

Five things you need to know today

✖ **Party flats – The Ladyboys and the Meadows – Dr Livingstone – Today's Fairtrade event – Today at the Filmhouse**

Today the [planning committee](#) will be considering ways of using the planning system to put a stop to the nuisance of so-called party flats, properties let for short term rentals often over a weekend to large groups.

Lothians MSP, Sarah Boyack, who has campaigned for some action on this matter, has written on her [blog here](#) about the problem and what the council might do about it.

The Council report states:-“Legal advice has been received on the issue of short stay commercial leisure apartments ('party flats'). Appropriate text will be added to the published version of the recently approved Guidance for Businesses to allow the planning authority to deal with the issue in cases where a material change of use has occurred. ” In other words, these properties might need specific planning permission which might or might not be granted in each specific case.

Ms Boyack has now [written a letter to the Council](#) seeking clarification on a number of issues in relation to the criteria against which applications will be judged, and whether the proposals could be applied retrospectively so that existing party flat operators could be asked to apply for planning permission.

Local MP Sheila Gilmore has written a letter of objection to the council about any proposal to continue to allow the Ladyboys of Bangkok to stage a show there during the Festival. You can read what she has said here:-

[Lady Boys of Bangkok comments](#) by

Dr Livingstone, I Presume?

The exhibition runs from 23 November – 7 April 2013 in the Exhibition Gallery 2, Level 3 at National Museum of Scotland. Entry is free.

Discover the story of Scottish missionary and explorer David Livingstone through new research, the Museum's African collections and Livingstone's personal possessions. Learn of Livingstone's early home life in Blantyre, Scotland; his studies in medicine and divinity; how he became the first European to cross the African continent; and his efforts to abolish the slave trade, share his Christian beliefs and develop legitimate trading relationships in the countries through which he travelled.

The exhibition draws on the partnership between National Museums Scotland and the National Museums of Malawi.

As part of this major exhibit there are two events in March which you would have to book now (tonight's talk with Neil Oliver at the museum has been sold out for some time!)

David Livingstone: Prophet or Patron Saint of Empire

15 March, 17:00 – 18:30

Cost: £6/£5 concessions and Members

This public lecture by Scotland's leading historian of empire, Professor John M. MacKenzie, will explore the roots of Livingstone's fame and examine the ways in which Livingstone's reputation was manipulated by others for their own ends.

Spotlight On: Dr Livingstone – Coming Home

21 March, 14:00 – 15:00

Free, book in advance

David Livingstone started life in a humble single tenement room in Blantyre. Karen Carruthers, Property Manager at the David Livingstone Centre, talks about the development of the site from Livingstone family home to museum and how the objects were collected for display there and in the exhibition *Dr Livingstone, I presume?*

Ethics and Environment Forum: Thursday 28 February, 11:30am – 12:30pm, Teviot Dining Room. Edinburgh University Students Association (EUSA) Ethics and Environment Forum.

Fair Trade Academic Network seminar: Thursday 28 February, 1pm – 2.30pm, Seminar rooms 1 and 2, Chrystal Macmillan Building. Come along and hear Dr Alastair Smith from the University of Cardiff give a talk on [‘Negotiating the meaning of fair trade: The case of Malawian rice in Scotland’](#). Hosted by Edinburgh University’s Fair Trade Academic Network.

Lincoln is showing twice today at [The Filmhouse](#). A film to see now that Daniel Day-Lewis has won the Oscar for best actor...? What do you think?