

Five things you need to know today



Holyrood today – Planning applications – Libraries – Edinburgh company – Botanic virtual learning

Holyrood will be in recess from the end of this week till 21 October but before then there are another couple of days of business to get through. Among the motions laid before Holyrood today are the following by Edinburgh or Lothians MSPs:-

*S4M-04344 Marco Biagi: Caledonian Hotel Restoration—That the Parliament welcomes the restoration of The Caledonian, A Waldorf Astoria Hotel, which, it considers, reinforces Edinburgh’s position at the forefront of the luxury hotel market; celebrates the restoration of the former station clock, which has been re-sited in the new Peacock Alley in the hotel; considers that the tourism and hospitality sector is vital to the Scottish economy, and believes that The Caledonian, A Waldorf Astoria Hotel, will be a great success for Hilton Worldwide, Edinburgh and the Scottish tourism market.

*S4M-04345 Alison Johnstone: Land Action Scotland and Community Control— That the Parliament welcomes the launch of Land Action Scotland and commends its campaign to open up and diversify ownership of land in Scotland; understands that over 90,000 acres of the Isle of Bute and the Applecross peninsula are owned by two private companies controlled by 13 non-resident members; congratulates Land Action Scotland on its aim to open up the membership of these companies, which have charitable status, and enable the communities there to join these companies as members if and when they wish to, and looks

forward to its work being extended to many communities across Scotland.

And Portfolio Questions to be put before The Scottish Government at this afternoon include these from Edinburgh MSPs:-

Gordon MacDonald: To ask the Scottish Government how many homes affected by external sewer flooding are listed on Scottish Water's register of properties. (S40- 01341)

Colin Keir: To ask the Scottish Government what cultural exchanges it is pursuing with non-EU European nations. (S40-01352)

The list of planning applications [validated most recently by the council](#) includes an application by BUPA Care Services to erect a 64 bed nursing and residential care home in one of Edinburgh's most select streets, Barnton Avenue. Comments are due by 9 October on the application.

This is the second property that we are aware of which will be converted or built for this kind of use in the Barnton area. The other is a sheltered housing, residential complex of 9 apartments in the original building and 73 flats on the site of the former Barnton Hotel which McCarthy and Stone are to build now that they have been granted permission.

This week the council are celebrating libraries. Tonight Marianne Wheelaghan, the author of '[The blue suitcase](#)' will be at [Stockbridge Library](#) at 7pm and [Ratho Library](#) on Thursday 4 October from 6.30 to talk about her remarkable novel. Lots of other events at libraries across the city and you can find out more on the Libraries blog [Tales of One City](#).

An Edinburgh University spin out company is reported on the [BBC website](#) as making a major breakthrough in combatting poor reception on your smart phone. They have developed what they call the 'world's smallest smart antenna'.

And the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh have set up a virtual learning centre online which has to have the best name possible. It is called [PropaGate Learning.](#) They are offering horticulture courses. Of course.