

Five things you need to know today



Ready for Winter

Garden of Remembrance

Elliott House

Nelson Mandela remembered

Lost Voices

Winter is coming – and the City of Edinburgh Council is getting ready for it.



Salt has been stockpiled, gritting lorries have been serviced and tried and tested plans have been reviewed and refreshed to help the Capital deal with whatever the weather has in store for us over the coming months.

Twenty four/seven stand-by arrangements for treating the roads and pavements came into force late last month [October] and salt bins throughout Edinburgh are being checked and topped up where necessary.

A Ready for Winter communications campaign, launching today, will see information leaflets and posters distributed to neighbourhood offices, libraries and doctor and dental surgeries.

The leaflets provide useful information about being prepared for winter and contact information so that residents can readily access the help and services they need.

A total of 16,000 tonnes of salt have been stockpiled; levels are monitored throughout the winter and topped up when required.

Local farmers, who have worked with the Council over the past three years gritting rural routes, have been engaged again this year. Contracts are also in place with external contractors should the Council need access to additional staff and equipment in extreme winter conditions.

The Council website's [live winter weather pages](#) provide information about priority road, cycle path and pavement gritting routes. Also on the site is an interactive map so that residents can find out where their nearest salt bin is.

If and when severe weather strikes, the Council will use its social media channels, website and local radio stations to keep residents updated on any impact on services.

Waste services skip locations have also been identified. If the weather deteriorates and prevents waste collections from being made, skips will be installed at these locations for public use.

Councillor Adam McVey, Vice Convener of Transport and Environment, said: "We've had a few mild winters in recent years but we are never complacent – the harsh winters of 2009/10 and 2010/11 are still fresh in everyone's memory. It's impossible to know at this stage what the weather has in store for us this year but we've been busy making sure we're as prepared as we can be to keep the city moving, whatever the elements throw our way. Our staff are all trained up, our equipment is ready for use and our salt stocks are topped up, with more available should it be needed.

"As ever, we'd encourage residents to ensure they find out everything they need to know about keeping themselves safe during the winter months. Pick up one of our Ready for Winter leaflets at your local library or doctors' surgery, visit

our [web pages](#) or consult the Scottish Government's advice at www.readyscotland.org."

The Garden of Remembrance in Princes Street Gardens is now open. There was a short ceremony with laying of wreaths by the Lord Provost and the Cabinet Secretary for Justice, Kenny MacAskill, yesterday morning. The Edinburgh Reporter also met Neil Richardson OBE, the Deputy Chief Constable for Police Scotland who is a former Lothian and Borders police officer and who laid a wreath on behalf of Police Scotland.

These are some of our photographs but there is also a full report with video [here](#).





The contractor ISG has been awarded three new contracts in Edinburgh, with a combined value in excess of £11 million.

The company has secured a prestigious £6.6 million project

from leading property developer, McLaren, as well as a £3.1 million win with the University of Edinburgh and a further £1.4 million scheme with Edinburgh Academy.

The largest of the projects involves ISG in carrying out the work to convert Elliott House, the former office development located on the corner of Hillside Crescent and Brunswick Street, into 138 student apartments for McLaren. The contractor will reconfigure and refurbish the six-storey building to form 134 student rooms, as well as replacing and upgrading the property's external cladding. An additional four studio apartments will also be constructed in a new build block to the rear of the property, with the project scheduled for completion in summer 2015.

Working at the University of Edinburgh's Ashworth complex, which forms part of the College of Science and Engineering campus, ISG will complete the refurbishment of Ashworth 2 – a five-storey building, which was partially upgraded in 2009 and 2013. This final phase encompasses the remaining three floors of the building and sees the reconfiguration of accommodation to create new office and laboratory space. The scheme is being carefully phased to enable vital research facilities to remain operational throughout the duration of the project, which is scheduled for completion in summer 2016.

At the Edinburgh Academy, ISG will replace the school's existing hockey pavilion with a modern, high-specification facility incorporating six changing rooms, referee's changing room and a covered terraced area for spectators. The new circa 5,400 sq ft pavilion has been sensitively designed and carefully oriented within the existing tree line on the Inverleith Place site to minimise its visual impact on surrounding properties.

Andy McLinden, ISG's Scotland regional managing director, commented: "All of these latest projects are welcome additions to our broad education sector expertise, whether creating safe

and secure student accommodation or delivering high-specification teaching or sporting infrastructure. Key to our success is a collaborative and highly disciplined approach to working within challenging live environments, which are core specialisms for our business."***

The council decided in December 2013 to take steps to put up some kind of memorial to South African President Nelson Mandela who had just died then.

The council may decide today on a proposal for the actual memorial which will be selected. The selection is then delegated to the Planning sub-committee. Options include the renaming of Festival Square, the development site at Fountainbridge, the new development at Haymarket, the area at St James shopping centre which is to be the subject of an £850m redevelopment scheme, the new development at Caltongate which is now known as 'New Waverley' and which is being developed by Artisan RSI who are largely backed by South African investors.

If the council chooses one of these sites then it has to be in discussion with the owner and developers as well as dealing with the difficulties that changing street names can pose.

The council recognises that altering names can cause difficulties for emergency services. Normally the council has to wait till five years after someone's death before renaming a street after them.

We saw and reviewed [this play](#) a couple of years ago at the Scottish Storytelling Centre and it is back there this weekend on Friday 7 November and Saturday 8 November. It centres around the Pan Am 103 tragedy and uses minimal stage set to take you from the departure lounge on board the plane to the hearts of the bereaved afterwards. [Ticket details here.](#)

[Lockerbie: Lost Voices Trailer](#) from [Alternative Productions](#) on [Vimeo](#).