

Five things you need to know today



Leith Waterworld – Canal college – Action on letting agents – 10 new commissions in Art Festival – Slow Food event in June

Leith Waterworld is in the news again. The family pool was closed last year and mothballed until something could be done with the building. A closing date for sale came and went. Then the council decided to allow the community group Splashback some time to try and reopen the pool and run it, albeit with some help and supervision from the council.

[It was reported earlier this week](#) that the council had received an unsolicited offer for the premises of £1m. Splashback put out a statement as to their position and now Councillor Richard Lewis has taken time to put forward the council's stance. [The minutes of the January council meeting](#) report the full wording of the council's agreement with the group who are determined to reopen the pool for everyone to use.

Councillor Richard Lewis, the city's Culture and Sport Convener, said:- "Over the last few months officials and elected members have been working closely with Splashback to progress the feasibility phase of their community bid to run Leith Waterworld. I'd like to thank Splashback for their continued commitment to developing their community bid.

"The council had agreed in January to re-market the property whilst we were supporting the feasibility phase of Splashback's bid and in the intervening months we received two new unsolicited notes of interest in purchasing Leith Waterworld, one of which is being taken to council for consideration."

canal college, the innovative, outdoors skills training programme for 16- 25 year olds who are not currently in education, employment or training, opens in Edinburgh during the first week of June.

Designed by the Scottish Waterways Trust to help address youth unemployment in Edinburgh, canal college offers young people the opportunity to gain work experience and a wide range of practical skills and awards through projects on the Union Canal.

The first programme in Edinburgh will be run in partnership with the Scottish Rural College (SRUC) with volunteer participants working towards two units in the SVQ Level 2 in Landscaping and Amenity Horticulture as well as the SQA Certificate of Work Readiness.

During the 18 week course, the volunteer mentors and participants will carry out a wide range of practical projects and work towards a number of additional awards and certificates.

Projects on the Union Canal and at SRUC's Oatridge Campus in Broxburn will include landscaping, tree planting and vegetation management, wildlife conservation, trail creation, canal engineering, maintenance, management and customer service.

canal college also welcomes people over 25 years of age, who are perhaps retired or currently unemployed, and who can get involved as volunteer mentors supporting the young people whilst themselves benefitting from achieving the same skills, practical outdoors learning and awards.

The £468,189 canal college, which has been funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the European Union Interreg IVB North West Europe programme, Scottish Natural Heritage and Scottish Canals, will run for two years and comprise twelve individual 14 week part-time courses.

Karen Moore, Chief Executive, Scottish Waterways Trust, says:

“canal college is a fantastic opportunity for young people who want to get on the path to work but need some help, whether that’s developing new skills, gaining more confidence or boosting their CV with practical work experience and a clutch of awards.

“We understand how difficult it is to get that first job so canal college has been designed to cover a wide range of skills but also to introduce the young people directly to people working on the canals and within the heritage and environment fields who can talk about their jobs but, more importantly, how they themselves got there.

“canal college is also there to benefit the canals and surrounding communities – each project will make a real difference to the waterside environment, whether that’s

bringing the social history and wildlife to life through new walking trails or creating new pathways, benches and planting.”

The volunteer mentors and participants on each course over the next two years will also work on a ‘Signature Project’.

In Edinburgh, the Signature Project is the creation of a new Gateway linking Calders with the Union Canal. The volunteer mentors and participants will learn about landscape design, from putting plans on paper through to bringing the ideas to life.

The volunteer mentors and participants will also work towards a number of awards to boost their CV, including the Saltire Volunteer Award, John Muir Award (Discovery Level), Youth Achievement Award and canal college Award.

Towards the end of the programme, all will be given help with job seeking and interview skills leading to a Presentation Skills Certificate.

They will also receive a canal college Award for completing the programme.

The canal college course will begin on Thursday 6th June and then run between Tuesday and Friday each week. Travel expenses will be paid.

Volunteer Mentors Sought

The Scottish Waterways Trust is looking for volunteer mentors over 25 years of age to help the young people reach their full potential and get on the path towards their first job.

Alan Forrester of the Scottish Waterways Trust explains:

“We’re keen to hear from anyone who has the skills to help us teach landscaping, tree and vegetation management, stonework, carpentry, wildlife conservation, trail creation, engineering or maintenance.

“We also welcome volunteers who perhaps don’t have the hard skills but who can make a real difference by helping us develop the softer skills, motivating the young people and giving them more confidence to stretch themselves.

“If you are considering volunteering, I’d encourage you to think about canal college. By offering your time, you can really make a difference to the success of the young people coming to canal college. We’re pretty certain you’ll enjoy your own rewards too, whether that’s learning new skills, meeting new people, simply getting outdoors or boosting your CV with some valuable volunteering and conservation awards including the Saltire Award and John Muir Award (Discovery Level).”

Find out more today. Telephone Alan Forrester at the Scottish

Waterways Trust on 07768 951740.



The Scottish Government has revealed intentions to begin regulating letting agents, in answer to a question from Edinburgh Central MSP Marco Biagi.

Edinburgh Central has the highest concentration of renting households in Scotland – over 40% of people live in a rented property. A shortage of homes and Edinburgh's rapidly growing population has made letting an agents' market. This has led to campaigns like those run by Shelter and the Edinburgh Private Tenants Action Group, who have identified so-called 'rogue' landlords and called for action to be taken against them.

