

# Five things you need to know today Edinburgh



**Christmas comes to the Grassmarket**

**All dogs to be microchipped in 2016**

**Have your say on Mansfield planning application**

**Hopetoun turkeys are mad about rugby**

**Christmas in Colinton**

Edinburgh's Greater Grassmarket Business Improvement District (BID) launches its programme of family-friendly festive events, including the Grassmarket Christmas lights switch-on, festive stage performances and a Christmas market. The launch will take place later today.

Edinburgh's Phelan School of Dance, will be performing on the Grassmarket Christmas Community Stage at 2pm. There will be performances from choirs, and local music, art and theatre groups on Fridays – Sundays from 12pm – 6pm. As well as stage performers, there will also be family entertainment street shows taking place throughout the Christmas period.

**A Christmas Light Switch-On to remember**

The Grassmarket's oldest resident, Maisie Trainer, who has lived in the area for over 65 years, will be switching on the Christmas tree lights at 5pm on Saturday 5th December. Either side of the switch-on will be a rousing and 'gloriously loud' performances by the Harbingers Drum Crew as well as Winter Fire Group featuring 'flame-taming, glitter-soaked team fire

monsters', part of the Beltane Fire Society (4.30pm) and Pyro Celtica, fusing fire dance and circus in an epic show stopping performance (5.35pm).

The Greater Grassmarket's Christmas market will run Friday – Sunday from 10am – 6pm, selling Christmas trees, festive Scottish produce, gifts and locally-made arts and crafts. There will also be a 'foodie haven' where guests can enjoy street food.

Norrie Stewart, Grassmarket BID Project Manager, says: "We are really excited to launch our festive events programme and bring Christmas alive in the Greater Grassmarket."

"We have a wide range of entertainers from local youth theatre groups to experienced dance groups, and we welcome any performers in Edinburgh to get in touch if they would like to perform for free on our Christmas Community Stage."

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Plans to make dog microchips compulsory in Scotland have taken a major step forward this week, as legislation is laid before the Scottish Parliament.

The law change – which received overwhelming support in a public consultation last year – is due to come into effect in Scotland in April 2016, the same time as in England and Wales.

Under the new rules, all dogs will need to be microchipped and their owners' details registered and kept up to date in a database complying with certain conditions.

[Read more here](#)

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Balerno Green Belt tell us that developers Barrett David Wilson have now re-submitted their previously refused application to build up to 150 houses on Green Belt land

opposite Cockburn Crescent in Balerno. The revised deadline for residents to comment is Friday 11th December. To submit comments, read more at [Balerno Green Belt](#).

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Hopetoun Estate, in South Queensferry, has a team of keen rugby players in residence but they're not the usual burly bunch...

The Hopetoun 'team' is this year's flock of Christmas turkeys that have shown an interest in the sport. The discovery came after the feathered friends joined in on a practice session with a Hopetoun farmer's son.

Dedicated rugby fan Joshua Eagers (16) – previously part of the Scotland Under 16 rugby team and now plays within the Edinburgh Under 18 pathway programme – was joined by the adventurous turkeys when practicing his rugby skills one afternoon.

Mike Eagers, Hopetoun Estate's farmer, explains: "Joshua was helping me on my rounds of Hopetoun Estate one day when he took a break to have a kick about with his rugby ball and noticed the turkeys looking on in awe, so Joshua passed the ball to the feathered flock and to our surprise...they got stuck in!"

Now it's a regular session with the Hopetoun turkeys loving nothing more than joining Joshua for "team training" with some of the poultry showing some promise for the game.

Mike continued: "If such a thing as Turkey rugby existed our team would be top of the league – there have definitely been some stand out "players" that

could give some local rugby teams a run for their money!"

Every year Mike and his wife Mary rear over one hundred Bronze turkeys on Hopetoun's farm, which then go on sale in the Hopetoun Farm Shop.

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Colinton Community Council tell us that Events in Colinton this weekend include:

**Colinton Primary School Christmas Fair – Saturday 5th December**

Lots of stalls, a Tombola and games

**Colinton & Merchiston Choir Concert – Sunday 6th December at 7.30pm in the Memorial Hall of Merchiston Castle School.**

Details on the [CAA website](#)

**Mini Christmas Market at Dreghorn Barracks – Sunday 6th December, 10am – 12noon**

More details [HERE](#)