

Five things you need to know today



- Four Edinburgh schools closed for detailed survey
- TISO reopens their Outdoor Experience store
- Edinburgh International Festival Director to deliver public lecture
- Crags Centre improve energy efficiency
- Museum Lates in May

Following the emergency closure of Oxfords Primary School in Edinburgh on Tuesday the council has now closed a further 3 schools: Firrhill High School, St. Peter's Primary and Braidburn Special School amid concerns about wall construction safety.

All three schools, and Oxfords Primary School, were built at the same time and by the same contractors, under the Public Private Partnership 1 (PPP1) project.

St Peter's will be closed until the end of the Easter holidays with the Council looking into alternative schooling arrangements being put in place for next week. This is as a result of the latest survey at the school.

Firrhill and Braidburn were both closed yesterday to allow further detailed tests to be carried out over the weekend. Fencing will be put up around the affected area at Firrhill High with the school reopening on Monday. If Braidburn cannot reopen on Monday alternative arrangements will be put in place.

The decision has been taken as a result of detailed building surveys carried out by the Edinburgh Schools Partnership who manage and operate the schools on behalf of the Council. This

followed issues identified at Oxgangs Primary School after storm damage to the outer wall of the school earlier this year.

The surveys focussed on the external walls of the school buildings which identified an issue with the width of the wall cavities and the wall ties so remedial works will be carried out to address this.

Although the technical specialists said the schools could remain open in normal weather conditions the Council is not prepared to take risks affecting the health and safety of pupils and staff.

Remedial works will be carried out at St Peter's Primary School over the next three weeks and it is expected this school, and Oxgangs Primary School, will reopen on Monday 11 April.

The Council says it is working closely with the Edinburgh Schools Partnership to ensure the work is completed within the timescale.

Councillor Paul Godzik, Education Convener, said: "The health and safety of our pupils and staff is our top priority and therefore the Council has decided to temporarily close these schools as a purely precautionary measure.

"Whilst the survey results have indicated that these schools could continue to operate in normal weather conditions until the necessary works are carried out we are unwilling to take any risk.

"We fully recognise the inconvenience caused by these closures and we would like to apologise to parents for this, however I am sure everyone will understand why we have taken these steps."

Parents at Braidburn Special and St Peter's schools will be

updated as soon as more information is available.

Cllr Melanie Main, education spokesperson for Edinburgh Greens, said: "Safety must be the top priority, of course, but it beggars belief that, 2 days after Oxbgangs was closed, here we are, once again, telling parents at tea time that their school is closed the next day. How on earth parents are meant to make alternative arrangements with such short notice, especially for those young people at Braidburn who often have very specialist needs?"

"On the face of it, it looks like something has gone badly wrong with the way these private school building contracts have been handled, both in building and in ongoing maintenance, that such rushed action has had to be taken. Once any emergency work is completed it is crucial that responsibility for these failings is established."

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Tiso have reopened their Outdoor Experience store in Leith, six weeks after a small fire forced them to close.

They have been in their flagship HQ in Leith since 1998, but CEO Chris Tiso opened the doors again to a queue of customers with the help of his mother Maude who founded the business with her late husband Graham in 1962.

There is a new café run by Lucana & Ross offering tasty fresh food and open for breakfast and lunch.



Pic © Greg Macvean

Chris Tiso, CEO of Tiso Group, said: "Over forty years after

my family opened a shop in Leith, it's terrific to have my mum here to help me open the doors to our new look Edinburgh Outdoor Experience.

"The small electrical fire in February created smoke damage meaning all of our stock had to be removed from the premises. The blank canvas inspired us to make some positive changes and we hope customers will be impressed by our new offer.

"We've refreshed the retail space, but also incorporated a new bike section for cycling enthusiasts aimed at the commuter, urban adventurer and kids.

"With Lucano & Ross now operating our new in-store café, we're also a great place for like-minded outdoor enthusiasts to meet over coffee or for locals to enjoy a healthy and substantial lunch.

"All of the Tiso staff share my passion for the outdoors and we look forward to welcoming customers inside, to help them get expertly equipped for going outside."

The store is open seven days per week at 41 Commercial Street EH6 6JD. For further details see www.tiso.com



Fergus Linehan was appointed in 2014, but really only took up the reins of the Edinburgh International Festival last year making a massive impact with new ideas and new events. He will speak on the the of Creativity and Community at Edinburgh Napier University next Wednesday evening 23 March 2016 at 6:00pm.

The lecture will be followed by a drinks reception. Tickets are free but you are invited to sign up by emailing lecturers@napier.ac.uk.



The Crags Centre has become more sustainable thanks to funding from Resource Efficient Scotland's SME loan scheme. The scheme allowed the business to cut costs and improve energy efficiency by carrying out new LED lighting installation.

The Crags Centre in St Leonard's area was reopened in 2012 by a group of basketballs and it is now home to a wide range of local groups from roller derby to aerial yoga.

Simon Turner, Co-founder of The Crags Centre said:

"I'm really glad we heard about the Resource Efficient Scotland SME loan scheme as it has provided a boost to the sustainability of the Crags Centre as a social enterprise.

"It's fair to say that the saving has been substantial, especially when you consider that our maintenance and replacement costs for the lights have reduced from £500 to £1000 per year to zero since we installed the LED lighting.

"The much improved quality, especially the 'whiteness', has enabled us to attract additional bookings which has increased revenue by approximately £2,000 per year as sports groups that require good quality lighting are now making regular bookings.

"As well as a cost reduction, our environmental impact has reduced and we would highly recommend other SMEs consider the loan."

Idlewild will headline an evening of Celtic entertainment at *Museum Late: Celts* at the National Museum of Scotland on Friday 13 May 2016.

The Scottish chart-toppers (www.idlewild.co.uk) will perform an acoustic set on the Grand Gallery main stage, supported by Indie folk duo Hannah Fisher and Sorren Maclean and a themed

DJ set by *Lates* favourite Vic Galloway.

Roddy Woomble, lead singer of Idlewild said: *"I'm very much looking forward to getting the chance to play at the National Museum of Scotland for Museum Lates. I understand that the evening's theme is inspired by the Celts exhibition. Speaking as a modern Celt, this is good news. This will also be the first time in Idlewild's 20 year career that Rod (Jones, Idlewild guitarist) and I have performed as a duo. So that'll be interesting!"*

The evening's Celtic theme complements National Museums Scotland's major exhibition *Celts*, 10 Mar – 25 Sep 2016 (www.nms.ac.uk/celts). An atmospheric performance by musician John Kenny and sound designer Chris Wheeler will bring the *Early People* gallery to life with the unique sound of the Deskford carnyx. The Beltane Fire Society will bring a taste of Beltane to the museum, with fiery performances of drumming, dancing, and more. Entertainment on offer will also include storytelling with the legend of Fionn mac Cumhail and other Celtic tales, hands-on archaeology, temporary tattoos and dancing with a difference at the silent ceilidh.

Popular features will return with Fresh Air FM providing the soundtrack for the silent disco alongside themed craft activities from the Red Door Gallery, object handling and engaging talks, including an exploration of the archaeology of Asterix. There will be bars and food plus the rare opportunity to simply explore the galleries of the National Museum of Scotland by night.

Tickets are on sale now www.nms.ac.uk/lates or by phoning 0300 123 6789. The live music programme is curated by media partner, The List.

Tickets for the Late only are priced £12 (£10 concessions and National Museums Scotland members), combined tickets for the Late plus admission to the exhibition, *Celts* are £20 (£18 for

members/concessions).

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