps Edinburgh Students Watch Solar Eclipse Safely

First year students at Portobello High had an extra surprise waiting for their very first day at high school, solar eclipse glasses.

Students will be able to watch the solar eclipse tonight safely thanks to the Royal Astronomer of Scotland.

By Zoe Walker Online 12 August 2026
Continued at **edinburghmagazine.com/royal-astronomer-helps-edinburgh-students-watch-solar-eclipse-safely**



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ABERDEEN

Aberdeen Reuse Shops Help Keep Thousands of Items in Use

Reuse Shops at two city recycling centres, operated by SUEZ in the UK (SUEZ) on behalf of Aberdeen City Council, have impressed visitors following upgrades to one of the shops, which has already sold over 104,000 items since opening its doors.

By Zoe Walker Online 19 August 2026
Continued at **aberdeenmagazine.co.uk/aberdeen-reuse-shops-help-keep-thousands-of-items-in-use**

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