

Five things you need to know today Edinburgh



Trains!

Scottish Youth Parliament

St Patrick's Day Parade in Portobello

Photography exhibition

Saughton Park consultation

The Edinburgh Reporter is off on a train to Berwick this morning and will be interviewing the new Managing Director of Virgin Trains East Coast David Horne on the way back to Edinburgh aboard the new Virgin East Coast service which began yesterday but is having its official media launch today.

Watch out for our tweets, instagrams and reports later!

The East Coast franchise was awarded to Inter City Railways, a joint venture by Stagecoach and Virgin, at the end of last year with promises of a cleaner, more reliable train service and faster journey times over the next few years. The route from Edinburgh to London is to be cut back to 4 hours and the long-distance anytime fares are to be reduced by 10%.

The Competition and Markets Authority opened a case over the merger in December when the ink was barely dry on the paperwork. Stagecoach is a 90% owner in the venture and since the bus company also runs a bus service along parts of the same route with its Citylink operation, the CMA were concerned about fares and services. Just last week the CMA announced that Stagecoach had given sufficient undertakings to address these competition concerns.

Stagecoach has agreed that it will not do anything to affect the competitiveness of the coach services in relation to fares, timetables, frequency and service quality. However there is still a long stop date of 21 April 2015 for the CMA to accept these undertakings.



The Scottish Youth Parliament elections begin next week and if you are a young voter then you are encouraged to take part in the voting process which begins today.

Anyone aged between 12 and 25 in the Capital is eligible to vote and to get involved young people can log onto the [Young Scot website](#) and use their Young Scot number to vote (temporary numbers for voting are also available from a selection of schools and community venues across the city).

There are 12 seats representing Edinburgh open to candidates who receive the most votes at the elections in March. These are in six city areas: Central, Eastern, Northern & Leith, Pentlands, Southern and Western.

The [Scottish Youth Parliament](#) is a non-party political organisation made up of 150 young people representing every constituency in Scotland. It campaigns to highlight the views of Scotland's young people on a national and international stage.

Its members meet three times each year at a range of different locations, including in the main chamber at Holyrood's Scottish Parliament.

Councillor Cathy Fullerton, Vice Convener for Education for the City of Edinburgh Council, said: "We've seen from the success of young people voting in the Independence Referendum that there's a real appetite out there for them to engage in

politics.

"The Scottish Youth Parliament offers an ideal chance for young people to be heard on both national and local issues and I would urge everyone eligible to cast their vote next week.

"It's great that modern technology means our young people can vote online for the first time for their preferred candidate. These elections are a great opportunity to develop young people's citizenship and debating skills as well as demonstrating democracy in action.

"The council is committed to involving young people fully in the life of our city, so they feel that Edinburgh is a place where they can really make a difference. That's why we are also actively encouraging them to come up with petitions which can be put to our Petitions Committee for consideration."

Anyone interested in voting should visit the Young Scot [website](#) or contact the CEC Young People's Participation Team on 0131 529 6502.

This year the second annual Portobello and Craigmillar St Patrick's Day Pageant will take place. It is a fun-packed afternoon out for all including local groups, churches, schools, shops and families.

The parade happens on Sunday 15 March 2015, moving off at 2:00pm for a short stroll along part of Portobello Promenade.

Wildlife Exposed

For twenty five years photographer, guide and Exodus stalwart Paul Goldstein has been photographing wildlife, particularly predators. Each year he unveils a sparkling new portfolio of leopards, lions, jaguars, polar bears and some breath-taking scenery. Paul, despite his 'marmite' reputation has a large following and his safaris and expeditions are always filled

with repeat clients, like many Exodus holidays. However much like his tours, if you are expecting a comfortable ride, think again: this lavishly illustrated presentation will be opinionated, provocative and intense, you have been warned. His new collaboration with friend and photographer Kyriakos Kheziras is a 240 page book just on Predators.

Event

[Date: 03 March 2015 Time: 19:00](#)

Venue: Edinburgh Marriott, 111 Glasgow Road, Edinburgh EH12 8NF



The council is asking for the public's views on the way forward for Saughton Park. The consultation runs [here](#) until 6 April 2015.

£5.3m has been allocated to works to return the park to its former glory with bandstands, walled gardens, winter gardens, new café, public toilets and a community venue. Accompanying the new look there are plans for a programme of events for all ages with opportunities for volunteering and learning. A full business plan is being developed with Jura Consultants to find ways of paying for these future activities.

Around £400,000 has already been awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and a further application will be made to the fund after the consultation ends next month.

Exhibitions of the ambitious plans are being held from today and will continue over the next few weeks.

Exhibition Event details

Fri 6 March, 12pm to 3pm, Winter Gardens, Saughton Park

Sat 14 March, 10am to 3pm, Spring Fever Event and Plant Sale, Saughton Park

Thu 19 March, 6pm to 9pm, Slateford Green Community Centre

Wed 25 March, 1pm to 6pm, Carrickvale Community Centre

Sat 28 March, 12pm to 3pm, Winter Gardens, Saughton Park

Sat 4 April, 12pm to 3pm, Easter Bear Hunt, Saughton Park

Saughton Park design displays (questionnaires can be filled out here)

Monday 2 March to Monday 6 April, Winter Gardens, Saughton Park

Monday 2 March to Sunday 8 March, Fountainbridge Library

Monday 9 March to Sunday 15 March, Central Library

Monday 16 March to Sunday 22 March, St Bride's Community Centre

Monday 23 March to Sunday 29 March, Carrickvale Community Centre

Monday 30 March to Wednesday 1 April, Hermitage of Braid Visitor Centre

Thursday 2 April to Monday 6 April Sainsbury's, Murrayfield

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