

Five things you need to know today



Edinburgh Airport on the up – Penguins at the Central Library – Council report card – Pandas – Commander Hadfield

The total number of passengers using Edinburgh Airport rose last month by over 34,000, an increase of 4.4% compared to the same time last year.

Scotland's busiest airport continues its return to growth with a total of 801,576 people travelling through the airport in April.

International traffic saw the biggest jump with 433,753 passengers, up 10% from the previous year. However, domestic figures suffered slightly and dropped by 1.4% with a total of 367,823 people passing through the airport.

Gordon Dewar, Chief Executive of Edinburgh Airport, said:- "It's clear to see that April was a very busy month for Edinburgh Airport and we're delighted to see so many passengers travelling with us.

"April's passenger numbers are no doubt a result of the recent launch of easyJet's new European routes, as well as the new flights from Ryanair and the start of Virgin Atlantic's new Little Red service to Heathrow.

"We're on course for a bumper summer season with introduction of our new summer schedule, as well as the new Air Canada Rouge service to Toronto which will launch in July. This is hugely exciting and will help promote Edinburgh and Scotland to a new and exciting market."

Penguin Keepers Colin Oulton and Jo Elliott visit Edinburgh's Central Library this evening to give a centenary lecture on penguins. They talk about the rich history of penguins at Edinburgh Zoo, as well as penguin conservation and research. [Get your free ticket for this event](#)

We were out to see the penguins at Edinburgh Zoo recently to see their new enclosure called Penguins Rock, and we thought you might like to see the penguins at play:-

- The pool contains approx. 1,200m³ of water or 1.2 million litres of water
- This is enough 4,000 bathes, to flush a toilet 120,000 times or to fill $\frac{1}{2}$ an Olympic swimming pool.
- The main pool is 65 metre long main pool, which is 3.5 metres at its deepest point.



The present Labour/SNP council have now been in power for just over a year. They published their Coalition Pledges at the beginning of the year and have been brave enough to explain on their website what their progress is with each one.

The first is a pledge to ensure that every child has the best start in life. This has six separate parts to it, and you can read the council's report on each part by clicking the link. The council scores 50% in relation to these pledges. They say that they are on track with 3 out of 6 of the pledges, but more work needs done on the other three, including the provision of Portobello High School which has been stalled pending a Private Bill which has been presented to Holyrood. The bill is aimed at changing the law so that a new school can be built on Portobello Park.

[1. Increase support for vulnerable children, including help](#)

for families so that fewer go into care

2. Hold the maximum P1 class size at 25 and seek to reduce class sizes in line with Scottish Government recommendations

3. Rebuild Portobello High School and continue progress on all other planned school developments, while providing adequate investment in the fabric of all schools

4. Draw up a long-term strategic plan to tackle both over-crowding and under use in schools

5. Seek to ensure the smooth introduction of the Curriculum for Excellence and that management structures within our schools support the new curriculum

6. Establish city-wide childcare co-operatives for affordable childcare for working parents.



Today's photo is of Yang Guang the male panda in Edinburgh Zoo. If you can't get to the zoo then you can watch the Giant Pandas on the panda cam. [This is here on the Zoo's website.](#) Currently you can book [panda viewing slots](#) until 30 June. The zoo also releases some 'on the day' tickets each morning.

Commander Chris Hadfield has returned to Earth, landing in Kazakhstan early this morning, but not before giving his own solo concert from space, all apparently with the approval of David Bowie.... For anyone on Twitter, the photos and tweets that Chris Hadfield has sent us from space have all been wonderful, but this has to be the best use of social media yet...