

Five things you need to know today



Today's news:-

Edinburgh's Christmas

Occupy Edinburgh

JKRowling at the Leveson Inquiry

Stop the Chop

A little mention of The Edinburgh Reporter

The Reporter was among the 10,000 who gathered on The Mound last night to see the Christmas Tree lights switched on by a 14 metre high Snow Queen. There are a [few more photos here](#) along with a little video clip. We had been invited to ascend the many steps of the Walter Scott Monument to take photographs from there, but declined that option in favour of the close ups that we managed to snap. Unfortunately the weather got too windy for the fireworks to be let off safely so that aspect of the event was curtailed.

From warming Gluhwein to fairground rides, there is something for everyone, young and old. The classic favourites in the form of Edinburgh's Ice Rink, the Edinburgh Wheel, the traditional German Christmas Market and the Highland Village Market are all back this year, as is the traditional Nativity Carol Concert in St Andrew Square Garden at 4 pm on 27th November.

A highlight of the programme will be the St Andrew's Day

celebrations, part of Scotland's Winter Festivals, on Saturday 26th and Sunday 27th November. The events will take place on the Castle Esplanade, with ice sculptors creating magical sub-zero masterpieces – on display until the ice melts! From 6.30 pm on Sunday, the Esplanade will burst into life with fire animation, the glow of lanterns created by local schoolchildren, pipers, visually stunning film projection and a jaw-dropping fireworks display.

As ever, Santa Claus himself will be present and visiting East Princes Street Gardens daily to collect children's letters from his postbox. His official arrival will see him travel along Princes Street in a sleigh pulled by live reindeer on Saturday 3rd December at 4 pm, and the Santa Express will feature on the newly pedestrianised Princes Street. In addition, many hundreds of fundraising Santas will run, walk or stroll around West Princes Street Gardens to take part in the Great Edinburgh Santa Run on Sunday 11th December at 11 am. We also have a little extra video that we have processed this morning here...

The crowd then moved to St Andrew Square for more revelling, but were warned that there was only room for 4,000 spectators in the square due to the Occupy Edinburgh camp which has now been there for just a day more than 40 days and 40 nights.

Some representatives from Occupy Edinburgh made a deputation to the council meeting yesterday to speak to the Green Party's motion to endorse the protest, which was approved by the council in a slightly amended form.

The motion tabled read as follows:-

1. Motion by Councillor Chapman – Support for ‘Occupy Edinburgh’ “Council: Notes that the encampment of citizens in St Andrew Square, ‘Occupy Edinburgh’, represents one part of a growing, global movement for real democracy, authentic global equality and justice, and a sustainable economic and ecological future; Notes that this occupation, together with the more than thousands of others worldwide, is not simply a protest, but an effort to bring to life the inclusive, equitable and sustainable systems desired; Notes that this movement, and its participants in Edinburgh, have significant support in the wider population;

Believes that it is unacceptable that bailouts for the rich minority who caused the current economic crisis are being paid for with the loss of priceless public services, and this must never be allowed to happen again;

Believes that an economy built on perpetual consumption needlessly depletes our planet’s resources, and causes irreversible environmental damage, and must end now;

Believes that these demands are not only fair, but are in fact the only reasonable response in the face of the crisis faced by our current economic system, our communities and our planet;

Believes that, by setting an example, Edinburgh can help our national governments, and the wider world, finally to accept the real and fundamental changes that are so desperately needed to salvage a sustainable future;

Thus supports the values of Occupy Edinburgh;

Supports the participants of the St Andrew Square occupation in demanding that these values be recognised and acted upon

by all governmental bodies in the UK, and worldwide;

Commits to return our democracy to the people, and to work together immediately to create a new, sustainable and equitable Scotland."

You can read the final version of the motion and a little [more about this story on STV Local.](#)

Edinburgh-based author J K Rowling gave evidence at the Leveson Inquiry yesterday as reported in [The Guardian](#). She recounted that one journalist had put a note into her five year-old daughter's schoolbag to try and get her attention. She said [in her written statement](#) that the fact that her daughter's space was being invaded made her furious.

[We reported to you yesterday](#) that the petition to stop the trees at Canonmills being felled had been handed into Holyrood. This morning it appears that this may have little effect on the council, who seem set to remove the 9 trees in question.

This is the content of an email to the campaign group from the City Council:-

Subject: WATER OF LEITH FLOOD PREVENTION SCHEME – TREE REMOVAL

Date: Wed, 23 Nov 2011 11:24:24 +0000

From: Dave.Anderson@edinburgh.gov.uk

To:

Thank you for your email addressed to the Chief Executive. This has been passed to me for response.

The cutting down of 11 sycamore and willow trees on the east side of the Water of Leith between Canonmills and Tanfield has been suspended by the Council's Head of Transport, pending confirmation that all necessary planning conditions have been conformed with by the contactor (Lagan Construction) and Flood Scheme Designer (Arup).

The Council has carried out a detailed environmental assessment for the Flood Scheme and arrangements are being supervised by responsible Environmental Clerks of Works employed by the contractor and the designer.

The removal of the trees in question is integral to the current Flood Scheme design.

Tree removal will be consistent with the extent of the engineering operations taking place. A detailed landscape plan for the location is currently being assessed which will include a replanting schedule. Replanting will involve extra-heavy standard trees (girth 18 – 20 centimetres). The trees proposed are alder and ash, native species suitable for the location.

Dave Anderson

Director of City Development

And The Reporter was delighted to be mentioned in [an article by well-known journalist Iain M Hepburn](#) writing in The Drum yesterday. How lovely to be noticed, and we quite like being called news mavericks!

We invite your comments on this and every article in The Reporter. [Please get in touch](#) if we miss anything that you think we should be writing about. We cannot cover everything but we do try!