

Five things you need to know today Edinburgh



Woman's body found in Bonnington flat

Forth Road Bridge

Mortonhall Memorial Garden

Christmas at Holyrood Palace

Weather warnings

Live Edinburgh News reports that a woman's body was found in a flat in Bonnington sparking a police investigation.

[Read more here](#)



Additional trains and buses are to be put in place alongside enhanced traffic management measures as part of an integrated travel plan to minimise disruption following the necessary closure of the Forth Road Bridge.

Following a further meeting of the Scottish Government's resilience committee chaired by the First Minister, ministers announced that an integrated travel plan for commuters and businesses would launch on Sunday, including a dedicated website to allow people time to plan their commute on Monday and throughout the closure period.

Additional rolling stock will see new train services put in place by Scotrail between Cowdenbeath and Haymarket that will, when combined with existing services, put an additional 6,500 seats per day into operation, increasing passenger capacity by 40 per cent over the period of the bridge's closure.

That will be supported by more than 30 additional buses from Stagecoach, which will provide thousands of extra seats per day as part of an enhanced park and ride priority service between Fife and Edinburgh, using the Ferrytoll and Halbeath sites.

It was also confirmed that, in partnership with Highways England, road management systems were being used to encourage traffic flowing north into Scotland to use routes on the west of the country where possible to ease congestion.

Transport Scotland also confirmed that mobile road signage units were being deployed on all diversion routes to provide journey time information and to keep traffic flowing on the diversion routes. Transport Scotland will also redeploy source from road operators to ensure that diversion routes remain clear and open for use.

Ahead of rush hour on Monday, ministers also announced that engagement with business groups and local authorities would be stepped up over the course of this week, with a round table to be convened via conference call on Tuesday at which businesses would be encouraged to feed back on the measures put in place in order that they could be refined in the coming days.

Transport Minister Derek Mackay said:

“We know this will be a very difficult time for commuters, businesses and hauliers and we remain extremely grateful for people’s patience while we work on strengthening alternative travel plans and minimise disruption during the closure period.

“Thanks to the hard work of our partners we are able to announce significant additional resources for public transport routes between Fife and Edinburgh. This will include additional rolling stock on the train service that will put an additional 6,500 seats a day into operation. Thanks to Stagecoach, we will also be able to rely on an additional 33

buses, bringing thousands of extra seats into operation.

“We are also grateful to the hard work of Police Scotland who have been working with Transport Scotland to ensure that traffic management systems on the diversion routes are robust and can cope with the additional traffic. To that end we have delivered ten additional portable information units to these routes that will aid traffic management.

“From tomorrow, commuters will be able to access a dedicated website offering detailed information on these updated travel options

“We will continue to monitor the situation closely and adapt our travel plan as required. While we are doing everything we can to ease the impact on travellers, we would urge people do their bit by considering their travel plans in advance and making any possible contingencies. This could include being more flexible about your work times and locations if possible.

“We also have made contact with the main business organisations in Scotland, local authorities and enterprise areas and are working together to examine the economic and business impact and identify any practical steps that can be taken to mitigate that as much as possible.”



Parents have visited the Mortonhall Memorial Garden which opened on Friday.

Specially designed plaques run along the inner walls of the garden inscribed with the names of 149 babies and short messages. The name plaques have been sensitively designed to include a dragonfly and floral motif to complement feature dragonflies that are in the garden.

The walled circular water feature garden includes beech hedges, birch trees, a stone ball water feature, rocks,

pathway, seating and is located off the existing memorial walkway within easy reach of the main chapel.

The memorial, created by Edinburgh company Green Edge, was chosen by affected parents following a series of consultation events held earlier in the year hosted by SANDS Lothian, SiMBA and the City of Edinburgh Council.



Dorothy Maitland, former SANDS Operation Manager, said: “I think it’s very important to have a memorial and I know some parents will find it very difficult to go back to Mortonhall but I’m hoping that they will change their mind when they see the garden.

