

Five things you need to know today Edinburgh!



Can you help Edinburgh's Direct Aid?

Emergency Meeting of Save Stockbridge

Bank of Scotland Report

Swimming news

Breakfast with Santa

The Chairman of Edinburgh Direct Aid has written to The Edinburgh Reporter asking for some urgent help.

I am writing to let you know that we are once again collecting warm winter clothes, especially padded jackets and waterproof boots, for the Syrian refugees in Aarsal in the Lebanon. They are facing a second winter in camps at an altitude of over 5000 feet in appalling conditions: in August the Lebanese army fought a battle there to repel militants from Isis and Al Nusrah. In the fallout many tents were burned, there were upwards of 30 deaths amongst the refugees, and many more lost such possessions as they had had. We plan to send off a full shipping container of aid as soon as possible.

EDA volunteers Maggie and Denis are just back from Lebanon where they went to try to source goods locally for immediate delivery to the families most in need. With the help of Dar Al Fatwa, the main Lebanese Aid agency, they were able to buy nearly 1000 warm winter jackets, and 1000 pairs of lined waterproof boots at very favourable rates. Delivering them was a problem because whenever fighting flares between the Lebanese army and the militants, or when there are dreadful

events like the beheading of Lebanese soldiers, the army imposes tight security and closes the approaches to Aarsal. Nevertheless. during a few days of relative calm the EDA volunteers were able to deliver the boots and jackets into Aarsal and personally check and initiate arrangements for distribution. (It helped that British army engineers have recently built a line of fortified observation posts to help protect nearby villages: often when soldiers manning the checkpoints realise that they were Brits, smiles broke out, and they were waved through – its nice to be popular for a change!)

The container-load of goods from Edinburgh will follow-on as soon as possible.

For those who live nearby, our warehouse at 16a West Harbour Rd, EH5 1PN will be open for donations of clothes etc. , Wednesdays and Saturdays from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. We will get the container away as soon as we can – if you can bring anything in, or collect anything during the coming week, we would be doubly grateful

Please see the website for further details:

www.edinburghdirectaid.org

Thanks once again for your support

Also needed:for Syrian refugee schools: pens, paper, working computers, sewing machines (for vocational classes)

An emergency meeting is to be held at 8.00 pm in Stockbridge House on Cheyne Street on Wednesday 17th December 2014 to discuss the wall, now demolished which runs along Comely Bank Road adjacent to the rugby grounds in Stockbridge.

The team at Save Stockbridge say they are taking this action

so that local people can be made aware of the current situation and participate in what they describe as 'an open deliberation'.

Responding to the Bank of Scotland report issued today, Deputy First Minister, John Swinney said:

"These welcome figures are further evidence of a strengthening labour market in Scotland. The Bank of Scotland report shows that the employment picture in Scotland improved for the 49th consecutive month, with the demand for permanent staff appointments also continuing to increase.

"The report comes at a time when the most recent labour market figures show that Scotland has the highest employment and economic activity rates and lowest unemployment rate of the four nations of the UK.

"We will continue to do all we can to ensure the positive trends continue, but with further job creating powers, we could do even more to help families throughout Scotland."

Robbie Renwick thrilled the crowd at the Royal Commonwealth Pool with victory in the 200m freestyle on the last day of the Scottish Gas National Short Course Swimming Championships yesterday afternoon.

Renwick, who has recently moved to the University of Stirling, has rediscovered both his form and love for the sport and has enjoyed a great meet. Swimming in lane seven for the final Renwick set off quickly but was playing catch up with Belgian swimmer, Emmanuel Vanluchene, until the final 25m when he made his move. The problem for Renwick was that Calum Jarvis (Bath) also made a move and the race was really on.

In fact nothing could separate Renwick and Jarvis and both

touched home in 1:44.19 to share the honours. Vanluchene settled for bronze in 1:44.36.

Speaking after the race Renwick was happy with the way he had performed and said,

“I thought that was a solid swim. It comes at the end of a three-day meet and I was also competing in the States last week so I was beginning to feel tired at the end.

“My move to Stirling has been really positive for my swimming. I’m really addressing some weaknesses I had in training and I’m in with a great group of guys.”

Watch the race again here:

On Saturday 20 December between 10am – 11.30am at the Eric Liddell Centre 15 Morningside Road, EH10 4DP.

Bring the children along for a light breakfast and a personal visit (and present) from Santa Claus himself! Tickets are now on sale at our reception and cost £6pp (children and adults alike.) Kids from babies to aged 8. Adults to age 100!

Please note that children must be accompanied to the event by a parent or guardian