

# Five things you need to know today

☒ In the news today:

**Operation Accessible Update**

**Council Leader responds to Scottish Government's Draft Budget**

**MSPs Expenses**

**Edinburgh's Christmas Open for business as usual Friday 8 December**

**Hurricane\*\*!!\*\***

Lothian and Borders Police have this morning targeted suspected drug dealers in Edinburgh as part of **Operation Accessible**. Several addresses in the west of the Capital were raided, and seven people have been arrested in connection with drugs offences.

This morning's activity represents the final phase of enforcement activity under Operation Accessible, which has primarily focused on housebreakers operating in the city.

So far, a total of 38 people have been arrested in connection with the operation. A total of 14 people are expected to appear at Edinburgh Sheriff Court today following a series of raids that took place in the north and west of the Capital yesterday morning.

Almost £4,500 worth of drugs have been seized by officers during Operation Accessible.

**Chief Superintendent Gill Imery**, A Division (City of Edinburgh) Commander, said:- "There is no doubt that Operation

Accessible has sent a strong message that Lothian and Borders Police will take positive action against suspected criminals whose activities blight our communities.

This morning's activity has targeted those suspected of drug dealing, and indicates our commitment to tackling the scourge of drugs in local communities.

We are continually focusing our efforts on targeting those involved in drug dealing and other criminality, using an intelligence-led approach. We rely on information from the public in order to identify drug dealers in our local communities, and we promise to act upon that information."

**Alan Boyter**, Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development, NHS Lothian said:- "We are proud to work in partnership with Lothian and Borders Police as we are both here for the same reason, to protect and care for the public.

"Our services are on-hand to ensure people who have been affected by the operation get the healthcare support and advice they need. Anyone who needs help should contact their GP or local drug and alcohol agency as soon as possible."

Anyone with any information about drug dealers and other criminals operating in their community should contact Lothian and Borders Police on 0131 311 3131, or anonymously through Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

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The Scottish Government announced their draft budget plans yesterday. Council Leader, Councillor Jenny Dawe, said:- "We welcome the additional £21.992m for Edinburgh [announced in the Scottish Government's draft budget today](#). This will help us in achieving the savings that the Council is still required to find.

"The situation remains challenging. Despite this Council

making a record £90million savings over the last three years and ensuring that all departments deliver on budget, we now need to work out the savings we need to make. We will, however, continue to do all that we can in caring for our increasing numbers of elderly and vulnerable residents and continue to provide the excellent public services that residents expect and value.”

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All of our MSPs publish their claims to expenses, and have done so for much longer than their Westminster colleagues. So this information is in the public domain, but it still seems unbelievable that their claims total £32,000 per day, according to [The Scotsman](#). What is not so unbelievable is that Independent MSP Margo MacDonald has only claimed less than £3,000 in total. MacDonald is our only Independent MSP, so perhaps it is a pity there are not more of them?

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All Edinburgh's Christmas attractions will be open for business as usual from 10am this morning.

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The storm has passed over. But it is at times like this that [social meeja](#) comes into its own. No sooner had the storm been forecast till Scotland's Twitterati had coined one of its best phrases ever...and suddenly a new [Wikipedia page](#) had sprung up...