Housing minister Margaret Burgess set out her intention to launch a new private rented sector strategy at the end of this month. The Minister made clear that regulation of the industry 'received broad support' in her consultation. A new Housing Bill is also expected later this year to introduce changes to the law.

Last year the Scottish Government made tenancy deposit protections compulsory and clarified the 1982 Rent Act to prevent letting agents loading rents with up-front add-on costs. The Minister's statement suggests strongly that more substantial changes are on the way.

Marco Biagi MSP said:-"Private tenants and their neighbours need to have confidence in letting agents. Neighbours need to know that the agents will carry out repairs and maintenance diligently, and tenants need to know that they will be treated fairly. Slapdash renting leads to the worst kind of tenancy, where mutual suspicion between letting agents and tenants can lead to less regard for the property, community and local area. Reputable landlords can also take heart from the clear

objective of cracking down on the cowboys who are increasingly giving the whole sector a bad name.

“The current system of regulating the private rented sector was designed for a time when rates of renting were less than half what they are now. I’ve been promoting reform since I was elected, and look forward to the Scottish Government’s imminent strategy being published and taken forward.”

Edinburgh Art Festival announces 10 new commissions to celebrate its 10th edition

This August, Edinburgh Art Festival (EAF) will celebrate its 10th anniversary with a series of 10 new public art commissions sited across the Festival city. Visitors will encounter site-specific artworks by leading Scottish and international artists throughout Edinburgh, from installations created for some of the city’s most historic landmarks, to works sited in unexpected spaces, including Edinburgh’s famous skyline. Placing cutting-edge contemporary art into the context of this world heritage city, the commissions programme will be supported by a series of special events, tours and one-off performances.

The 2013 festival commissions programme, titled Parley, celebrates art that generates and depends on dialogue for its realisation, offering a site for debate, discussion and exploration. In a year in which Scotland begins to debate its future, Parley takes inspiration from Miralles and Tagliabue, architects of the new Scottish parliament building (also celebrating its 10th year) who devised ‘not a building in a park or a garden but a form for gathering people’.

Highlights will include:

– A new installation by 1997 Turner Prize nominee Christine Borland in

collaboration with Brody Condon for the burnt out Watchtower of the New Calton Burial Ground examining ideas of decay and dereliction – Robert Montgomery’s first major work for Edinburgh since graduating from Edinburgh College of Art in 1999, a new ‘Fire Poem’ sited on The Mound – Krijn de Koning’s first ever exhibition in the UK, a site-specific installation which will transform Edinburgh College of Art’s iconic sculpture court into a specially designed platform for debate and discussion – Peter Liversidge’s Flags for Edinburgh project, which will encourage Edinburgh’s institutions to replace their usual flags with a simple message of ‘HELLO’ for the duration of the Festival – The first publicly sited sculpture by one of Scotland’s most exciting young artists, Sara Barker, made for the wooded landscape of Jupiter Artland

The Parley commissioned artists are Christine Borland with Brody Condon, Peter Liversidge, Sarah Kenchington, Ross Sinclair, Robert Montgomery, Katri Walker, Krijn de Koning, Sara Barker, Kenny Watson and Daniel Padden with Peter Nicholson.

Two Parley symposium events have been specially conceived for Krijn de Koning’s installation in Edinburgh College of Art’s Sculpture Court by artists Ross Sinclair and Rachel Maclean.

Sorcha Carey, Director, Edinburgh Art Festival, said:-

“Our annual commissions programme has grown to become an essential part of Edinburgh’s summer festival offering. Our 2013 programme, the most ambitious to date, celebrates art’s unique capacity to promote dialogue and debate; and we are particularly excited that this latest edition sees leading and emerging Scottish and international artists collaborate across borders to make new work for Scotland’s extraordinary capital city.”



News from Summerhall about an event in June

Meet and Greet the Champions of Scottish Food 9th June 2013 –
12:30pm to 4:00pm

Tickets: £20.00 / Concession: £15.00 (SF Members only) [Book Tickets on the Summerhall website](#)

Join us for a special event, a collaboration of Summerhall and Slow Food UK, to celebrate the end of Slow Food Week 2013. 10 top Scottish chefs from the Slow Food UK Chef Alliance will be welcoming you on the day to showcase the best of local and seasonal Scottish produce, championing small-scale food producers. All ticket proceeds will be donated to Slow Food UK to support the Forgotten Foods programme and to continue protecting British edible biodiversity.

Learn the top tips about bread-making, preserving, braising, curing and seasoning and enjoy the little treats our chefs will prepare for you on the day! A free whisky tasting provided by Highland Park will be running the entire afternoon explain how to pair the chef’s creations with

whisky expressions. Grana Padano has also kindly donated a half wheel of their Consorzio cheese for guests to taste in the afternoon.

A free whisky tasting provided by Highland Park will explain how to pair the chef's creations with whisky expressions and free Lavazza espresso will be available for everyone during the afternoon. Grana Padano has also kindly donated a wheel of their Consorzio cheese for guests to taste.

Programme:

- 12:30 – Arrival and welcome drink
- 13:15 – 13:45 Official welcome
- 14:00 – 16:00 Meet and greet the chefs individual 'express masterclasses'
- 13:45 – 16:00 Whisky tasting

For tickets go to the [Summerhall website](#) or for more information see the [Slow Food UK newsletter](#)