

Five things you need to know today in Edinburgh



- Same sex marriage for all
- Serious assault on Easter Road
- Photography Competition
- Edinburgh Short Film Festival
- Aberdeen Asset Management Foundation fund holidays for children

Civil partners registered elsewhere can now marry in Scotland.

Couples who have a civil partnership registered abroad or elsewhere in the UK can now marry in Scotland, thanks to an extension to existing legislation.

From today, civil partners registered outside Scotland will be able to change their relationship to a marriage by having a ceremony here. Previously, the legislation meant only civil partnerships registered in Scotland could be changed.

Scotland made same sex relationships just as valid as mixed sex relationships when it passed the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014 in 2014. More than 1,000 same sex couples have now married in Scotland

Local Government Minister Marco Biagi said: “We are sending a powerful message out about the kind of country we are – one which is incredibly proud that same sex couples can show their love and commitment to each other by getting married.

“By passing historic legislation last year, and now extending it to include those who had a civil partnership outwith Scotland , we are demonstrating to the world how importantly Scotland views equality.”

Tim Hopkins, Director of the Equality Network, said: “We very much welcome this change, which is a small but important piece of unfinished business from the equal marriage legislation last year.

“Without this, same-sex couples living in Scotland who have registered a civil partnership outwith Scotland would be unable to marry in Scotland unless they live apart for a year first to dissolve their civil partnership. That’s obviously not an option for most couples, and now they will be able to marry in the usual way, changing their civil partnership directly to a marriage.

“The number of couples in this situation is relatively small, but the value of the change to them is huge.”

The Scottish Government is currently consulting on the future of civil partnerships in Scotland It closes on Tuesday 15 December at 5PM and can be accessed at <https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/family-law/review-of-civil-partnership>

There is no obligation on couples to change their civil partnership into a marriage which is a decision for individual couples.



Police in Edinburgh are looking for help from the public following a serious assault in the north of the City during the early hours of yesterday.

The incident happened shortly before 2:50am outside the Iceland supermarket on Easter Road near to its junction with London Road.

A 24-year-old man had been walking alone on London Road after a night out in the city centre and had turned left onto Easter Road when he became aware of a man and a woman walking behind

him.

The male suspect engaged the man in conversation before punching him in the head in an apparently unprovoked attack.

The couple then continued northwards on Easter Road before going out of sight.

Paramedics from the Scottish Ambulance Service transported the male to the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh for treatment to a head injury and he was later discharged.

Police are now appealing to anyone who may have seen the couple to come forward immediately.

The male suspect is described as white, around 5ft 8ins – 6ft tall, spoke with a Scottish accent, approximately 25 years old with short dark hair. He was possibly wearing a witch's hat along with a red hooded top and dark jeans.

The female had been wearing a distinctive pink princess-style dress, believed to be around 20 years old with long curly blonde hair and carrying her shoes.

Detective Chief Inspector Martin MacLean of Police Scotland said: "It appears that this was a random and unprovoked attack and we are carrying out various lines of inquiry in order to trace the male responsible.

"Given the distinctive dress worn by the woman who was with the male at the time, I would hope that someone remembers seeing or speaking with them at some point during the evening.

"I ask anyone with such information to contact police on 101 or, alternatively the registered charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111."



Neil Hanna Photography

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Edinburgh Bus Tours is challenging visitors and locals alike to capture the best vistas of Edinburgh's historical skyline with a new photography competition.

Kicking off today (Monday 2 November) and running until 4 January 2016, visitors can submit their best snaps via Facebook (facebook.com/edinburghtour) and Twitter (@edinburghtour), using the hashtag #wishyouwerehere.

This marks the start of the company's winter season where the green Edinburgh Tour, red City Sightseeing and blue and yellow Majestic Tour to Leith are available, with tours operating 364 days a year excluding 25 December.

The lucky winner will have their sensational shot displayed in all of the Transport for Edinburgh group's Travelshops, with a donation of £500 also being made in their name to parent company, Lothian Buses' charity of the year, Fresh Start.



Just over a week till the launch of the Edinburgh Short Film Festival 2015. There will be 23 guests lined up ranging from all over the UK to Canada, the USA, Turkey, Mexico, Italy Germany and the Caribbean.

There's pavement cinema, an award, guest curated programmes from the Trinidad & Tobago Film Festival and the Sardinia Film Festival and much more!

Full programme and tickets available [online](#).



Disadvantaged children living in Edinburgh have enjoyed well-

deserved breaks – some going on the first holiday of their lives – through funding from the Aberdeen Asset Management Charitable Foundation.

Scottish children's charity HopScotch secured £9,000 from the firm's Charitable Foundation to enable 36 children to enjoy a total of 180 days of respite at its holiday centre in Ardvullin in the Scottish Highlands.



A dozen children each from three organisations – Edinburgh Women's Aid, Aberdeen's Middlefield Community Project and Waverley Care in Edinburgh – were selected for the much-needed breaks. allowing them to spend time in safe and secure surroundings while escaping the stresses of home life and gaining and building confidence, in a caring and supportive environment.

Waverley Care works with children who are living with, and affected by, HIV/Hepatitis C in Edinburgh. Many of the families struggle to take youngsters on holiday due to poor health and financial constraints. Children live in stressful situations and often act as carers to their parents/younger siblings and rarely get the chance to socialise or form friendships.

Edinburgh Women's Aid provides practical and emotional support to those who have been, or are, experiencing domestic abuse and many of the children will have witnessed abuse or even been abused themselves. Recovery is a lengthy process for some and an opportunity for a respite break is very beneficial in very many ways.

At Ardvullin the children try a range of activities like horse riding, canoeing and indoor climbing, boat trips, biking and visiting the beach.

One youngster who went to Ardvullin said: "I loved my

Hopscotch holiday and didn't want to leave.

I did lots of exciting things like hill climbing, walking in the forest, canoeing and lots more. I loved the big, massive swing park out the back garden. My favourite part was when I made it to the top of the hill and the snow was really, really deep."

The Edinburgh-based charity's 2015 programme has provided around 350 children with a respite break at Ardvullin and this year HopScotch has worked with organisations from the Highlands, Ayrshire, Strathclyde, Perthshire, Tayside, Lanarkshire, Midlothian and Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire to identify those children most in need.

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