

Edinburgh Geological Society – Excursions 2026



Excursion title:	Building Stones of Edinburgh's West End
Date & start time:	Wednesday, 6 th May 2026 at 19:00
Finish time:	21:00
Leader(s), organisation:	Andrew McMillan, EGS

Excursion summary:	This excursion celebrates the publication of a new Lothian & Borders Geoconservation booklet on the Building Stones of the West End of Edinburgh. The walk will include the late 18th Century to early 19th Century Charlotte Square which has been described as 'one of the major achievements in European civic architecture of the period'.
Meeting point:	Assemble at S end of pedestrianised Castle Street near the Vodafone Shop NT 249 738; parking possibly available in parts of George Street
Transport details:	Tram and many buses available in nearby Princes Street
Outline of the excursion route:	Castle Street, heading west along George Street (S side), Charlotte Square (E and S), west end of Princes Street, Charlotte Square (W and N), George Street (N side) heading east as far as Hanover Street, George Street (S side) heading west, finishing at Castle Street. Minor diversions en route.
Terrain, walking distance, height gain:	Walking on pavements and minor roads, locally cobbled. Mainly level with minor descents and ascents, max. walking distance 1.5 miles
Excursion Grade	A - Easy field trips participants should be used to walking 1 mile (1.6 km), on good coastal paths and beaches of sand and pebbles. Note these grades are not an extensive list of difficulty so please read the full excursion form or inform the excursion secretary if you have any questions or concerns.
Additional Hazards not included in the EGS Excursion Handbook:	Moving vehicles: we shall be crossing busy city centre streets, usually but not always at pedestrian crossings; paving and road surfaces can be irregular.
Control measures required to mitigate against any Hazards referred to above:	Always keep an eye out for all vehicular traffic when crossing streets Moving vehicles: we shall be crossing busy city centre streets, usually but not always at pedestrian crossings; paving and road surfaces can be irregular.
Hard hats or Hi-viz clothing needed?	Leader and Coordinator will wear Hi Viz vests. Hi Viz vests optional for participants
May dogs be brought on the excursion?	Yes, on a lead at all times.
Toilet information:	No public toilets on the route; nearby Princes Street Gardens West (has accessible toilet) open 10am to 8pm. Waverley Station is c. 1 mile away.
Geological map sheet:	32E OS 66
References:	New Lothian & Borders Geoconservation booklet to be published in 2026: Building Stones

	of the West End of Edinburgh – a Geoheritage walk Building Stones of Edinburgh, 2nd edition (EGS, 1999) Lothian Geology - an Excursion Guide (EGS, 1996), p. 56-63
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Excursion grade key

A grade field trips participants should be able to walk 1 mile (1.6 km), on good coastal paths and beaches of sand and pebbles.

B grade field trips all participants should have good balance and be fit enough to walk up to 3 miles (4.8 km), sometimes on uneven ground (such as rocky shores).

C grade field trips all participants should have very good balance & be fit enough to walk up to 4 miles (6.5 km), sometimes on more uneven ground than for B grade (such as rocky shores with small boulders), on steeper slopes, & for light scrambles.