“Some parents are still finding it so difficult to accept what happened that right now a memorial is not of any comfort. I really hope that in time when they heal a bit more that they will be able to visit the garden and have their baby’s name added and find comfort by doing this.

“It means so much to many parents to have somewhere where they can go that is nice and tranquil. It shows to everyone that each of these babies matters whether their names are on the memorial or not – it’s for all babies.

“Obviously there has been a lot of hurt but the Council have taken what has happened very seriously and made sure all of Dame Elish’s recommendations have been met. The memorial has been done in a very sensitive way which speaks volumes.”

Becky Govier, owner of Green Edge, said: “I wanted to create something that would reflect what the parents wanted – most importantly a space and garden they would feel comfortable in. The circular shape feels like two large hands that are coming together, embracing and protecting those within.

“The garden design unites the wishes of parents for a

contemplative space with a water feature. It also recognises both the rustic and the contemporary spirit of the setting. I hope we have created a garden that gives some comfort to the parents.”

Dame Sue Bruce, former Chief Executive of the City of Edinburgh Council, said: “This has been a very difficult process for so many people over the past three years so I want to acknowledge my personal appreciation of the support and feedback from parents in helping choose such a fitting memorial.

“The design reflects their wishes for a garden that will provide a private and peaceful place for personal contemplation and reflection.”

Andrew Kerr, Chief Executive of the City of Edinburgh Council, said: “The work of the Mortonhall Multi-Agency Working Group will continue so nothing like this can happen again. Lessons have been learnt and the action plan produced last year has now been fully implemented so we can ensure the highest possible standards are adhered to at Mortonhall.”

In line with parents’ wishes an alternative memorial is being proposed as some families had strong views that they did not wish to return to Mortonhall. The preferred location for the second memorial is Princes Street Gardens.

The creation of a memorial was one of the 22 recommendations in Mortonhall Investigation report produced by Dame Elish Angiolini and commissioned by Sue Bruce in January 2013 after concerns were raised about practices at the crematorium.

The remit was to establish the facts regarding practices relating to the cremation of babies at Mortonhall Crematorium and to learn lessons that will ensure best practice for the future.

Dame Elish interviewed bereaved families, current and former

members of crematorium staff, representatives from funeral directors, staff from other crematoria, support groups and health professionals and took opinion from experts in the field of human anthropology, law and forensic accountancy. [The report](#), with annexes, extends to over 600 pages in total.

As a direct result the City of Edinburgh Council created a multi-agency working group which consists of representatives from the Scottish Government, NHS Lothian, SANDS Lothian, Sands UK, SiMBA, Mortonhall Ashes Action Committee, funeral directors, Edinburgh Crematorium Ltd and council officials to draw up an action plan to implement Dame Elish's recommendations.



Christmas has come to Holyrood Palace as you can see in our photos here.

For the first time, the Palace of Holyroodhouse is to be transformed both inside and out for the festive season. Until 6 January, the Palace's historic State Apartments, as well as the courtyard and the ornamental fountains, will be adorned with lights, decorations, and rich foliage, making the Palace the ideal place to visit to get into the Christmas spirit.













In the Royal Dining Room the table will be laid with a silver service, presented by Scottish benefactor Sir Alexander Grant to George V and Queen Mary in 1935 to mark their Silver Jubilee. Made in Edinburgh by Henry Tatton, the service was commissioned specially for use at the Palace, with each piece engraved with the Scottish Coat of Arms. Selected pieces from a Bloor Derby porcelain dessert service which was ordered by Queen Victoria in 1842 will also be on display and warden staff will be on-hand to give short talks about the favourite foods that would have been served and the Christmas traditions that the Victorians introduced.

Throughout the festive season families will be able to explore the Palace with a special Family Activity trail, and visit the Family Room which will be transformed into a Christmas grotto. On Sunday 21 and Sunday 28 December, an additional programme of special family events will be included in admission to the Palace, including face painting and storytelling in the Great Gallery. Find out more [here](#).

