

Five things you need to know today Edinburgh!



Rugby – Granny Green’s – Caltongate a new petition – University of Edinburgh get AHRC Grant – Travelodge Competition winner

The Calcutta Cup will be contested this afternoon at Murrayfield. We will have a match report later with the usual lovely photographs from our rugby correspondent John Preece.

Meanwhile we understand the Edinburgh Rugby match to be played tomorrow at Rodney Parade has been cancelled due to a waterlogged pitch.


Are you going to the International? Send us your five word review later – either by email theedinburghreporter@gmail.com or through the wonderful medium of [Twitter](#)! We will then compile them into an article later.

The Scottish Rugby Union announced a new sponsorship deal earlier this week when Peter Vardy was announced as the provider of a fleet of vehicles for them to use.

“As part of the relationship Peter Vardy Ltd will provide Scottish Rugby with a fleet of Vauxhall vehicles. The cars will predominantly be used by coaching staff to assist in the development and growth of the game at club and school level across Scotland, from the Highlands and Islands all the way down to the Borders.

“The first presence Peter Vardy Ltd will have with Scottish Rugby will be at this weekend’s RBS 6 Nations Championship match against England, where a selection of vehicles will be

on display behind the east stand and near the ticket centre. The array of cars, which will include Land Rover, Jaguar, BMW, Mini and Vauxhall models, will then become a permanent fixture on international match days.”


Granny Greens is a group of local crafters who meet  regularly over their knitting. Yesterday they were very visible out and about near Greyfriar’s Bobby. Read more [here](#) about what they were up to!

A huge presence at last month’s planning meeting over [the future of Caltongate](#) showed that local people really do care about the city and what the planners decide. Now after the decision has been made to allow the development of offices and houses (but many say not enough houses) on the gap site a new petition has sprung up. This is how it is explained on the petitions website.

Dear Supporters of the ‘Caltongate’ Petition.

You will likely have heard that the Council have given planning consent to the ‘Caltongate’ development in the face of considerable opposition and controversy. The vote came close (8 to 6). The breakdown of the vote is given at the bottom of this email if you care to take the matter up with councillors.

In spite of this disappointment the petition managed to galvanise the support of over 5000 individuals in just 7 days which is a great tribute to the potential of the internet as a campaigning tool for networking and lobbying for social change.

 *Just before voting one councillor described the plans as “not hideous enough” to merit rejection while supporters*

argued that the site was formerly just a gas works and then bus depot (reflecting an older period in the City's industrial past), hardly meriting exceptional attention. However, the conservation value of the overall area and the magnificent location has inspired campaigners to envision an exemplar redevelopment worthy of the World Heritage Status.

The Old Town is now in critical decline due to the ongoing favouritism shown by the Council for budget hotels, student accommodation, offices, chain shops etc. Not only does this threaten the long term liveability of the area but the very World Heritage Status itself.

Since the vote, the petition has attracted hundreds more signatures showing that there is continuing support. This then presents an opportunity to develop and indeed broaden the campaign as there are other controversial developments across the City of national significance, particularly the considerable threat to Greenbelt land and the case of Craighouse. No doubt there are more contentious planning issues in the offing that will attempt to asset strip other valued public resources, such as the uncertainty over the Astley Ainslie hospital.

In light of the 'Caltongate' decision and contrary to the Council's commitment to "co-operation, fairness, accountability and responsibility" the process to date has been anything but this. Furthermore, Council Leader Andrew Burns pledged that this Council would, "listen to, and work with, local people. There needs to be strong process for looking at the quality of how the Council has reached decisions so that there is genuine scrutiny and questioning of the actions it has taken" and "conserve the City's built heritage."

With the Council's reputation arguably at an all time LOW and Our officials and elected representatives demonstrably beholden and enthralled to an unsustainable, discredited

system of speculation and endless economic growth on a finite planet, if you would like to further add your support to challenging the 'Caltongate' decision and strengthen the case for reform in the planning system there is an opportunity to register an expression of NO CONFIDENCE in the Edinburgh Council's Planning Department:

<https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/no-confidence-in-the-city-of-edinburgh-planning-department>

If government rhetoric actually has any meaning there is hope that reform can be achieved through the Community Empowerment Bill which is currently being debated at the Scottish Parliament which affirms the fundamental democratic principle that,

"Scotland's people are its greatest asset, and best placed to make decisions about their future... Our belief in local self-determination, through a strong Scottish Parliament, strong local authorities and strong communities, is the key principle which underpins the proposals in this consultation document. At its heart, community empowerment is about communities taking their own decisions about their futures".

With this in mind the petition recommends that Scottish Ministers embrace the ethos of community empowerment and call in the 'Caltongate' application in the hope that a fitting outcome can finally be realised.

Photo of the Caltongate site courtesy of [RCHAMS](#)

Edinburgh University's Department of English & Scottish Literature and Professor James Loxley have been awarded an Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) grant for his project Palimpsest: an Edinburgh Literary Cityscape.

The project, a collaboration between literary and informatics

scholars, aims to develop an interactive, mobile friendly website, called Palimpsest, that provides access to vivid, evocative and dramatic excerpts of a wide range of geolocated Edinburgh-based literary texts either through the web or via smartphones and tablets. [You can read more here.](#)

✘ [Our Travelodge competition](#) attracted loads of entries and this morning we are pleased to announce Sally Allen from Essex as the winner of a two night stay in one of the city's Travlodges with theatre tickets. Well done Sally!