

One of our key successes in recent years has been the establishment of a city region brand. 'Inspiring Capital' was developed to help Edinburgh promote what it has to offer and to be on the front line in the drive to raise the city region's profile. We have hundreds of brand ambassadors who use 'Inspiring Capital' to market their organisations, ensuring that Edinburgh competes at the highest level, across market sectors, on the global stage.

We're now taking this a step further through the Destination Edinburgh Marketing Alliance. This new approach will have a specific focus on promoting Edinburgh and will bring together a coalition of the city's top talents with skills and experience in business and leisure tourism, inward investment and talent attraction. Their expertise will be crucial in enabling Edinburgh to excel in the highly competitive national and international destination arena. There will be a dedicated marketing and promotion function and a new marketing strategy for the city, which provides a 'one-stop shop' that puts our customers at the forefront of advancing sustainable economic growth in the city.

Public and private agencies will come together for the greater good of the city. I believe this approach will put us a step ahead of our rivals and ensure Edinburgh continues to climb the rankings as a must-visit destination.

One of the keys to Edinburgh's success is undoubtedly its reputation for holding major festivals and events. Edinburgh has done much to build a year round calendar of events. Edinburgh's internationally renowned summer festivals continue to go from strength to strength. Our winter festivals programme fares just as well with the city's population swelling in December as visitors from near and far flock to our Christmas and Hogmanay extravaganzas.

In addition, businesses in the city centre recently voted for the establishment of a Business Improvement District (BID). This will allow additional funding to be put into services that will enhance the environment of the area, and provide a cohesive mechanism for promoting the city centre.

Edinburgh is well placed to weather the current difficult economic climate. We are investing heavily now so that we are well positioned for the future. Major developments including the West End, Waterfront, Caltongate, Quatermile and St James Quarter are all underway and transforming the city.

Investment in infrastructure is also vital to our future sustainable growth and work continues to deliver the first phase of our tram network by 2011. It's an exciting time for transport in the city as we prepare for an integrated system between bus and tram to ensure we can cope, in an environmentally friendly way, with the increased number of people requiring public transport in the near future.

Edinburgh strives for excellence at all levels. I'm proud to be the Leader of the Council in a city where the people that live and work here have such a pride and 'can-do' attitude towards ensuring the city is the best that it can be.



Cllr Jenny Dawe, Leader of the City of Edinburgh Council.