On Wednesday, 10 December, gather in the Great Gallery at the Palace for carols around the Christmas tree, from 7.00pm until 8.30pm. Find out more about this special event and book tickets [here](#).

On selected dates in December and January, Exclusive Evening Tours offer the opportunity to experience the festivity of the Palace after visiting hours, in the company of an expert

guide. Find out more and book tickets [here](#).

The Café at the Palace will offer a delicious selection of tempting festive treats, from mulled wine to Christmas cake, and a winter cart in the Café forecourt will sell roasted chestnuts and home-made mince pies.

Gift inspiration is on-hand at the Royal Collection Trust Shop, which will also be decorated for Christmas.

Book tickets [here](#).



If you're in Edinburgh you may escape some of the worst weather, but you might be best to stay put.

The Forth Road Bridge is closed and the roads in the Borders could be flooded.

Deputy First Minister John Swinney yesterday chaired a meeting of the Scottish Government's resilience committee, where ministers were updated on steps being taken to address the impact of flooding on communities and key routes and to minimise the risk of further disruption.

Torrential rain and severe winds have had a significant impact across Scotland over the past 24 hours.

Further alerts are in place for most of Scotland over the next 24 hours

<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/warnings/> meaning more rain for already saturated ground.

Mr Swinney, Infrastructure Secretary Keith Brown, Transport Minister Derek Mackay, Flooding Minister Aileen McLeod and Community Safety Minister Paul Wheelhouse were joined by key responders including representatives from SEPA, local resilience partners, Police Scotland, Fire and Rescue Service, Transport Scotland and operating companies.

MART (Multi Agency Response Team) partners have been activated and present in the TrafficScotland control centre and will remain operational until after Monday's rush hour.

There has been extensive flooding across Scotland, including the most significant flooding on the River Tay in 12 years. On the M90 the local operating company was deployed to pump and clear water. The A82 and M9 have also been affected. On the M8 (W) at Bathgate a lorry struck the central reservation, causing delays.

Deputy First Minister John Swinney said:

"The Scottish Government's Resilience Team (SGoRR) has been in contact with the Met Office throughout the week, receiving regular updates on the developing weather system and its potential impacts.

"The predicted weather warnings of yesterday have been accurate and we are now dealing with a very serious situation. We have seen exceptional rainfall, caused in part by rising temperatures and rapid snow melt, combined with gale force winds.

"It is clear that people across Scotland are experiencing some challenging situations and we will do all we can to help them at this stressful time. Local authorities, Police Scotland, SEPA and resilience teams are all involved in the efforts to mitigate the impacts of flooding and weather issues across the country.

"SEPA have issued numerous flood warnings across the country and we would urge people in those areas to pay attention to the up to date information being provided, consider whether you need to travel and take all possible precautions to stay safe, particularly in the worst affected areas."

Environment Minister Aileen McLeod said:

“The situation is being closely monitored by SEPA, and I would encourage everyone to monitor SEPA’s Floodline website for the latest flood information and to sign up to receive Floodline warnings direct to their phone.


“Our emergency services and an incredible number of volunteers have been out in force today dealing with flooding issues in their local area and we would like to commend their efforts and the important role they play in dealing with this serious situation.”

Marc Becker SEPA’s Duty Hydrology Manager said:

“Across Scotland we have seen rivers have risen significantly through Saturday and will remain very high throughout Sunday. This is causing widespread agricultural flooding but is now also widely impacting on transport and communities. We are particularly concerned that the flooding situation will deteriorate further this evening in Tayside and particularly the South West of Scotland and the Borders. The risk to communities in Hawick and Newcastleton are such that SEPA, in discussion with emergency responders, have issued severe flood warnings for both towns. Impacts will include widespread property flooding, evacuations, damage to infrastructure and severe transport disruption.

“Currently, it is anticipated that the Tay at Perth will peak at levels not seen since 2006 and the Ettrick at Hawick is anticipated to be of a similar scale to the 2005 flood event. Flood levels on the Annan and Esk (Dumfries and Galloway) may also approach record levels ”



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