

Five things you need to know today



Scottish Parliament to discuss Cycling – Assault and Attempted Robbery in the City Centre – Hustings – Hyperlocal Media Funding – Panda News

Alison Johnstone Green MSP for Lothians has filed a motion on cycling which will be discussed this morning at Holyrood. The motion reads as follows:-

*“*S4M-02522 Alison Johnstone: Cycling–That the Parliament welcomes the growing number of cyclists in Scotland and the 12% drop in cycling accident casualties between 2000 and 2010; believes that investing far more in infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians will boost jobs, reduce business costs, cut congestion and climate-changing pollution and improve Scotland’s health by improving air quality and reducing obesity; recognises the central importance of cycling safety and the perception of safety on the road to encouraging more people to cycle; considers that active travel is a cross-cutting priority for central and local government and that active travel champions should be represented on relevant transport and land-use forums, and calls on the Scottish Government to place active travel at the heart of the planning system, to work with local authorities to implement a rolling programme to upgrade infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists as part of every road improvement, to expand the use of 20 mph zones in residential and shopping streets, to consider reviewing all urban speed limits and simplifying the Traffic Regulation*

Orders process, to provide the necessary support to ensure that all road users have access to increased cycling safety training and to work with local authorities to ensure that every child in Scotland has the opportunity to undertake on-road cycle training by 2015."

Lothian and Borders Police are appealing for witnesses following an assault and attempted robbery in Edinburgh city-centre.

The incident happened around 4.20pm yesterday (Tuesday) in South Charlotte Street.

A 25-year-old man had just withdrawn money from the RBS cash machine in the west end of Princess Street before walking east and turning onto South Charlotte Street.

As he crossed the junction with Hope Street Lane, a man approached and grabbed him from behind before demanding he hand over his possessions.

A struggled ensued during which time the suspect tried to grab the victim's laptop bag. However, members of the public intervened and the man made-off empty-handed.

Police are now urging anyone who can assist with their enquiries to come forward.

The suspect is described as white, between 18 and 30-years-old, 5ft 7ins – 5ft 10ins tall with a slim build, short dark ginger hair and a pockmarked or scarred face. He was wearing a navy blue hooded top and black jeans and spoke with a Scottish accent.

A police spokesman said: "Fortunately the victim was not injured during this incident, nor was he robbed of any of his possessions.

"Nevertheless, we are eager to speak to anyone who can assist

us in tracing the man responsible.

“Anyone who was in or around South Charlotte Street at around 4.20pm yesterday and remembers seeing anything suspicious is asked to contact police immediately.”

Anyone with any information can contact Lothian and Borders Police on 0131 311 3131, or the charity Crimestoppers in confidence and complete anonymity on 0800 555 111.

Yesterday's hustings at Age Scotland are captured by the charity on their blog [here](#). We were trying out live video and there are some of our clips included. Unfortunately the sound in some of the later clips was not so good. We are working on that! But our latest video which you can see on the right hand side of the page here is of the Shadow Business Secretary opening a new post office in Bruntsfield yesterday. We are quite proud of that one and the sound worked!

Tonight the important hustings are on George IV Bridge and are run by Spokes. You can [get details on our notice board](#) which you will find here. If you know of any others feel free to add in the details!

The most exciting news as far as we are concerned today is the announcement that [Creative Scotland and Nesta have announced the possibility of funding for hyperlocal media](#). (That's us!) The article [here](#) explains more, but safe to say we are very excited about the prospect. We will keep you informed about our application. A couple of things that you could do to help us is tell five friends today about The Edinburgh Reporter, tweet about us and also subscribe on the right hand side of the page for your free daily updates about our news.

The pandas might be ready to mate as early as next week Edinburgh Zoo tells us. We have been invited along this afternoon to have a look at them in their separate enclosures but it is hoped that next Tuesday and Wednesday the pandas might be introduced to one another, with the hope of panda babies. If you have tickets for seeing the pandas on those days then you might have to rebook as there is only a 36 hour window when successful mating, or alternatively artificial insemination, might take place.

If visitors would like to rebook or be refunded, they should email visitorservices@rzss.org.uk, quoting their name, booking reference number, date they purchased the tickets and a contact telephone number (please note it may take a couple of days to process the refund).