

Five things you need to know today



- Opening at the National Museum of Scotland
- Smart cards are not so smart
- M8 roadworks
- MagicFest Gala today
- Vintage Fair

The new galleries at the National Museum of Scotland on Chambers Street open to the public today with pipe bands and a party on the newly created piazza from 9.30am.

The public-private partnership which has created a new public space outside the museum at the foot of the steps includes the City of Edinburgh Council, National Museums Scotland Charitable Trust, the University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh World Heritage and a group of private donors. The rearrangement of the statues, resurfacing of the street and pavement has cost £700,000.

The statue which was in the middle of the street of William Chambers, the publisher and former Lord Provost, has been moved closer to the museum and is joined with a new statue of Edinburgh architect William Henry Playfair created by renowned sculptor Sandy Stoddart who is Her Majesty's Sculptor in Ordinary in Scotland.

The pedestrianised area will we are sure become a much loved public space after the anticipated crowds disperse later today.

The council have long wanted to improve the street and this scheme is part of a broader plan to improve public realm here and elsewhere in the city centre.

Funding for the latest part of the redevelopment of the museum exceeds £14 million and has been provided by a variety of sources including the Heritage Lottery Fund, Wellcome and the Scottish Government. As well as these three further funds were donated by more than 800 individuals and over 40 organisations.

*Lovely evening [@NtlMuseumsScot](#) looking at the lovely new galleries and marvelling at the completed piazza!
pic.twitter.com/p5doIaI9Y7*

– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [July 6, 2016](#)

Willie Rennie the leader of Liberal Democrats in Scotland and the MSP for North East Fife warns that any commuters to or from Fife could be worse off by buying a Scotrail smart card. Mr Rennie has been told by some of his constituents that there is a major anomaly which could leave anyone buying this card out of pocket.

If a commuter converts their season ticket to one of Scotrail's smart cards they lose the right to travel on East Coast or Cross Country trains. So even though the card costs the same as a paper ticket it is not valid on all services and commuters might have to buy another ticket. The MSP alleges that this could mean an additional cost of £700 a year.

Mr Rennie has contacted the Scottish Government and Scotrail to sort this out. He said: "I am calling for the price of a smart card season ticket to be reduced to reflect that it isn't valid on all services.

"I also want commuters who have surrendered their paper season ticket for a smart card to be able to convert it back to avoid the penalty charges from Cross Country and East Coast.

“It isn’t Scotrail’s fault that Cross Country and East Coast don’t honour the tickets. And Scotrail are upfront about the eligibility. But it still adds up to a poor deal for Fife commuters who could be much worse off as a result.

“Smart cards were meant to help people, not cost them extra”.

Essential maintenance work on the eastbound M8 at Baird Road will take place overnight between 8pm and 6am on **Tuesday 12th July** and **Wednesday 13th July 2016**.

The work requires a full closure of the eastbound M8 Junction 2 on slip road and main line from the Junction 2 off slip road. A signed diversion route will be in operation.

Traffic will leave at the Junction 2 eastbound off slip towards the A8 at Newbridge, and will then travel to the A720 Hermiston Gate roundabout to re-join the M8 eastbound.

This work has been planned in consultation with Police Scotland, local bus operators and City of Edinburgh, Falkirk and Stirling Councils.

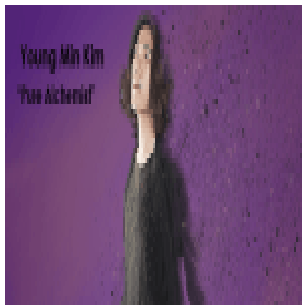
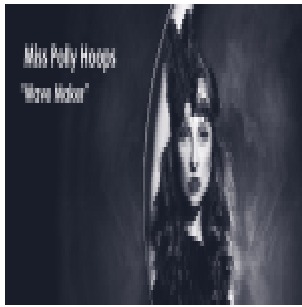
The work, with a value of £100,000, will benefit around 33,000 vehicles that use this section of the M8 each day by ensuring road users experience greater journey time reliability, continued safety and comfort.

Real-time journey information can be obtained by visiting www.trafficscotland.org or via Twitter: [@Traffic Scotland Enquiries](https://twitter.com/TrafficScotlandEnquiries)

To report a problem on the network please visit: <http://scottishtrunkroadsse.amey.co.uk/report-a-problem/>

At the Festival Theatre tonight the MagicFest Gala (still some tickets left they say! (T 0131 226 0006 boxoffice@magicfest.co.uk) we are promised a breath-taking mix of world champion illusionists, mindreading and confounding variety from Scotland and around the world. So if magic is your thing then this is the only place to be at either 2.30 or 7.30.





The Great Lafayette Award will be announced at the Evening Gala Show.

In this its seventh year the MagicFest Gala welcomes Hector Mancha from Spain, Hun Lee, Ted Kim and Young Min Kim all from South Korea, Colin Cloud from Scotland Jeton from Germany, Miss Polly Hoops from Scotland and the whole event will be compered by Chris Henry.

According to MagicFest the illusionist The Great Lafayette performed his last ever show here....

This is the last event in this year's MagicFest which included a Magic School for young up and coming magicians.

On Sunday 17 July the Assembly Rooms will host Lou Lou's Vintage Fair. You are promised more than 40 stalls provided by some of the UK's best vintage traders with vintage fashion from the fifties.

As well as clothes there will be homeware, collectibles, jewellery and accessories. And Lipstick, Lashes and Locks will offer you a vintage style hair do and beauty makeovers.

www.thevintagefair.com for more information.