

Five things you need to know today



The founder of Apple, Steve Jobs, died earlier this morning. This announcement, of an early death for someone so influential on several generations around the world, is a profoundly sad one. Whether or not Edinburgh ever gets its promised Apple store, we are sure there are many of you in Edinburgh who, like us, depend on Macs to make our work much easier and more enjoyable.

The Scottish Government has announced awards of substantial funding from its renewable energy scheme CARES to [two Edinburgh projects](#). Greener Leith and PEDAL are rejoicing in the loans which will make at least the planning of their projects feasible.

Making West Edinburgh a safer and cleaner place to live is the aim of a new community safety postcard being launched today. The postcard highlights the successful work of the West Community Safety Forum and how members of the public can raise issues of concern.

Achievements in recent months have included regular joint Police and Council patrols to deal with broken glass and dog fouling close to the play area at Clermiston Park, engaging with young people by liaising with schools, and working with parents to respond when antisocial behaviour is identified.

Other initiatives have included raising awareness of and stopping dangerous parking around schools so it is safer for

children to cross roads, and speaking to speeding cyclists in Roseburn Park.

There is a housing debate this morning in Holyrood when three Edinburgh MSPs, Malcolm Chisholm, Marco Biagi and Colin Keir are among those who are taking part. The motion proposed by Keith Brown reads as follows:-

That the Parliament recognises the difficulties that the current economic climate presents for those in need of affordable housing; believes, in light of the severe constraints on public expenditure, that this challenge can be addressed only through the development of innovative and creative measures to provide a range of high-quality sustainable homes that people can afford and that meet their needs; notes with approval initiatives such as the National Housing Trust and the Investment and Innovation Fund; welcomes the willingness of local authorities, registered social landlords and developers to participate in these initiatives, and congratulates them on working together innovatively to deliver the maximum number of affordable homes in these testing circumstances.

There are a couple of amendments to that motion including one tabled by Alex Johnstone MSP as follows:-

“is concerned that housebuilding in Scotland has slumped to its lowest level in almost 30 years while the number of house sales is 10% lower than last year; is further concerned that, against this background, the Scottish Government has chosen to cut spending in housing and regeneration by 30%, with a 40% cut in the Supporting Economic Growth/Housing Supply budget line, and therefore calls on the Scottish Government to take action to free up the planning system to boost the construction industry and to scrap home reports to boost house sales.”

And at the other end of the housing scale [The Herald](#) has told us that there will be a sale at Lyon and Turnbull next month of the contents of a stately home in London once the property of the Forbes family, the publishing dynasty.