

Five things you need to know today



- Today at the Edinburgh International Science Festival
- Olio launches today!
- RNIB Manifesto
- Easter at Edinburgh Castle
- Waitrose celebrate 10th anniversary with a drawing competition

Today you might go out of town to the National Museum of Flight to see what they are doing there. As well as the new hangars which are lovely and warm and which have multimedia displays, there is a part of the Science Festival taking place there called Bird People.

Come and explore the forces of flight in the uplifting Bird People science show with medieval would be aviator and alchemist John Damian. Then use what you discover to compete in our family technical challenge.

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OLIIO is launching in Edinburgh today. It is a way to help combat food waste in the city and surrounding areas.

Smartphone users throughout the city now have access to the app providing local people and businesses with a simple way to reduce the food they waste.

OLIO is a free app that connects neighbours with each other and with local independent shops so surplus food can be shared, not thrown away. This could include food nearing its use-by date from shops, cafes and markets; spare vegetables from the allotment; cakes from an amateur baker; or groceries from household fridges when people go away or move home.

To access the app, users simply snap a picture of their items and add them to OLIO. Neighbours then receive customised alerts and can request anything that takes their fancy, and arrange pick-up from home, the store, an OLIO Drop Box, or another agreed location.

OLIO's launch in Edinburgh coincides with the Scottish Government's pioneering [pledge](#) last month to cut food waste by a third by 2025. The social, economic and environmental case for action against food waste is compelling. Globally, a third of all food produced is wasted, and in the UK, households – which are responsible for half of all food waste – collectively bin over £12.5bn of edible food per year, at a cost of £700 to the average family.

To attend the Pot Luck event please register on Eventbrite here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/olio-edinburgh-potluck-tickets-22578238118>.



RNIB Scotland the leading charity for those who are blind or partially sighted say that Scotland could be a kinder, safer, more inclusive place, and it need not cost very much. The charity's manifesto for the Scottish Parliamentary Elections 2016 is launched today saying that the benefits of some modest expenditure would bring far-reaching and profound benefits to those they represent.

Ross MacFadyen, interim director of RNIB Scotland, said: "Sight loss will, inevitably, be a more common feature of our society. It is vital, then, that we act now to contain

preventable sight loss and maximise the independence of those whose vision cannot be saved.”

Among the things the manifesto, ‘A Vision for a Better Scotland’, calls for are more support for people who are newly diagnosed with sight loss, disability benefits that recognise the extra costs involved in being blind, and more accessible public transport.

“Being told you are going to lose some or even all of your vision is devastating news,” said Mr MacFadyen. “People need reassurance that they can find their lives and independence again, help that our hard-pressed health and social care professionals are often too busy to provide themselves. There are Vision Support Services in over half the health board areas in Scotland, but we want to make sure this vital support is available to everyone.”

The charity is also hopeful that additional powers to be devolved to the Scottish Parliament over disability benefits could help make the welfare system more sensitive to the needs of people who can’t see.

The charity is also calling for mandatory training to ensure bus and coach drivers better understand the needs of passengers with sight loss, who are often more dependent on public transport. “Little things like not moving off until someone finds a seat, or telling them when their stop has been reached can make a tremendous difference,” explained MacFadyen.

Sight, according to most surveys, is the sense that most people fear losing most. “To be blind or partially sighted is to be more dependent on the good will and empathy of society,” said Mr MacFadyen. “But with the right support and assistance, people with vision impairment can lead fulfilling lives. If we can make progress with these things in 2016 we will have made Scotland a kinder, safer and more inclusive place for anyone

living with sight loss.

“The costs are relatively modest, but the gains for some of the most vulnerable in our society are profound.”



Scotland's top visitor attraction, Edinburgh Castle, has reported a record breaking Easter weekend.

Between Friday and Monday, more than 28,500 visitors crossed over the castle's famous drawbridge – an increase of almost 2,500 on the previous record, which was set in 2014. Saturday 26th March saw the stronghold welcome over 8,800 visitors alone, making it the busiest Easter Saturday on record.

The castle was amongst 77 ticketed attractions operated by Historic Environment Scotland to experience strong visitor numbers for an Easter falling in March. Over 60,900 people visited some of the country's most iconic heritage attractions. This is an increase of 23 per cent on the last Easter to fall in March, which was in 2013.

Stephen Duncan, Director of Commercial and Tourism at Historic Environment Scotland, said: “The Easter holiday weekend is always a popular time for our attractions and this year we welcomed a record breaking 28,552 visitors to Edinburgh Castle over the bank holiday period.

“With more than 30 of our sites, up and down the country, opening their doors to visitors once again, a full Easter themed events programme at Edinburgh and Stirling Castles and the opening of a new medieval stones exhibition at Elgin Cathedral, there was plenty for visitors to do and see this Easter weekend.

“Overall this was one of our best March Easters on record.”



It's been 10 years since Waitrose opened its first store in Scotland and to celebrate this special anniversary Waitrose Morningside is hosting a drawing competition for children and teenagers in Edinburgh. Adults with an artistic flair don't have to miss out, as there is a category for those aged 16 and over.

One lucky winner could see their design on canvas shopping bags in Waitrose stores across Scotland.

To enter the competition entrants are asked to create a design that celebrates Waitrose's 10th anniversary and the abundance of delicious food and drink produced in Scotland.


The competition features four age categories: one for children aged 12 and under, one for youth ages 8-11, one for youth ages 12-15 years and teenagers age 16 and over. Children can either take part individually or through their school.

The overall winner will receive a £100 Waitrose/John Lewis gift card, and their design will be printed onto canvas bags, which will be given away for free in all Scottish branches on 6 June. The runner ups in each category will receive a £25 Waitrose/John Lewis gift card.

Speaking about the drawing competition, branch manager Lindsay Clifford said "We're very excited about it and hope to receive lots of entries. We're looking forward to seeing how entrants choose to celebrate Waitrose's 10th anniversary and the wonderful food and drink that Scotland has to offer."

The closing date for the competition is 24 April, with winners announced the following month.



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