

Five things you need to know today Edinburgh!



The Nutcracker

Children's Library

Burns Brunch

Forth Bridge

Frozen reservoirs – a warning

The ballet starts today at the Festival Theatre. We have some photos [here](#). If you get along then do let us know what you think!

Edinburgh's oldest public library has reported a leap in visitor numbers following a refurbishment of its children's and music collections, says a report going to the City of Edinburgh Council's Culture and Sport Committee next week.

The new children's library, which was relocated from its old home on 9 George IV Bridge in May, has been transformed to feature a special 'under 5s' room with artwork by renowned children's illustrator Catherine Rayner. The space has recorded a 188 per cent increase in visitors (22,178 visits) with lending of children's books up by 45 per cent (10,543 loans) on the previous year.

The children's library now has a dedicated arts and crafts area and parent friendly access including nappy changing facilities. Since the refurbishment five months ago, 16 per cent more children and their carers have been attending events

at the library (1,473 visits), including the library's popular new Lego club.

The report shows that the new music library is also proving a hit with visitors. Launched as a hub for musicians, students and fans alike, the dedicated space for engaging with music has seen a 36 per cent increase in lending (10,543) and a 26 per cent increase in visitors (11,442). The music library's new streaming service, from Naxos, provides access to a back catalogue of over one million classical and jazz tracks and has already received over 2,100 downloads.

The new facilities have been specially designed to be accessible to all, and for the first time in 40 years allow all of the Central Library facilities to be housed in the same building. The sustainable designs means that the installation of new lighting in some parts of the building saves the library 40 per cent in electricity bills without sacrificing light output compared to the previous lighting installation.

Councillor Richard Lewis said: "The new children's and music collections have really transformed the Central Library and it is great that the new and enhanced facilities are being so well received by visitors.

"As someone who has worked as a musician and conductor, I'm excited that the music library space is being used more and more and I urge students and those keen to explore music in their own way to pay a visit to the library and experience the facilities.

"The refurbished library offers a unique space for relaxing, reading, and so much more and I think Edinburgh residents have been quick to recognise that."



Network Rail has appointed Arup to take forward the design of a visitor centre and bridge walk for one of Scotland's most recognisable landmarks, The Forth Bridge.

The six-figure contract, which will develop detailed designs for a North Queensferry based visitor centre and lift and a South Queensferry based facility for bridge walkers, will see build-ready designs delivered by the middle of next year prior to a submission being made to local authorities for planning consideration.

Arup, an international engineering and design consultancy with an office in South Queensferry, will be supported by two local firms. WT Architecture, a South Queensferry based firm which developed early design concepts, will provide architectural advice and local knowledge. The Paul Hogarth Company, a landscaping firm also based in South Queensferry, will help develop the hard and soft landscaping plans for both locations.

David Dickson, Route Managing Director, Network Rail said:

"This is a significant investment in our vision for a groundbreaking new tourist attraction for Scotland. It demonstrates our commitment to further developing our visitor proposals during the Forth Bridge's 125th anniversary year.

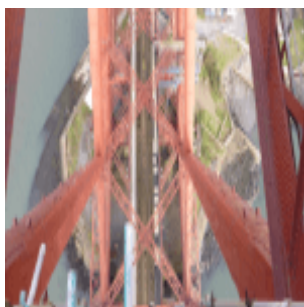
"The quality of submissions we received from our procurement process were of an exceptionally high standard, as you would expect with a landmark of such importance and prominence. Arup's bid stood out for a number of reasons, not least due to the involvement of local firms which will help form a strong core for the design team."

John Campbell, Arup's Rail Business Leader in Scotland said:

"Arup are delighted to be awarded this prestigious contract

and look forward to collaborating with Network Rail to successfully deliver a scheme in keeping with this iconic engineering structure.”

The contract will include designs for North Queensferry where proposals envisage visitors arriving via a landscaped shore side walk to a unique visitor centre building created under the northern Fife Tower. The visitor centre will offer education and exhibition facilities alongside catering, Forth Bridge themed retail and function options. The centre will be connected by a step-free ramp to two panoramic elevators on the eastern side of the bridge. The elevators will provide access to a viewing platform located dramatically at the top of the bridge, 110m above sea level.



The South Queensferry design brief envisages a visitor reception centre from which guided bridge walks for groups of up to 15 people begin. The walking route will pass along the south approach viaduct on a pre-existing walkway underneath the track, followed by a climb to the top of the southern Queensferry Tower using a walkway within the top cantilever.

Design services will include safety and security features, transport solutions and pedestrian access improvements. A separate element of work is being progressed at present to develop options for traffic management for both facilities.

Mike Cantlay, Chairman of VisitScotland, said:

“Next year, we will celebrate the 125th birthday of the Forth Bridge – a Scottish icon that is recognised around the globe. A new visitor centre, which would give people a unique opportunity to get up close to this stunning landmark, would be an exciting addition to this country’s wonderful array of world-class visitor attractions and has the potential to be a huge boost for tourism.”

Network Rail has also begun the process of seeking a partner organisation to help manage and operate the Forth Bridge Experience on its behalf. A Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) has been posted on the project website for interested parties: www.forthbridgeexperience.com

The cold weather introduces some danger and the council would like to warn those of you who are out and about to be careful especially near water. This is the advice they give:

Emergency Action (as recommended by the Royal Life Saving Society UK)

NEVER VENTURE ONTO FROZEN RESERVOIRS, NO MATTER HOW SAFE IT LOOKS

If you see someone fall through the ice

Shout for assistance and call the emergency services using

999.

Do not walk or crawl onto the ice to attempt a rescue.

Shout to the casualty to keep still.

Try and reach them from the bank using a rope, pole, tree branch, clothing tied together or anything else, which extends your reach.

When reaching from the bank lie down to avoid being pulled onto the ice.

If you can reach them slide something that floats, like a rescue buoy.

If the casualty is too far away, do not attempt to rescue them. Wait for the emergency services while calming and reassuring them.

After the casualty has been removed from the ice:

Make sure the ambulance is on its way.

Lay them flat, check breathing and pulse and begin resuscitation if necessary.

Prevent them from getting colder by putting them in a sleeping bag or covering them including their head, with blankets or spare clothing.

Get them under shelter out of the cold.

Do not remove any clothing until the casualty is in a warm place.

Do not rub their skin, apply hot water or give an alcoholic drink.

Keep them wrapped up so that they warm up gradually.

If you fall through the ice:

Keep calm and call for help.

If no help is available spread your arms across the surface of the ice.

If the ice is strong enough kick your legs and slide onto the ice.

Lie flat and pull yourself to the shore.

If the ice is very thin, break it in front of you and make your way to the shore.

If you cannot climb out, wait for help keeping as still as possible.

Once you are safe, go to hospital immediately for a check up.