

# Five things you need to know today



## Queen's Baton Relay – Register to vote – Commonwealth Day at Loretto – Sumo Run – Business Networking

Are you planning on watching the Queen's Baton Relay this weekend? Well you will have to be fairly fleet of foot to follow it all the way. It starts off from Heriot-Watt at 10 and makes its way across the city, including on a tram from Murrayfield, the Castle, the Scottish Parliament at about 12.45pm, Meadowbank an hour later, the Royal Commonwealth Pool at 5.45pm and arriving at the Ross Bandstand about 7.20 where a free concert will then take place.

Up to 3,000 school children [will run](#) from The Palace of Holyroodhouse to Meadowbank. They will form a guard of honour for the baton as it approaches the Queen's gate at the Parliament. The baton will go in to the Parliament and they will then form up on the north approach road at the palace, move through the courtyard and off through the royal park.

You can [see the whole route here.](#)

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People across the city need to register to vote to take part in the much-anticipated election, which will take place on 18 September.

But voters could risk missing out if they fail to meet the registration deadline on 2 September, or if they fill out their postal vote or ballot paper wrongly.

The City of Edinburgh Council is now launching a campaign to promote voter registration and voter awareness with a series

of roadshows across its neighbourhood offices, in partnership with the Electoral Registration Office.

Members of the public can come along and find out more about making sure they are on the register and how and where they will cast their vote.

The drive builds on efforts to increase voter awareness in the lead-up to last month's European Elections, which saw turnout at 41.6%, a 6.1% rise on the 2009 elections and 7.6% above the Scottish average.

Sue Bruce, Chief Executive of City of Edinburgh Council and Counting Officer for Edinburgh, has stressed the importance of registering to vote. She said: "This is a big decision for Scotland's voters and it's not worth missing out by failing to register.

"It's also important to understand how easy it is to vote, and I would urge any first time voters to come along to our roadshows to find out about the whole process."

Elsewhere in the city schools, community groups and youth clubs are holding their own awareness-raising events, including a cross-generational referendum debate at the City Chambers, held by Edinburgh Active Citizenship Group, and a 'Summer Muster' at Royston Wardieburn community centre.

Gracemount High School kicked off the drive today with a 'Question Time' event involving four local political representatives – Kenny MacAskill MSP (SNP), Alison Johnstone MSP (Scottish Green Party), Gavin Brown MSP (Conservative) and Ian Murray MP (Labour).

Each politician was given the opportunity to pitch their stance on the Yes/No debate before an audience of fifth and sixth year pupils asked questions about the referendum, followed by a mock ballot to close the event.

Pauline Walker, head teacher at Gracemount, said: “Many of our students will be voting for the first time in the Referendum, so we were keen to encourage them to become actively engaged in a lively and positive debate before making an informed decision.

“The event has enabled our students to get a real feel for the issues surrounding the referendum and to engage in politics first hand. We are confident that this will help our students make confident decisions in September.”

Unlike in other elections, 16 and 17-year-olds will be able to vote in the referendum, and reports show that 77% of these young people in Edinburgh are already registered to vote.

Registration roadshows will take place on the following dates:

Tuesday 10 June, 10am – 3pm, [South Neighbourhood Office\(external link\)](#)

Wednesday 11 June, 10am – 2pm, [North Neighbourhood Office\(external link\)](#)

Tuesday 17 June, 11am – 3pm, [South West Neighbourhood Office\(external link\)](#)

Tuesday 24 June, 10am – 2pm, [Leith Neighbourhood Office\(external link\)](#)

Wednesday 25 June, 10am – 2pm, [West Neighbourhood Office\(external link\)](#)

Monday 30 June, 11am – 3pm, [East Neighbourhood Office\(external link\)](#)

Wednesday 2 July, 11am- 3pm, [City Centre Neighbourhood Office\(external link\)](#)

Find out more about voter registration, roadshows and elections information [on the Council website\(external link\)](#).

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In preparation for this summer's Commonwealth Games, Loretto Junior School pupils celebrated in style by painting the flags of all the Commonwealth countries and researching each of the different sports to be featured in Glasgow 2014. The various sports were displayed on wooden figures which then joined together to form a friendship circle.

Jonathan Hewat, Director of External Affairs, commented, "The children are certainly most excited about the impending Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games and from this activity they not only learned about the various sports taking place over the summer, but also the importance of community and friendship."

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The first ever Sumo Run is wrestling its way to Edinburgh this summer! Hundreds of runners in giant inflatable sumo suits will run, jog, sprint and waddle the 5km course for charity around The Meadows in Edinburgh on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> July.

The charity race is set to become the capital's most unique running event and entrants should expect to look silly, laugh a lot, and in doing so, raise money for Link Community Development International. For those who don't fancy wobbling around The Meadows as a sumo wrestler, locals are encouraged to come along and cheer the city on for what is guaranteed to be the biggest giggle in town!

### **Pre-race prep:**

- The course is a nice, green, flat 5km (about 3 miles)
- Make sure to register online at [www.sumorun.com](http://www.sumorun.com) before 27<sup>th</sup> June to avoid missing out
- Registration is £33 per person – which includes your sumo suit! The minimum fundraising amount is £150
- Self funding participants can register for £67 with no minimum fundraising amount

- Last-minute registration is also possible after 27<sup>th</sup> June (£39 or £75 self-funding)

Louisa Johnson, Fundraising Officer at Link Community Development International says, “We’re really excited to be saying *kon’nichiwa* to Edinburgh and its army of Sumos for the very first time this year. Sumo Run is all about having fun whilst also supporting a great cause. It’ll be fantastic to see Edinburgh’s Sumos rising to the challenge and rolling around The Meadows in their giant sumo suits, on what I feel sure will be a sensational supersized Saturday!”

Link Community Development International is a charity that works to improve the quality of education for children in sub-Saharan Africa. They believe that quality education is achievable but sadly many obstacles stand in the way, making it all too rare. Link works at all levels of the education system – including with governments and communities – to identify and remove these obstacles.

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## **Business on the Boat Networking – 23 July 2014**

Get out of the stuffy offices, avoid the meeting rooms and busy public venues and join us for some informal business networking with a difference. Step on board the Lochrin Belle and network with other guests as you cruise along the Union Canal and take in the sights. The networking format is informal, bring your business cards, grab a complimentary glass of wine and relax. The leisurely pace of the canal boat cruise lends itself to good conversation and the building of rewarding business relationships. Tickets are £10 each [click here to book](#)

