

Five things you need to know today



Safer Travel Day – Foster in Scotland Day – Police Boxes – Edinburgh College Employment Fair

Police Scotland is promoting safe travel to airport passengers as part of an event taking place at Edinburgh Airport today.

Police Scotland's Border Policing Command is running a 'Safer Travel Day' where advice and guidance will be offered to passengers on how they can keep themselves safe while travelling.

There will be two stalls situated within the terminal building, where police officers and airport staff will be on hand to provide advice and guidance.

They will hand out leaflets to passengers containing a range of tips on safe travel, from crime prevention and personal safety advice, to who to contact in an emergency when abroad. The intention is to ensure that passengers are equipped with the information they need to have as safe a journey as possible, from airport to destination.

There will also be similar events held at Aberdeen, Glasgow and Prestwick airports.

Sergeant Stevie Amabile, based at Edinburgh Airport, said: "We are always looking for different ways to engage with the public and staff at Edinburgh Airport, and this event is another opportunity to raise awareness of the security issues when travelling by air. We will also be providing crime prevention information to help keep people safe as they travel between destinations."

The Edinburgh Reporter hopes to travel safely to the airport today – by chauffeur driven limo... More on that adventure later!



People across Scotland are being asked to think about the amazing work that foster carers do on Monday 19 May, **Fostering in Scotland Day**.

The special day is an opportunity to celebrate the work that thousands of foster families do across the country, as part of the Fostering Network's *Foster Care Fortnight* (12-25 May).

Some 4,400 foster families look after more than 5,300 fostered children on any one day in Scotland. Despite Scottish people being extremely positive and confident about foster care, there is a need for a further 850 families to be found across the next 12 months.

A recent poll found that:

- 73 per cent of the Scottish population felt positive about foster carers and the work that they do;
- 23 per cent said they would consider becoming a foster carer now or in the future;
- 33 per cent think they would be very or fairly likely to be accepted as foster carers if they applied with the next two years.

This is compared with a UK average of 28 per cent, and is higher than in Northern Ireland, Wales or any English region. Across the UK, the poll found that younger people, those over 55, single people and those with no children were less likely to think they could be accepted. Fostering in Scotland Day gives a real opportunity to bust these myths, as in fact:

- There is no legal minimum age to become a foster carer, though in general they will be 21+;
- There is also no official upper age limit on being a foster carer;
- Single people can foster as well as married or cohabiting couples;
- There are many gay and lesbian foster carers;
- Foster carers do not need to own their own home;
- People don't have to be parents to foster.

What is important is that foster carers have the right skills and qualities to look after children separated from their own families, who have often experienced abuse or neglect. Discover what these skills and qualities are with our [skills checklist](#), explore the [different types of fostering](#) and learn about the [road to fostering](#).

Director of the Fostering Network Scotland, Sara Lurie said: "Today is real opportunity to focus on foster carers in Scotland and the amazing work that they do, and to encourage others to see if they have the skills and qualities needed to foster.

"We'll be sharing the stories of fantastic foster carers and care leavers on social media throughout the day – join us on Twitter at #FCF2014.

Natalie Innes, from South Lanarkshire, became a foster carer five years ago when she was 24. She says: "Fostering is something that brings so much to our family life. Being a foster carer is an immensely rewarding life and I can't see myself doing anything else.

"I'd encourage anyone who thinks they might have the skills to care for vulnerable children to get in touch with a fostering service and to see if it's for them. If you have patience, love in your heart and room in your home why not see if you can give a vulnerable child a new start?"

19-year-old Shannon Mamara said: "I have been in foster care

for nine years and have been lucky enough to stay with the same foster family. Carol and Billy and their family never made me feel out of place, they all made me feel so welcome and made it feel like my home too.

“I didn’t get on well at school, but started in college to study hairdressing and have managed to get some amazing qualifications. There is no way I would have got them if it hadn’t been for my foster carers pushing me to try my best.

“I wouldn’t change this family for the world, they are my family now and will always be part of my life.”

Foster Care Fortnight is supported by children’s minister Aileen Campbell MSP. She said: “I am grateful to those people who, already open up their homes and commit themselves to provide care and support for some of our most vulnerable children.

“I fully support this year’s *Foster Care Fortnight* campaign, which aims to encourage even more people, from a wide and varied range of backgrounds, to consider whether they too could provide a safe, supportive and secure family life and give a brighter future for those children, by applying to become a foster carer.”

To find out more about fostering and becoming a foster carer, see www.couldyoufoster.org.uk, contact Fosterline Scotland on 0141 204 1400 or fosterlinescotland@fostering.net, or contact your local fostering service.

Any idea where our Police Box of the day is? There are many of them across the city, sometimes in rather unusual places. No prizes – but you could always leave your thoughts in the comments section below!

Last day today to go and see the [Wildlife Photographer of the Year Exhibition at the National Museum of Scotland](#).

Dates: Sat 3-Mon 5 May & Sat 17-Mon 19 May

Times: 12:00-16:00

Cost: Free, drop-in

Enjoy holiday weekend activities, including crafts, stories and object handling inspired by incredible images of the natural world from the [Wildlife Photographer of the Year](#) exhibition.

Magic Carpet

Each day we have two special themed Magic Carpet story activity sessions for under 5s – one at 11:30 and one at 14:30. Limited places, sign up at the Lighthouse Lens in the Grand Gallery 10 mins before start time.

Hands on activities

There's also a different hands-on activity each day, inspired by the exhibition. Come to the Learning Centre on Level 4 between 12:00 – 16:00 and make:

Date: Saturdays 3 & 17 make an animal thaumatrope

Date: Sundays 4 & 18 make a cyanotype photogram

Date: Monday 5 & 19 make a wildlife mask

