

Five things you need to know today



Leith Waterworld – Edinburgh Outdoors -Forestry Commission here to stay – Terence Stamp – Edinburgh Fringe

[Yesterday at the council meeting](#) the council decided to throw the campaign group Splashback a lifeline. They now have eleven months to make a go of running Leith Waterworld as a community enterprise.

This feasibility phase will establish whether the facility can be operated within the parameters of a finalised business plan.

The continuation of the bid beyond this phase is dependent on the community group securing the necessary capital funding to invest in the facility and, further, on their business plan meeting with the approval of an independent third party.

The council will release a maximum of £100,000 to help fund the feasibility study and a dedicated Councillor/ Officer Working-Group will be set up to support Splashback in developing their bid.

A report on the results of the study will be considered by councillors once the development phase ends, following which a decision on the facility's future will be taken.

Councillor Richard Lewis, Culture and Leisure Convener, said: "I want to acknowledge the considerable time and effort that Splashback have committed to their bid thus far.

"While there remains a tremendous amount of work to be done in the months ahead, we want to give the community the best possible chance of success by providing the necessary funding

and support toward taking their proposals to the next phase.

“We owe it to the people of Edinburgh to do everything we can to preserve this valuable community asset.”



Splashback campaigners with Leith councillors after the council vote

Today the council staff are out and about in the parks tweeting to let you know what is happening out there. This is all part of the launch of the new website and app called Edinburgh Outdoors.

Staff from across the Council will be tweeting and uploading photos to the website with comments about what they are doing while they go about their normal work in the city's parks and greenspaces. Follow [@EdinOutdoors](#) for the latest.

Using the hashtag [#edinparks](#), people can join the conversation on Twitter and get out and about in parks to add what they are doing both on Friday and over the weekend.

The UK Government has published details of its forestry and woodland policy in response to the report from the Independent Panel on Forestry.

A new, independent public body will hold in trust the nation's publicly-owned forests for future generations. Alongside the continuing work of the Forestry Commission, this new body will own, maintain and safeguard our forests on behalf of the public.

Last July the Government confirmed that the Public Forest Estate in England will remain in public ownership after the Liberal Democrats' campaign. This followed on from a similar successful campaign in Scotland in 2008/9.

Up to 100 jobs at the Forestry Commission's Edinburgh offices were threatened by the plans to privatise the Public Forest Estate.

Commenting, Edinburgh's Liberal Democrat MP, Mike Crockart, whose constituency is home to the Forestry Commission's HQ at Corstorphine said:

"Today's statement reaffirms the Government's commitment to keep the forest estate in public ownership for future generations to enjoy.

"The Minister has acknowledged the potential that our forests have to create jobs and growth and I welcome the news that the forestry industry is working on an action plan to ensure that potential is unlocked.

"The Government has increased the Forestry Commission's budget by £3.5m next year specifically to make up for lost income from sales of woodland. A further £2m has been allocated in recognition of the importance of implementing the commitments made by the Minister today as well as to address the pressures arising from the Chalara dieback of ash outbreak.

"£0.5 million of additional Forestry Commission funding and up

to £4 million additional funding from research councils is also available for specialists to carry out in-depth research into tree diseases.

“Whilst the future shape of the Forestry Commission is still to be considered by Defra following the recommendations of the Independent Panel on Forestry’s report I am confident that the Government’s commitment to our forests and the extra funding in place will secure the future of the Forestry Commission’s Corstorphine base.

“There is a huge amount of talent, expertise and experience within the Forestry Commission’s Edinburgh team and I will continue to push Ministers to ensure that these skilled individuals are central to the future of the Commission ensuring the security of Edinburgh based roles now and for the future.”

Next Thursday is a date for your diary. Terence Stamp, will be doing a Q & A at the Cameo after a showing of the new film Song for Marion. Stamp was chosen by Empire magazine as number 59 in the top 100 sexiest stars of film history. [Book here!](#)

The Edinburgh Fringe programme is not launched until the end of May, but there are tickets on sale already. And you might design the next Fringe Poster... This from the Edinburgh Fringe Festival website..

The search is on for the next Fringe Poster

If you’re an art teacher or know any talented young artists in Scotland, the Fringe needs you! Find all the details of

our Schools Poster Competition and download an entry pack and free learning resources [here](#).