

Five things you need to know today



Planning meetings – Protest at Standard Life – At Fringe by the Sea today – Edinburgh Festival Fringe Pick of the Day – Britain in Bloom judges visit Edinburgh

The council's planning committee will meet this morning to discuss proposals for The Royal Mile and the proposed Pilrig conservation area. Next week the sub committee will meet to discuss several planning proposals including some at the [Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh](#).

These are described as:-“New buildings in existing Nursery of Royal Botanic Garden including polytunnels, glasshouses, vehicle storage shed, staff facilities building and ancillary buildings, alterations to entrance gates and associated external works.”

40 representations were made to the council about these plans, so it appears that local residents are not exactly in favour. One of the shortcomings of the council's otherwise good Planning Portal where you can see all the papers relating to the planning application is that although the names of those who have commented are listed, you cannot always read what they say.

One local resident Stephen Lister has written that the changes will be detrimental to the area and will alter the character into that of a semi-industrial site.

Stockbridge and Inverleith Community Council has lodged objections to the proposals stating that the buildings are too big and that a 'valued birch tree' will be lost. The community council asked for the buildings to be placed elsewhere within

the gardens. The proposal is however being recommended for approval subject to certain conditions.

All papers for the Development Management Sub-Committee are [online here](#).

Yesterday we happened across a protest by UNITE outside the offices of Standard Life on Lothian Road and made a [video report about it here](#). We had just been to meet some lovely Brazilians at the EICC who we will tell you more about later, and last night we enjoyed an evening of fun and comedy at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery...What a great venue that is for all manner of events! And today's photo reminds you that the Book Festival is opening its doors on Saturday.



The Scottish Makar Liz Lochhead is having a busy time this Fringe. As well as appearing at the Assembly Rooms (where we met her last week to take this photo) she is also appearing at Fringe by the Sea today.

An enormously popular national institution. Her first collection of poems, Memo for Spring, was published in 1972 and won a Scottish Arts Council Book Award. Appointed Scots Makar – the National Poet for Scotland – in 2011, Liz Lochhead is both transgressive and popular; as Anne Varty wrote, “her work is that of one woman speaking to many, and one person speaking for many”.

Book your tickets for this show, which takes place at 2:00pm

today, or a plethora of other shows [online here.](#)

LAH DI DAH – THE RISE, DEMISE AND SONGS OF JAKE THACKRAY – JOHN WATTERSON

Date, Time & Price

Aug 2-6, 9-10, 14-25 13:45 (1hr) £11.00 (£9.00)

Venue

New Town Theatre – *drama, music*

Jake, one of Britain's best loved singer/songwriters, performed weekly to millions on Esther Rantzen's That's Life. But he hated stardom, shunning his fans. John Watterson is superb as Thackray.

☒ Pictured in Greyfriar's Kirkyard are: David Jamieson, Parks and Greenspace Manager; judge Mel Henley; Tom Sargent from the Grassmarket Community Project; judge Mark Wasilewski; Cllr Lesley Hinds.

Judges from Britain in Bloom toured the parks, gardens and streets of Edinburgh today to assess the city's place in a national competition. Edinburgh is representing Scotland in the prestigious Britain in Bloom contest after winning the coveted City Award at the [Beautiful Scotland](#) awards in September last year.

The judges for the competition, which is run by the Royal Horticultural Society, will be assessing the Capital's horticultural achievement, environmental responsibility, and community participation. They visited gardens including the Duddingston Village community garden, Pollock Halls, the Cowgate Under-5's Nursery, Holyrood Park, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Princes Street Gardens and Brown's Close. They also admired the planting carried out by the Grassmarket Community Project in Greyfriar's Kirkyard. Councillor Lesley Hinds, Transport & Environment Convenor, said: -"Representing Scotland in Britain in Bloom is a great honour for Edinburgh and provides us with an ideal

opportunity to promote the outstanding public parks and greenspace network we have in our city. It also allows us to shine a light on all the hard work that local communities do to keep these areas looking clean, green and beautiful."The competition has given us the chance to demonstrate some of the work that both the Council and local residents do in helping make Edinburgh one of the UK's most popular places to live, work and visit."

Carole Noble, Head of Environmental Services at Keep Scotland Beautiful, said: "These awards are the pinnacle of achievement for communities looking to demonstrate the difference that their effort, imagination and hard work can make to local environments.

"After their success in the Beautiful Scotland awards in 2012, we wish Edinburgh in Bloom well as they await their assessment from the judges. We know they'll do well."

