

Five things you need to know today



In the news today:

New convenience stores in the city centre

Hillend Makeover

Splashback answer back

Portobello Wind turbine

Village axe tree in cost cutting measure

Good news for city centre residents as The Co-operative has announced it is investing £1million fitting out two new food stores due to open in Edinburgh today.

The new convenience stores will open in the heart of the city at 26-28 Frederick Street, and nearby at 8 McDonald Road.

The Frederick Street store will create 20 jobs, and offer shoppers a 1,800 sq ft store, while the McDonald Road outlet will create 15 new jobs, and will provide a 2,500 sq ft store.

As well as providing shoppers with convenient stores to quickly pick up groceries and day-to-day items, both stores will feature state-of-the-art fixtures and fittings, eco-refrigeration, and energy efficient lighting. The investment will also see in-store bakeries introduced into both, new kiosks, internal and external signage, and external decoration.

John McNeill, The Co-operative Food's Regional Operations Director in Scotland, said: "We are always looking to grow our business and we're delighted to open two new stores in one day

in Edinburgh. The new stores will complement our existing store network serving local communities. They will be valuable additions to our portfolio, and mark another important step in our ambitious plans to expand.

“We’re looking forward to opening stores that will provide ideal locations for shoppers to pick up high quality groceries locally.”

The Co-operative has been using INGEUS to help fill the vacant positions, INGEUS is a business that helps support people who have been unemployed for a long period of time to get back into the workplace.

Students from the choir at Broughton High School will perform a ribbon-cutting ceremony to open the McDonald Road store, and get shoppers in the festive spirit with some carols, while children from Abbeyhill Primary School will cut the ribbon to open the Frederick Street store.

Hillend Ski Centre has spawned some of our best skiing talent over the years. It has had some financial difficulties in recent times but now it is to get a makeover costing about £500,000 as reported in [The Herald](#).

Splashback is the group set up to campaign to keep Leith Waterworld open. They have [written a piece here on STV Local](#) giving their response to Councillor Thomas who has defended the council’s decision to close the facility.

Community groups in Portobello and Leith have been celebrating all month so far as their renewable energy project won the public vote in the [Energyshare.com](#) contest. The project, a collaboration between neighbouring community groups Pedal –

Portobello Transition Town and Greener Leith, aims to build a community-owned wind turbine on the Seafield Waste Water Treatment Site in Edinburgh.

The project won the online Energyshare.com vote, beating off competition from nearly 1,000 other community renewables projects from around the UK. The prize is funding to complete feasibility work on the wind turbine, which is expected to go to planning permission during 2012. The Energyshare.com contest is a collaboration between River Cottage and British Gas which awards a total of £500,000 to community renewables projects on the basis of online votes.

Eva Schonveld, Chair of PEDAL – Portobello Transition Town said, “We’re delighted to have won so much support for the project, and would like to thank everyone who took the time to vote for us. The funding is very welcome and will allow us to complete the final stage of feasibility work but just as valuable is the massive support from local people that this vote represents.”

Charlotte Encombe, Chair of Greener Leith said, “A big thank you to everyone who voted online, tweeted, face booked, blogged and badgered their friends and colleagues to support the project. We’re delighted to be the most popular project in the Energyshare.com contest, but the turbine is not built yet. We still have a number of hurdles to overcome, but this vote gives a clear message that the project has widespread support, for which we are extremely grateful.”

Whatever we think of The City of Edinburgh Council and their budget proposals, at least we still have a Christmas Tree...We were interested to read in PDP’s [Freedom of Information](#) the story of drastic cuts in public spending in Sufflok – including the axing of the Christmas Tree...

Christmas Tree axed due to 'unbearable burden' of FOI

A Parish Council has doubled its tax demand, cancelled meetings and axed the village Christmas tree after facing a flurry of FOI requests.

Walberswick Parish Council, in Suffolk, said it had been forced into drastic savings because of the "unbearable burden" of FOI requests. Since May 2010, the Council has been asked a succession of questions, relating to a planning application for a housing development and the running of the parish, by a small group of villagers thought to be made up of four households.