# Damage to Dundee City Square steps raises alarm over escalating vandalism costs



Damage to the steps at Dundee City Square has reignited discussions surrounding the persistent issue of vandalism in the area, prompting calls for more robust measures to curb the destruction of public property. The concrete steps leading from the square to Crichton Street were found broken and chipped over the weekend, necessitating the prompt closure of the walkway for repairs. Councillor Craig Duncan, representing the Broughty Ferry ward, expressed his firm belief that the damage was intentional, noting, “I don’t think that was in any way accidental and it must be vandalism.”

Duncan recounted visiting the steps just the day before during the VE Day parade, highlighting that they were in good order at that time. His comments reflect a growing frustration with the impact of such incidents on the public's perception of the city centre. “You want people to come into the city centre but that is a dreadful look. It’s off putting for people coming here. For anyone who cares about Dundee, images and appearances matter,” he added.

Beyond the aesthetic concern, Duncan pointed out the financial implications of these acts, warning that repairs would ultimately fall on the taxpayers. He contested the council's current approach to vandalism, stating, “There needs to be strenuous measures to identify who does these things.” His call for accountability mirrors a broader sentiment expressed by other local officials regarding the ongoing battle with vandalism in Dundee.

Similar incidents have emerged across the city, including damage to several bus stops, which have also raised safety concerns. Councillor Lynne Short highlighted how vandalism has exposed electric wires, creating risks for both individuals and public transit systems. Xplore Dundee, the bus operator, condemned the vandalism and underscored the council's duty in ensuring public safety. The council has committed to restoring the damaged areas while addressing the growing issue of graffiti, which has plagued the city centre.

Over recent years, Dundee City Council has faced a staggering financial burden due to vandalism, racking up costs exceeding £870,000 against insurance claims since 2017. These figures reveal a systemic challenge; public resources are frequently targeted, draining funds that could otherwise be used for community improvements. Incidents have ranged from minor graffiti clear-ups to significant damage, such as a break-in at the Camperdown Wildlife Park in 2021, further complicating the council's maintenance efforts.

The recent spate of vandalism points to a troubling trend, echoing reports from past months of damaged benches in Albert Square and incidents of anti-social behaviour in the city centre. The council has taken steps to address these challenges, deploying its Rapid Response Team to promptly remove graffiti and repair damage. However, the persistence of these problems suggests a deeper issue that necessitates collaboration between the council, law enforcement, and community members.

As Dundee continues to grapple with these challenges, the call for more effective strategies to manage public spaces and mitigate vandalism has never been more pressing. Councillors have emphasised the necessity of a concerted effort to maintain the city’s image and ensure a safe environment for residents and visitors alike. Whether through monitoring, community engagement, or enhanced punitive measures, it is clear that action must be taken to preserve the integrity of Dundee's public spaces for future generations.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3
2. Paragraphs 4, 5
3. Paragraphs 6, 7
4. Paragraphs 8, 9
5. Paragraph 10
6. Paragraph 11
7. Paragraph 12

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/5243310/dundee-centre-city-square-vandalism/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/lives-risk-bus-stop-vandals-26684824> - In Dundee, vandals have targeted several bus stops, causing significant damage and exposing electrical wires, posing safety risks. Councillor Lynne Short expressed concern over the safety hazards, especially with exposed electrics, and emphasized the need for prompt repairs. Xplore Dundee, which operates buses on these routes, condemned the vandalism and highlighted the council's responsibility for repairs and cleaning. The council is working to restore damaged parts and remove graffiti as part of a broader effort to maintain public safety and the city's appearance.
3. <https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/dundee/3630370/albert-square-benches-taped-off-again-vandalism/> - Dundee's Albert Square benches have been vandalized for the second time in recent months, with backs missing from several benches outside The McManus museum. Dundee City Council confirmed the damage was due to vandalism and is addressing the issue. This incident follows previous vandalism in the city, including racist graffiti in Broughty Ferry. The council is taking steps to repair the damage and prevent future occurrences, emphasizing the importance of maintaining public spaces for residents and visitors.
4. <https://www.anguscountyworld.co.uk/news/people/seven-figure-vandalism-bill-for-cash-strapped-councils-4046018> - Over the past five years, cash-strapped councils have faced a seven-figure bill to repair vandalism at schools and public buildings. Dundee City Council claimed £870,062.45 against insurance since 2017, with bus stops and schools among the frequent targets. Incidents include graffiti clear-ups and significant damage, such as a break-in at Camperdown Wildlife Park in August 2021. The financial strain underscores the broader issue of vandalism affecting public resources and the challenges councils face in maintaining and repairing damaged infrastructure.
5. <https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/dundee/3391986/albert-square-dundee-benches-vandalised/> - Several benches in Dundee's Albert Square have been damaged by vandals, with backs missing from a couple of the wooden seats. Dundee City Council has inspected and taped off the damaged benches and is in the process of removing any unsafe ones. This follows a series of incidents of anti-social behaviour in the city centre, including youths being banned from takeaways and alleged arson. The council is addressing these issues to ensure public safety and the upkeep of public spaces.
6. <https://www.dundeelibdems.org.uk/news/article/call-for-graffiti-to-be-properly-tackled-in-the-city-centre-a-right-old-mess-say-councillors> - Dundee councillors have called for better management of graffiti in the city centre, particularly in the Murraygate area, where some graffiti has been present for months. Councillors Fraser Macpherson and Craig Duncan emphasized the negative impact on the city's image and the need for prompt removal. They highlighted the importance of collaboration between the council and building owners to address the issue and prevent long-term graffiti. The council's Rapid Response Team is deployed to remove graffiti quickly, but challenges arise with privately owned properties.
7. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-tayside-central-37024930> - Three 15-year-old boys have been charged after causing £20,000 worth of damage to cars and vandalizing allotment buildings in Dundee's Hilltown area. Over 20 vehicles were damaged, and sheds at Dundee Law allotments were set on fire and had windows smashed. Police are also reporting another 15-year-old boy to the Youth Justice Assessor. The incident highlights ongoing issues with youth-related vandalism in the city and the significant impact on the community and local authorities.