

# Five things you need to know today Edinburgh!



**Pedal on Parliament 2014 – Live from the City Chambers – Tonight at the Cameo – Rubbish collections – Edinburgh International Book Festival**

In April Edinburgh's streets will be taken over by a colourful mass of cyclists of all shapes and sizes calling for a cycle-friendly Scotland. Pedal on Parliament, the grass-roots organisation which brought 4,000 demonstrators to Holyrood last year, from children on balance bikes to champion cyclist Graeme Obree, have announced their third mass protest ride on the Scottish Parliament on Saturday the 26th of April. People will be gathering at noon at the Meadows for a minute's silence to remember those killed on Scotland's roads and then riding down the Royal Mile to call on politicians to support the PoP manifesto for safer cycling.

This will be a light-hearted occasion, but with a serious purpose. Last year saw 12 cyclists killed in Scotland, the highest number for several years, and 2014 has already seen two cyclists die, the most recent only this week. Meanwhile the latest census figures show that the Scottish government is far behind on its target to see 10% of journeys by bike by 2020 – in the last decade, the percentage commuting to work by bike has risen only 0.1% to 1.6%. The organisers believe that without real and sustained investment in cycling and roads designed to accommodate people of all ages and abilities, then these figures will not improve.

Organiser David Brennan said "This year Scotland will be hosting the Commonwealth Games, bringing some of the world's top cyclists to race around the streets of Glasgow. Yet if

those same riders were to venture out in Glasgow on the roads that I and others cycle on any other day of the year, they would be shocked at how little quality provision there is for people who chose to travel by bike. As a result I often feel that my safety is compromised and many potential cyclists are discouraged from starting at all. We may have produced some great sporting cyclists as a nation but we're a very long way from being a cycle-friendly country. We want to see a Scotland where anyone – from Sir Chris Hoy to my four-year-old daughter – can enjoy the freedom of getting about by bike if they wish, and not having to wait until the roads are closed to do so."



Graeme Obree, who led the ride last year alongside the families of Audrey Fyfe and Andrew McNicoll who were both killed on their bikes on the streets of Edinburgh, said:- "Pedal on Parliament are not asking for spending here, but an investment, so that young people can cycle freely and without fear. We want a network from our homes to our workplaces, our shops, and schools and everywhere we want to go. It's an investment in the health of the nation."

Investment in cycling and other forms of active travel has been shown to return up to 19 times the amount invested in reduced congestion and improved health and pollution levels. It also makes the roads safer for everyone, including drivers, and substantially improves lives and livelihoods, as the experiences of places as diverse as New York, Copenhagen and Seville have shown. Pedal on Parliament believe that with proper funding and well-designed cycling infrastructure, Scotland can be a healthier, wealthier and above all happier place.

\*\*\*

The council is webcasting the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee which meets at 10am today.

You can watch online as the meeting progresses or watch later by clicking [here](#). We are also told that the meeting can be watched for the first time on iPad or smartphone, however at last month's council meeting the technicians were having a time of it making anything work, so we may have to wait and see about that!

\*\*\*

There are several showings of The Book Thief today at the Cameo. [Booking details here.](#)

Set to music composed by John Williams, this inspiring tale of courage and strength is set in war-time Germany.

\*\*\*

Do you know when your rubbish should be collected? Well [this page](#) on the council website will help you find out. All you have to do is put in your postcode.

\*\*\*

**Important dates for this year's Festival have now been finalised so put them in your diary pronto.**

- Details of this year's line-up will be revealed at the programme launch on Wednesday 11 June 2014.
- Tickets will go on sale to the general public on Tuesday 24 June.
- The 2014 Book Festival will run from 9-25 August.

More detailed information about how to book tickets will be available later in the year.



Photo of Cerys Matthews at EIBF 2013 by John Preece