

# Five things you need to know today



- **Sofa Workshop have a photography competition for you!**
- **Annual Boys Brigade Band Contest**
- **Fife Talking Tandems will be at Pedal on Parliament 2016**
- **Edinburgh Leisure offering class for new parents (with buggies!)**
- **Action Earth launch at Bridgend Farmhouse**

The team at Sofa Workshop in Edinburgh are looking to add some local flavour to their store and need the community to help them do it.

To bring some of the picturesque scenery from around the capital city indoors, the Sofa Workshop store at Ocean Terminal Shopping Centre is calling on locals to take a photograph or draw a piece of art, of their favourite Edinburgh landmark, to win the chance to see it framed and displayed in store.

Potential landmarks for the budding photographers and artists could include Edinburgh Castle, one of the most photographed and beautiful attractions in Edinburgh, or perhaps the Scott Monument or Arthur's Seat.

Sofa Workshop is encouraging local creative talent, ranging from professional artists and photographers to ordinary folk with a passion for painting to send in their entries for the chance to have their work exhibited in store.

Store manager, Angela Lockhart, said: "We've been getting to know the local community and customers across Edinburgh over the past few years and we really wanted to find out what it was that inspired people, what building or landmark really

summed the city up and made them proud.”

“We’re looking for that shot that captures Edinburgh, its heritage and unique personality. The winning shot will take pride of place in the store for everyone to view and I’m really excited to see the entries.”

Deadline for entries is **Friday 29 April** and you can enter by sending your photograph via email to [prsofaworkshop@havasww.com](mailto:prsofaworkshop@havasww.com) or sending a CD in the post to Sofa Workshop, A View From A Sofa, Havas PR UK, 26 Palmerston Place, Edinburgh, EH12 5AL

#### Ts & Cs

- *Entrants must be 18 or over*
- *Entrants must be willing to take part in any PR related to the competition*
- *By entering the competition you give permission to Sofa Workshop to use the photo in any marketing, advertising, PR and in-store promotion for 12 months*
- *Images submitted will not be returned*
- *Images submitted after the deadline will not be considered*



More than 250 young musicians aged from nine to 18 are fine tuning their talents ahead of The Boys’ Brigade’s 37<sup>th</sup> Scottish Bands Contest, set to take place at The Brunton in Musselburgh next weekend.

Nearly 500 people are expected to head along to see the best and upcoming talent across The Boys’ Brigade with brass, woodwind and pipe musicians competing at the competition on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2016. The event will begin at 10.30am and will finish at 4.30 pm, following the awards presentation.

Bands from Companies in Ayrshire, Dundee & Angus, Renfrewshire, Inverclyde, Dunfermline, South Lanarkshire and Edinburgh, are all expected to attend the competition over the course of the day.

The bands will be performing for Councillor Jim Gillies, Depute Provost of East Lothian Council, Major General Mark Strudwick CBE, retired British Army officer and Bill Stevenson, Director for The Boys' Brigade in Scotland.



Thousands of cyclists – including at least two party leaders and a Scottish government minister – are expected to converge on the streets of Edinburgh and simultaneously in Aberdeen this weekend for Scotland's biggest demonstration for safer streets. Led by a tandem club which pairs visually-impaired stokers with sighted captains, the protest will gather at the Meadows in Edinburgh at 12 noon before cycling down to the Scottish Parliament to call for greater investment in active travel.

The Fife Talking Tandems cycling club – whose members will have ridden a round trip of 40 miles to attend the event – are leading out Pedal on Parliament to show that cycling can benefit everyone, if the conditions are right. With active travel increasingly high on the political agenda in Scotland in this election campaign, they will be joined by transport minister Derek Mackay, the leader of the Liberal Democrats, Willie Rennie – who will also cycle from Fife – and Green Party leader Patrick Harvie. Kezia Dugdale, leader of the Labour party has also tweeted the organisers that she is hoping to attend. Thousands of cyclists and marchers will join them for the ride down to Holyrood, having come from across Scotland with feeder rides coming from Cumbernauld, Kirkcaldy, Glasgow and Peebles, while riders will simultaneously gather in Aberdeen's Hazlehead Park to ride to Marischal College in a satellite event organised by the Aberdeen Cycle Forum.

