

Five things you need to know today



In the news today:-

PandaNews

Portobello & Leith Community Wind Energy Project

Fire in Cramond

Santa Run

Policy & Strategy Committee

Panda Express is due to arrive at Edinburgh Airport today around lunchtime. The pandas are to be whisked into Edinburgh Zoo under police escort, and will then have around two weeks to acclimatise before they are shown to the Edinburgh public. Tian Tian and Yang Guang will no doubt be a little tired, having travelled 5,000 miles from China.

German grower Reiner Winkendick is set to provide 85% of the animals' bamboo requirement for the initial phase of the ten-year period that the pandas will reside at the zoo. The supply will be grown in bamboo plantations at a nursery on the outskirts of Amsterdam.

The other 15% will be grown at special sites around the zoo itself, allowing members of the public to see for themselves the delicate process involved in cultivating a plant that contributes almost exclusively to the giant pandas' diet. After the first three years of the project, the zoo's home grown supply will be gradually increased.

Between them, Tian Tian and Yang Guang, are expected to chomp

their way through nearly 18,000 kg of bamboo every year, or around 20 three-metre stems each day. And, over the course of a year, the giant pandas will be tempted with at least 25 different species of the plant, to encourage a variety in their diet which replicates their natural environment in the mountain ranges of central China.

The pandas' rather exacting dietary requirements have presented a horticultural challenge for gardening experts at the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS).

Good news for the [Portobello & Leith Community Wind Energy Project](#). They have won funding from Energyshare by a very narrow margin of only 50 votes.

Earlier this week an historic building in Cramond was damaged by fire.

Around 35 firefighters from Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service were called to battle the fire at the Grade 1 listed building Cramond Tower in the early hours of Thursday morning.

The alarm was raised to a report of a house alight at 1.40am at Cramond Tower in Cramond Glebe Road.

Firefighters discovered a fire in the roof space of the four-storey building, which dates back to the 15th century.

Six firefighters in breathing apparatus used a line of hose, high-pressure hose reel and a short extension ladder to fight the fire.

The fire was extinguished shortly before 4am but fire crews remained on site until shortly before 8am to strip back the damage and carry out salvage work.

The fire investigation team is investigating the cause of the blaze.

No one was injured during the fire and the damage to the property is still to be assessed.

Next Sunday we hope to be warming up for the [Santa Run](#) in Princes Street Gardens. Will you be taking part? Send us photos if you do!

And this week at the City Chambers the [Policy and Strategy Committee](#) meets on Tuesday morning. One of the most exciting things on any agenda for a while are the plans the council has to develop and modernise the Central Library. We await the discussions with interest!