

Five things you need to know today

✘ Edinburgh MP comments on UK Budget – Cargo Networking – Festival on George Street – Johnston Press – Serious assault

Local MP, Mark Lazarowicz is backing a call by Usdaw, the shop workers union, for the Coalition Government to stop squeezing family incomes by continuing to cut the help they get through tax credits and other benefits.

Mark said:-“The Coalition Government’s austerity policies have hit ordinary families hard and meant that many are struggling to meet basic bills for heating their home, food or clothing.”

“A recent report by the Child Poverty Action Group found that in Forth ward 29% and in Leith 28% of children are growing up in poverty.

“Across the UK as a whole almost two-thirds of children in poverty has at least one person in their home who is employed. With over 5,000 families in Edinburgh set to lose out when the bedroom tax comes into force, household incomes are set to be squeezed even tighter. It’s time for the Coalition Government to stop cutting and start listening to hard pressed families.”

Most USDAW members work in retail so they may also have been affected by families tightening their belts and cutting back on spending which obviously hits local shops.

Some of them may also have felt the impact of changes to the rules on working tax credits introduced last April which increased the number of hours that parents must work to qualify for working tax credits at a time that many retailers were cutting back on employees’ hours rather than being in a position to increase them.

A networking event is taking place at Cargo this Friday. Contact tjoyce@cargoedinburgh.co.uk to confirm your place. Further details here:-



At yesterday's Transport Committee meeting, the council agreed to allow the Spiegel Tent and the Spiegel Terrace to be sited outside the Assembly Rooms as they were last year, [despite objections](#) from George Street traders and Essential Edinburgh. The objectors led deputations to the meeting to make their views known.

Johnston Press which owns The Edinburgh Evening News and The Scotsman has cut 1300 jobs from its workforce in response to a 12% reduction in turnover according to the [Press Gazette](#). Many of these jobs are of course not in Edinburgh, and the editor of the Whitby Gazette has been made redundant.

Police in Edinburgh are appealing for information following a serious assault in the early hours of Saturday 16 March 2013.

The incident happened at around 1.30am near to the Village Pub on South Fort Street.

A 35-year-old man was walking home with a friend when they noticed a male standing on South Fort Street, shouting at passers-by.

The victim turned onto Trafalgar Lane and a few seconds later the suspect assaulted him causing him to fall to the ground.

He was taken to the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh and treated for serious facial injuries.

The suspect is described as white, between 18 and 21-years-old, around 5ft 6ins tall with a stocky build and short brown hair. He was wearing a grey tracksuit top and grey bottoms.

Detective Constable Mark Seymour said: "This was a violent and unprovoked assault, which has left the victim badly injured.

"We would appeal to anyone who remembers seeing anything suspicious in South Fort Street on Saturday morning to contact police immediately.

"A woman in a pink dressing gown and another man are believed to have witnessed this attack and we would ask both of these individuals to come forward and assist with our enquiries.

"Similarly, anyone recognises the description of the suspect is also asked to get in touch."

Anyone with any information is asked to contact Lothian and Borders Police on 0131 311 3131 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.