

Five things you need to know today Edinburgh!



Light Night

Edinburgh charity in the running for national award

Lochend Community Growing Project

Kyloe Cow

Light a Light

Today we have the official ceremony to light the Christmas decorations in the city centre.

The official opening ceremony to Edinburgh's Christmas is an event for the community by the community. There will be seven stages spread along George Street with 60 community companies and 1350 performers who will entertain the crowds before the big switch on.

The theme this year is favourite Christmas Carols and festive tunes. Festive fireworks will be released from behind the Gold Stage which will be situated on the junction of George Street and North St David Street.

A charity that organises social activities for adults with disabilities so they can in Edinburgh and the Lothians has been nominated for a national award.

From Wiff Waff ping pong tournaments, to panto and speed dating. Get2gether arranges social activities in ordinary places for disabled people, supporting them to build confidence as well as skills for developing lasting

friendships and relationships.

Get2gether is the only Scottish charity in the running for the everyday impact award for new enterprises. Voting is open to the public and closes on November 24.

The charity is being recognised for its uniqueness. As well as offering membership to any adult with a disability, members decide what activities they want to do. The activities are ordinary, everyday social events in ordinary, everyday places and members are increasingly gaining the confidence to go out independently of the group.

The awards are organised by the Directory of Social Change, an independent charity that provides training and information to the voluntary sector.

Edinburgh charity get2gether has over 70 members and was set up after research and feedback showed that adults with disabilities wanted more opportunities to develop friendships and relationships and to have dedicated support to help them make it happen.

Since get2gether was set up in May 2013 many members have found friendship, dating and romance at sell out club nights at local venue The Cav and a range of events, which are all decided by the group.

The charity's members are also growing in confidence with some who were nervous about mainstream venues now going out to socialise independently as well.

Marion Smith, Project Co-ordinator, said,

“We are delighted to be nominated by the Directory of Social Change for the everyday impact award for new enterprises. It's great for the group to see that what we have achieved and the impact it is making is being recognised. It's so encouraging. We hope that people will take the chance to show their support

and vote for us!”

“Since we launched this year we have run packed out club nights and a whole range of activities. Coming to the events is a great way for people to meet new people in a fun and safe place. We can already see people gain more confidence about going out and meeting new people.”

On 29 November there will be a workshop running from 11am till dusk including wreath making, learning about DIY garden materials, planting in a polytunnel, herbal Christmas presents and garden arts. The project is at 6a Lochend Quadrant. You can contact them for more information on lochendsecretgarden@gmail.com



Edinburgh’s Christmas will officially launch this weekend with the big Light Night celebrations later today and the opening of the European Christmas Market and Kyløe Cow is ready!

Kyløe Cow gets in the festive spirit with a Christmassy make over by local artist Chris Rutterford. Donning his favourite festive socks and sporting a Santa inspired white beard Kyløe cow is bringing Christmas cheer to the West End.

Complete with chalk painted belly The Huxley are encouraging fellow West End friends to write messages of good will over the festive season. Chalk will be provided!

On 15 December 2014 the Christmas tree in Charlotte Square will be lit. This is a tree to enable those who have lost loved ones during the year to come together to remember, and also raise funds to support the patients at St Columba’s

Hospice.

Everyone is welcome to attend the Tree Lighting Ceremony. The gates will open at 5.30pm and the lights will be switched on at 6.30pm. The event will also include a special service and carol singing.

People can 'dedicate a light' on the Tree of Remembrance by sending a donation to the Hospice along with the name of those they wish to remember, and they will then receive a Light a Light Christmas Card inscribed with the name of their loved one with space to add their own additional message.

Donations can be sent via post using the dedication form on the Light a Light flyers (available in the Hospice, Iona Café and charity shops), via telephone on 0131 551 1381 or via e-mail at fund@stcolumbushospice.org.uk