

Five things you need to know today Edinburgh



SNH looking for board members

Planning approval for Donaldson's

Holyrood in recess

Street of Light

Hairdressing for the homeless

People interested in helping to look after Scotland's spectacular nature are being invited to apply to be a member of the Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) board.

SNH is particularly keen to have more women on the board to meet the Scottish Government's 50:50 by 2020 initiative and Scottish Ministers will appoint four new SNH Board members to start on 1 April 2016.

SNH's work is hugely varied, from researching and combating climate change to encouraging people to get out and enjoy nature, restoring Scotland's peatlands, battling wildlife crime, and being involved in a diverse range of partnership projects that seek to enhance our biodiversity – from the majestic sea eagles to the more obscure woolly willow. A key aspect of our role is to demonstrate the link between our natural heritage and a range of wider social and economic benefits to society.

Ian Ross, SNH's chair, said: "You think of Scotland and immediately picture beautiful mountains, lochs and coastlines. It's SNH's role to help protect and enhance all of this, which is not only crucial to our heritage and health, but also to

our economy. The work we do is incredibly important, and I'd encourage anyone with a passion for nature, and experience of either scientific conservation or business, to apply for these rewarding board openings."

"In particular, I would like to encourage women and members of minority groups to apply. At the moment, we have only one woman out of seven people on our board, but we're committed to change this dramatically to meet the Scottish Government's 50:50 by 2020 initiative."

"The Scottish Government looks to SNH for both advice and hands-on management, often working with our partners, to conserve nature for future generations. That's a huge responsibility, and a challenge that the board members take to heart. The job isn't an easy one – as board members constantly have to balance protecting our environment with the resources available and what can be very differing interests across public, private and voluntary sectors – but it is a highly rewarding one. Board members fulfil an important governance and accountability role and make an important contribution to SNH's engagement with a diverse range of groups and organisations."

Current expertise represented on the SNH board includes local authority, land use, natural resource management, renewable energy, environmental education, wildlife management, strategic planning, business, information technology, modernising government, and bird conservation.

Ian added: "You don't need a detailed understanding of science and nature to apply for the board positions. We're looking for people with the experience and enthusiasm to help lead a large and complex public service organisation."

SNH board members receive £291.37 per day with a normal commitment of 30 days a year. Application packs are available from the public appointments website (<http://bit.ly/1QwZ07B>)

with a closing date of 17 January. The appointments are for a three-year period.

Planning permission has been approved by The City of Edinburgh Council for the redevelopment of the Category A Listed Donaldson's, Edinburgh.

Working in partnership, City & Country will restore and convert the majestic Playfair building, whilst CALA Evans will create a range of contemporary homes in the surrounding grounds.

The permission allows for 115 new properties sited within the Playfair building, ranging from one to three bedrooms and 84 newly built two and three bedroom homes, designed in a crescent shape to the rear of the Playfair building. The sweeping South Lawn that faces Wester Coates will be retained as an open, landscaped area.

As part of the proposals there will be 402 cycle parking spaces for residents, whilst car parking for both the Playfair building and the new build crescent will be sited underground, totalling 364 allocated residents spaces and a further 26 for visitors.



The Scottish Parliament will be in recess between 19 December 2015 and 4 January 2016. Business will resume on 5 January 2016.

The Scottish Parliament building will be closed to visitors between 24 December 2015 and 3 January 2016. The building reopens to the public on 4 January 2016.

Only a few days left to enjoy the Virgin Money Street of Light which finishes on Christmas Eve. Have you been yet? What did you think?

[The Edinburgh Reporter News](#) from [Phyllis Stephen](#) on [Vimeo](#).



Edinburgh College's young hairdressers are swapping salons for the streets this winter for a charity project to provide haircuts to homeless people.

Seven hair and beauty students took their scissors to the Salvation Army at The Pleasance and Cross Reach's Cunningham House hostel this week, cutting and styling the hair of around 30 clients who use the charities' services. They will be visiting the centres again over the winter to offer more haircuts.

Rosemary Martin, hair and beauty lecturer at the college, has run the Haircuts for the Homeless project for four years, and each year has a new set of students to take along.

Rosemary said: "It's not compulsory but my students are always up for it. The whole experience is really beneficial and a privilege, as they get the chance to practise the skills they've learnt in college on real people. The homeless centres are always pleased to see us."