The mass ride, which is now in its fifth year, has grown to the point where riders are still leaving the Meadows long after the leaders have reached the Parliament building 1.5 miles away. Since its inception in 2012 the campaign has been

successful in putting active travel on Scotland's political agenda and encouraging the Scottish government to reverse planned cuts in and increase investment in infrastructure for safe cycling.

Mike Young, secretary of the Talking Tandems, and himself a visually impaired stoker, said "Talking Tandems is both delighted and proud to be leading out this year's PoP procession. Our presence on Saturday amongst so many other likeminded people will demonstrate that visually impaired cyclists – and those who suffer from other disabilities – love getting out on their bikes for all the reasons that sighted and able bodied cyclists do; but like them, we need a safe environment in which to cycle, and sometimes this requires different approaches and additional investment. We would therefore take this opportunity to remind the Scottish Government that cycling comes in many forms besides 'mainstream' and ask them to keep in mind the needs of disabled cyclists"

Denise Marshall, on behalf of Pedal on Parliament, said: "PoP is a fun, family-friendly event but with a serious purpose. When PoP started, cycling and active travel were barely on the agenda, with regular cuts to funding. Now, the Scottish Government likes to boast that it's spending record amounts on active travel – whilst cutting funding for local authorities to spend on cycling and walking. Without proper investment, cycling will never reach the levels set by The Scottish Government's own Cycling Action Plan of 10% of journeys by bike.

"We hope that, with the election looming, our politicians will realise that now is the time to do what the majority of Scots have said they support and invest in proper cycle tracks that suit not just young fit cyclists, but groups like the Talking Tandems."



Edinburgh Leisure is offering free taster sessions for a new exercise programme, 'Mums on the Run', designed specifically for new mums (and dads) with buggies.

The free taster sessions will run from Monday 25<sup>th</sup> April – Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> May inclusive at several Edinburgh Leisure venues across the city and any mums (or dads) with a baby in a buggy can join in. All the sessions will be outside.

Based on the latest research, the class will offer guidance, advice and solutions to help mums across the city enjoy the social and psychological benefits of getting out and being active.

Ally Flannigan, Fitness Class Manager, said: "Getting back into exercise after having a baby can be an uphill struggle. With reduced sleep and trying to get into a new routine, exercise may seem like the last thing on a new mother's mind.

"However our new class, which will take place outdoors, is designed to be fun, and will be a great opportunity to meet new mums (and dads) and workout at the same time. We'll be gaining feedback from the new parents trying to get back in to exercise to help shape the programme before it goes live."

To book, contact the relevant Edinburgh Leisure venue. The free taster sessions are available to both members and non-members.

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Bridgend Farmhouse © John Knox

The Action Earth campaign, run by national charity

Volunteering Matters, launched its 2016 grant giving scheme at Bridgend Farmhouse in South Edinburgh.

Bridgend Inspiring Growth (BIG) will use their [Action Earth](#) grant to carry out a range of improvements, including a disability audit of Craigmillar Castle Park.

Hazel Flett, Committee Member with BIG says; “Thanks to our Action Earth grant, adults with a range of disabilities will be able to identify accessibility concerns which we can act upon to assist others using the park and local woodlands.


“This will be followed up by biodiversity improvements, habitat creation and community bench-building workshops. All of this will ensure greater accessibility and engagement in the park and the farmhouse. The farmhouse is a place of true social integration. From the socially isolated person with learning disabilities to a Chief Executive Officer, there’s always a new friend to meet and work alongside.”

Bridgend Inspiring Growth (BIG) exists to renovate Bridgend Farmhouse into a community-owned centre for learning, eating and exercise. They will provide educational, training and employment opportunities with a focus on the environment, sustainability and outdoor learning, as well as providing a training kitchen, cafe, events space and four new external workshop spaces (DIY, Arts & Crafts, bikes and storage) for community use.

The Action Earth campaign is supported by Scottish Natural Heritage and offers easy to access grants of up to £500. These are available for any group of volunteers in Scotland carrying out practical environmental improvements and wildlife habitat creation in their local green spaces.

Ian Ross, Chairman of Scottish Natural Heritage, and a former volunteer himself, said: “Taking part in environmental volunteering is a great way to grow confidence and learn new skills and at the same time enjoy the outdoors with like-

mindful people who want to help their local wildlife. Any volunteer can apply for an Action Earth grant, and we are very pleased to continue supporting this excellent programme.”

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