

Five things you need to know today Edinburgh!



Cyrenians launch film today

Fair Trade for Christmas

House prices in Edinburgh and the Lothians

Submit your Story

Skate like an ice hockey star

A unique and innovative approach to supporting vulnerable young people who have been homeless is being showcased in an engaging short film to be premiered today

Devised and produced by the residents and volunteers at Edinburgh's two Cyrenians Communities, the film portrays what it is like to live, volunteer and work in the communities, and highlights why this approach works for both residents and volunteers.

And you can read more [here](#) (and you can watch the movie!)

International Development Minister Humza Yousaf today urged shoppers in Scotland to opt for a Christmas with a conscience this year.

Mr Yousaf officially opened the Ethical Christmas Fair at Edinburgh's Ocean Terminal, where he met Fairtrade stockists from across Scotland and producers of fairly traded and ethically sourced goods from Kenya and Bali.

Read more [here](#).

Latest figures released by ESPC, the leading property marketing company in East Central Scotland, show that activity in the property market in Edinburgh, the Lothians and Fife has continued to strengthen as 2014 draws to a close.

Between September and November the number of sales recorded by ESPC rose by 19% on an annual basis bringing sales to their highest level for the period since 2007. It is the market for upper-mid market that has seen the greatest rise in demand, with sales of homes in the £300,000-399,999 bracket rising by 33% annually. By contrast, sales of properties at under £100,000 rose by a modest 1% compared to the same period a year ago.

The supply of properties to the market has also improved, with new instructions through ESPC up by 13% year-on-year. Interestingly, in recent weeks there has been a particularly notable rise in the number of higher value homes coming onto the market following the announcement of the proposed bands for Land & Buildings Transaction Tax (LBTT) which will replace Stamp Duty from April 2015. During November itself the number of new instructions with an asking price of £325,000 rose by more than 92% annually.

David Marshall, Business Development Manager with ESPC, explained:

“Whilst most buyers will pay slightly less tax following the introduction of LBTT in April, those buying higher value homes will incur a higher tax bill. Under the proposed LBTT system anyone buying a home for more than £254,000 would pay more tax from April than is currently the case meaning buyers at the upper end of the market have an incentive to bring forward their purchase if they can.

“Many sellers are already looking to get their home on the market to take advantage of this expected rise in demand and

we'd expect the first three months of 2015 to be a particularly busy period for the property market north of the border.

“Overall, 2014 has seen a substantial improvement in the local property market. Selling times have shortened significantly, with the median selling time down from ten weeks a year ago to seven weeks today and more sellers are seeing their properties achieve or exceed the Home Report valuation than at any stage since Home Reports were introduced in 2008.”

We need more news. All the time we need your news. So now is a good time to tell us what you are up to. If you are the leader of a pack of Brownies or the CEO of a major company based in Edinburgh if you have news then we have space for it. Use the Submit your Story feature [here](#).

Edinburgh Capitals players will be making an appearance at the 2:30- 4:30pm general skating session at Murrayfield Ice Rink on Friday 19 December. The players will be on the ice between 3pm and 4pm. This is your chance to skate with your favourite Capitals players, chat with them and pose for pictures.

Richard Hartmann said: “With the Christmas holidays starting the guys thought it would be a great chance for the players to share some time on the ice with the fans.”

And remember we have a great competition over [here](#) to win tickets to see the Capitals play!

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