

# Five things you need to know today



**West End BID**

**Craigmillar Parliament Day**

**Young entrepreneurs Social Innovation Weekend**

**Young Bands at the Bongo Club**

**Afternoon Tea at the Signet Library**

Edinburgh's West End BID Steering Group has launched their proposed manifesto to bring prosperity back to the city's West End through the creation of a Business Improvement District (BID) and business owners in the area are now being encouraged to have their say.

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a geographically defined or themed area, where businesses come together and commit to pay a levy to the BID Company to invest collectively in projects and services that the businesses think will improve their trading environment.

The mission of the West End BID is to promote, revitalize and develop the area. 156 businesses across 20 streets are eligible to vote in the ballot between 13th May and 25th June, when the ballot closes at 5pm.

The West End BID is focused on retail, service and hospitality businesses in the historical West End district of Edinburgh where it adjoins the neighbouring BID area of Essential Edinburgh, which covers George Street and Princes Street. The

West End BID Steering Group has agreed that these are the businesses that will be liable for the levy, and the proposed improvements in the BID have come from ideas, surveys, consultations and discussions with the local businesses.

Find out more here

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Scotland's most promising young entrepreneurs recently came together in recognition of their social innovations and to help tackle some of the biggest issues affecting the country.

Shortlisted from 267 team entries to this year's Young Innovators Challenge competition, more than 100 entrepreneurs gathered for a two-day 'Social Innovation Weekend' at the John McIntyre Conference centre in Edinburgh. Over the weekend they listened to inspiring speakers and took part in interactive workshops aimed at developing their social ideas into fully fledged businesses tackling issues in areas such as healthcare, infrastructure, and the environment.

Listening to Street Soccer Scotland founder, David Duke, the first round winners learned from David's own experience of running a successful social enterprise in Scotland on how to turn their ideas into working businesses.

David Duke, founder of Street Soccer Scotland, commented:

"It was a great pleasure to attend the SIE event, and an honour to speak to some of Scotland's brightest social innovators. There was a fantastic energy in the room and some great ideas. No matter who wins the competition, it's inspiring to see so many people wanting make a contribution to social change"

The winners also benefited from workshops hosted by business experts from competition organisers, Scottish Institute for Enterprise.

Fiona Godsman, Chief Executive for Scottish Institute for Enterprise said: "We had a record number of entries and a huge variety of promising ideas to this year's competition, reflecting the depth of entrepreneurial talent across the country. We will continue to work with those entrepreneurs to help nurture and progress their ideas into functioning


businesses which could potentially have a big and positive impact on some of the toughest social issues facing the country today.”

Each first-round winning team is now working on a video pitch which will go to a judging panel made up of social innovator, Josh Littlejohn (organiser of the Scottish Business Awards), Susan Aktemel, director of Homes for Good, Graham Bell, chief executive of Kibble Foundation and Tony Banks, chairman of Balhousie Care Group. They will then choose 30 thirty overall winners who will each win a further £2,000 in funding. They will have then the opportunity to return in August to pitch their ideas to judges for additional funding of up to £5,000.

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 Edinburgh's historic Signet Library will throw open its newly refurbished doors to Edinburgh's most glamorous afternoon tea venue from 1st June 2015, in partnership with premium caterer, Heritage Portfolio. Building on the success of the annual Pommery Champagne Café Bar, weddings and corporate events, Heritage Portfolio will open the new luxury destination, offering the finest in food and drink throughout the year.

Following a £250,000 restoration of the stunning Library interiors including unique lighting, intricate gold leaf and a bespoke handwoven carpet, the Lower Library will open under the name *Colonnades*, which is a reference to the classical pillars that grace the building. It will be one of the finest lunch and tea venues in Edinburgh. Talented interior designer, Amy Schellenberg has brought years of experience working with clients such as the Royal & Ancient, to oversee the superb restoration.

Operating to the usual Heritage Portfolio standards of excellence, the venue will have its own Tea Sommelier, Champagne experts and mixologists and an on-site pastry chef, with all food cooked from scratch and served in style. *Colonnades* will work in partnership with some of Scotland's best food producers such as the Wee Tea Company and Summerhouse Drinks, alongside the Signet Library's favourite tippie: Pommery Champagne. The signature afternoon tea will change with the seasons and reflect the best of Scottish produce. A gluten free afternoon tea option will feature, alongside a range of seasonal specialities and the best in Champagne and cocktails.

Robert Pirrie, chief executive of the Society of Writers to HM Signet, owners of the Signet Library, comments: "This opening represents the crowning glory to ten years' work by the WS Society and Heritage Portfolio. This is a new era in the extraordinary life of the Society which goes back over 500 years to when the Signet Library was built for the Writers to the Signet as a library and meeting place at the height of the Enlightenment period in Edinburgh. Over the years the building has adapted and evolved with changing times. We are now opening our doors so the public can share this unique architectural gem with us. The prestige and heritage of the Writers to the Signet lies in excellence and that is the standard both we and Heritage Portfolio have set for *Colonnades*."

Mark Miller, executive director of Heritage Portfolio, comments: "Our business is renowned for offering luxury hospitality and *Colonnades* will certainly be the best example of how fabulous we can really make an afternoon tea. With bespoke silver teapots and table furnishings from Heritage Silverware, plus fizz and finery, we have transformed the venue into something truly unique and special in Edinburgh."

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