

Five things you need to know today



Trams Trams Trams – Blondie & Kenny Rogers – Sunday Post closing Edinburgh office – Bogus callers -Labour MP worried about benefit cuts

The Reporter is off to catch a tram this morning in the company of the Transport Secretary, Keith Brown and the council's Transport Convener, Lesley Hinds, and is looking forward to telling you all about it when she gets back! The overhead power lines between the Gogar depot and the airport are now live and hopefully a wee hurl on the tram will be on offer....

Both Blondie and Kenny Rogers are playing The Usher Hall next year and [tickets go on sale here](#) at 9:00am. So you may have to be quick!

Lothian and Borders Police are appealing for information following two bogus workmen incidents in Edinburgh on Monday.

A group of men called at an address in Campbell Park Crescent about 2.30pm and told the elderly resident that they were there to carry out an inspection of work they had done on the roof some time ago. After carrying out two inspections, and claiming further work would have to be done, they made off after the man handed over around £1500.

Then, around 4:00pm, two men called at an address in Caiystane Terrace claiming to have spotted a loose roof tile, and offering to go into her loft to inspect it. After examining

the loft they claimed the repair would cost £900. The homeowner queried this cost, and immediately became suspicious as they claimed she would have to go to the bank to get the money immediately. They left when she said she would call the police.

Inquiries are ongoing into both incidents, and police believe they may be linked as the descriptions of the men involved are similar.

The first man is white, 40-50-years-old, squat build and was wearing a woollen hat/dark baseball cap, blue heavy duty jacket and said his name was Mr Stewart.

The other two men are both described as being white, in their early 20s, 5ft 7ins tall. One of them was wearing a white jacket, the other was wearing a dark waterproof jacket.

Detective Sergeant Ben Leathes said: "These men have preyed upon elderly homeowners in both incidents, and in the first case taken a significant amount of money from the homeowner.

"Door to door inquiries have been carried out in the local area, and CCTV opportunities are being explored.

"We would remind people to always ask for formal identification from any cold callers, and to follow it up with a phone call to their workplace – genuine workers will be happy to provide their details, and this is often enough to deter bogus workmen.

"We are appealing for anyone who may have also been approached by these men yesterday, or who may recognise the description of the men involved, to contact us on 0131 311 3131. We would also be keen to hear from anyone who was aware of people acting suspiciously, or saw a suspicious vehicle in the areas involved.

"Anyone seeking further information or advice on how to deal

with cold callers should contact us and ask to speak to their local crime prevention officer, or check the personal safety section of our website (www.lbp.police.uk).”

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

It appears that The Sunday Post is to close its Edinburgh office which might have opened here as long ago as the 1920s. The newspaper will continue to have an office in Glasgow working on news analysis [according to AllMediaScotland](#).

Over 5,000 working families in Edinburgh North and Leith are being squeezed between rising prices and cuts in Government support according to local Labour MP, Mark Lazarowicz, who claims that over 5,000 working families in Edinburgh North and Leith will be hit by the Chancellor’s decision to increase working age benefits by only 1% for the next three years – equivalent to a cut in real terms.

That’s because the latest inflation figures out this week show it remains above the Government’s target of 2% as it has been every month since December 2009 and according to independent forecasts commissioned by the Government it is likely to stay there as far ahead as 2018.

Mark Lazarowicz said:-“In his Autumn Statement the Chancellor tried to pit hard working families against those who have opted for a life on benefits. The reality is very different. Help for working families such as maternity pay and working tax credits will not keep pace with inflation. At the same time they are being squeezed by rocketing fuel bills, rising housing costs and high food prices. The Chancellor’s priority should have been to support them, not a tax cut for

people earning over £150,000 a year.

The inflation figures for November show CPI at 2.7% and the forecast by the Office for Budget Responsibility – whose work the Chancellor referred to throughout his Autumn Statement – show it failing to fall below 2% before at least 2018 – 19. The Government has said that it wants to make sure it always pays to work but basic working tax credits which aim to make up for any loss of income as people move off benefits into work will be frozen next year – 2013-14. They will rise by 1% in the two years after that but that's half the rate of inflation forecast by the OBR in 2014-15 and 2015-16.

Of course, it is still better if people are in work but many families on low income depend on working tax credits to help meet basic bills.”