

Five things you need to know today

✘ **Cycling Safety Week – Edinburgh International Film Festival – *somewhereto* at The Mound on Thursday – Alastair Darling MP – Remploy**

In cycling Safety week the council are putting on a Bike Breakfast with Spokes this morning from 8 am at the City Chambers. Later on there are bike related events in Festival Square from 11. There is a [Drive Safe Cycle Safe](#) event to mark [National Bike Week](#), in the square from 11am to 2pm.

Organisations from across Edinburgh will gather there to provide tips and advice to road users on the dangers of large vehicles and blind spots.

A practical demonstration will also be staged – blind spots will be marked on the ground around a large vehicle and cyclists encouraged to swap places with the driver to understand his limited visibility.

Cycling safety videos and campaign messages will also be shown on the Big Screen.

The Edinburgh International Film Festival starts today. The opening night film is to be Killer Joe, and [our preview is here...](#) The Edinburgh Reporter went to watch The French Connection at the Filmhouse last night when director of both films, William Friedkin (and director of The Exorcist!) was available for a Q & A afterwards. Basically he said that none of the cast of The French Connection were his choice but the Movie Gods must have been watching over him as it all fell into place. (rather well we thought – the car chase is one of the best)

And then there will be the closing night offering which everyone in The Scottish Government is certainly very excited about:- Brave made by Disney Pixar. [PR Newswire](#) reports that VisitScotland has just launched its biggest ever global marketing campaign, working alongside Disney-Pixar and their much-anticipated epic action adventure “Brave” to reach millions of potential visitors across the world.

You can watch the [Visit Scotland video here](#). More information about the Film Festival [on their website](#).

Some news from somewhereto about something happening in Edinburgh tomorrow... 'More than six-thousand young people have found a space to do the things they love, at [somewhereto.com](#). And now, it's your turn, Edinburgh!

Show up and show off your skills to win the chance to perform at a very famous, secret location, this summer. One winning act will also be flown to Brazil, to appear in a short film, directed by BAFTA winner Adam Deacon. The Show Off Stage will be at the Mound Precinct in Edinburgh this Thursday, 21 June from midday, where you can perform live for a chance to win. Or, go to [www.somewhereto.com/showoff](#)'

They have sent us the link to their Promo Trail featuring BAFTA award winning actor and director Adam Deacon:-

Young people can EITHER show up on the day and show off their talent on stage for the competition, OR they can submit a 60 second clip of them performing their talent online at [somewhereto.com/showoff](#).

Alistair Darling has been accused of utter hypocrisy after calling for greater capital investment, despite having personally cut Scotland's capital budget by 36% when he was chancellor, according to the SNP.

Speaking on Good Morning Scotland this morning, the former Chancellor conceded that “it would be far better, if you're going to borrow, to borrow to stimulate the economy” and that increasing capital investment is “precisely what you ought to be doing at a time like this”.

As well as conceding that the lack of growth in the UK economy was leading to higher levels of borrowing, Alistair Darling also accepted that “you either have massive borrowing and growing debts because of recession or you use that money actually to get growth going again, you generate the revenues and you know that is how you get out of this”.

Commenting in reaction to Alistair Darling’s interview, SNP MSP Gordon MacDonald – a member of the Infrastructure Committee and whose Edinburgh Pentlands constituency matches Alistair Darling’s Westminster constituency, said:-
“Alistair Darling has either had a ‘road to Damascus’ moment – and now accepts that the SNP were right all along – or he is guilty of utter hypocrisy of the worst kind.

“If he believes that infrastructure spending is the best way to get the economy growing, why on earth did he cut capital funding when he was Chancellor?

“This is the man who planned cuts that were, in his own words, ‘deeper and tougher’ than those of Margaret Thatcher. For Alistair Darling to now back borrowing to fund greater capital spending totally undermines his credibility on the economy.

“This is exactly the sort of dither and delay that Mervyn King was referring to, when he said that failure to act quicker on the banks greatly exacerbated the financial crisis and cost over a million jobs in Britain.

“Alistair Darling is supposed to be heading up the anti-independence campaign, but he has far more questions to answer about his own track record on the economy than that of anyone else.”

In 2009 Iain Gray gave his support to Scottish Government calls for £350 million of capital spending to be accelerated in order to provide a much needed boost to Scotland’s economy. This request was snubbed by Alistair Darling, publicly humiliating Iain Gray, and hindering Scotland’s economic recovery. Referring to this, Mr MacDonald added:

“There is quite clearly a severe issue of trust here. Alistair Darling not only savaged Scotland’s capital budget but also snubbed a request for funding to get our economy moving again that had been backed by his party colleague Iain Gray.

“Actions speak louder than words, and whether it is Alistair Darling or George Osborne, it is clear the interests of Scotland’s economy are far better represented by Scotland’s

Parliament.”

Mark Lazarowicz MP for Edinburgh North and Leith has today called on the UK Government to restart its mismanaged consultation on the future of 54 Remploy factories, including the one in Edinburgh at South Gyle, which under current plans is due to close in the autumn.

The call comes ahead of this week's debate in the House of Commons in which Opposition MPs will be voting for the process to begin again. The UK Government is planning to close factories which provide vital work for disabled workers at a time when it will be difficult for many to find work with mainstream employers.

Mark said:-“The consultation on Remploy has been a shambles and it must be restarted. Here in Edinburgh there are well over 11,000 people looking for work but only 2,200 current vacancies yet Ministers think now is the right time to throw disabled workers out of a job. This government's treatment of the thousands of Remploy workers has been nothing short of a disgrace, not least the Secretary of State's comments that factory staff just sit around drinking coffee.

“The Government originally chose to place details of closures in the House of Commons Library until forced to make a statement directly to MPs. Now this last minute change to the tender process will make it practically impossible for a serious bidder to draw up completely new plans in just four weeks. Is the Government really interested in a future for these factories at all?”

The MP went on to explain that the Government's own review of Remploy concluded that factories should be given help to develop a business plan 2 years before support is fully withdrawn. However, the government radically altered the terms of its Remploy tender process on May 17, one month before the deadline, and with closure looming for 36 of the 54 factories

as early as this autumn.