

# Five things you need to know today



- Shattering the glass ceiling
- Get your air gun licence now
- Investment in libraries in the west of the city
- Pedal for Scotland photos
- Joiner turned singer appearing at the Edinburgh Folk Club

The Scottish Government has announced that 185 public bodies have signed up to its gender balance programme called Partnership for Change. This means that the organisations will strive to have boards which are gender balanced, the so-called 50/50 by 2020.



We met with Angela Constance MSP the Equalities Minister and Dame Sue Bruce, Chair of the RSNO who explained the importance of having men and women on boards.

Other organisations including Scottish Ballet, The Scottish Chamber Orchestra, National Theatre for Scotland and Scottish Opera have also signed on the dotted line.

Christopher Hampson, Scottish Ballet's CEO/Artistic Director said: "Scottish Ballet is delighted to already benefit from a 50/50 board. This gender diversity adds yet another positive element to the wide breadth of experience that our board members possess, ensuring that Scottish Ballet's governance is both robust and balanced."

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All air gun owners have only 50 days left to get a firearms certificate to ensure that they can hold on to their weapons when new laws come into force on 31 December 2016.

The new laws make it a criminal offence to have such a weapon without a licence. The penalty is up to two years in prison.


The government hopes that this move will improve public safety and reduce gun crime by taking air weapons out of the hands of those who would misuse them.

The Cabinet Secretary for Justice, Michael Matheson, said: "I'd like to remind anyone who owns an air weapon, regardless of whether or not they use it, to apply to Police Scotland for a licence straight away.

"The October 31 deadline gives users enough time to get a certificate, or a permit in some circumstances, before the new rules are introduced. If you possess an air weapon and apply for a certificate by 31 October, but the application has not been determined by 31 December, you can continue to possess the weapon without holding a certificate. You cannot, however, use the air weapon, or purchase or acquire another until your application has been decided.

"We saw from Police Scotland's surrender campaign that over 11,500 people handed in their unwanted weapon to stations across the country, but there are still a large number of people who wish to keep their weapons who are still to apply.

"The new law is a means of ensuring people can use air weapons in a regulated way without compromising public safety, so if you know anybody who owns or possesses an air weapon, please remind them to apply for a licence."

The Minister was speaking at the Juniper Green Air Rifle Club  where one of their members, Chris Martin, agreed that the new laws would be a good thing. He said: "I applied for an air gun licence when the application process first opened in

July.

“I found the website helpful and the application process straight forward. There’s no reason for people who own an air gun to put off applying.

“To help keep people safe, I would encourage anyone who owns or uses an air weapon, or family and friends who know someone who has one, to apply for a licence.”

To find out more on how to apply visit [www.airweapon.scot](http://www.airweapon.scot)



Libraries in Wester Hailes, Ratho, Sighthill and Oxbgangs will all benefit from a share of £450,000 of government funding just announced. The money will come through the Public Library Improvement Fund and the Scottish Government’s ‘Read Write Count’ initiative, the ‘Every child a library member’ programme and Book Week Scotland events.



Edinburgh Pentlands MSP Gordon Macdonald, Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop, and Councillor Richard Lewis visited Wester Hailes Library to meet pupils who could benefit from the support for the Edinburgh Explorers project.

Gordon Macdonald MSP said: “The manner in which people use libraries is changing – users still borrow books, but increasingly libraries are becoming spaces for learning, and somewhere for creative activities and community-based events. They have also become digital information hubs in addition to their role with traditional media. The Scottish Government have invested more than £2 million since 2014 in our public library strategy and this extra funding will keep libraries up to date with technology and ensure they continue to be relevant to the community across all age ranges”.



Pedal for Scotland took place on Sunday when 7,500 cyclists made their way from Glasgow Green to the Royal Highland Showground at Ingliston, and some of them even went all the way back again. You can now concentrate on getting fit for next year and enter on the website by clicking [here](#).





David Francey, the Scottish-born Canadian carpenter turned hit songwriter, singer and storyteller, appears at Edinburgh Folk Club this month as part of his latest UK tour.

The three-times Juno award-winner, whose songs have been covered by major roots music stars Del McCoury, the Rankins and the Barra McNeils, recently released his eleventh album, *Empty Train*, a collection of songs focusing on working class heroes such as sailors, signallers and stokers and telling the stories of everyday people from hospital patients to sex

workers with realism and honesty.


Originally from Ayrshire, Francey was a late-starter, playing his first professional gig in his forties. After years of secretly writing songs as he worked on construction sites, in rail yards and in the Yukon bush, he shared some with his wife, the artist Beth Girdler, who encouraged him to take them out to the public.

An instant positive response saw him release his first album, Torn Screen Door, an immediate hit on the Canadian folk scene in 1999. He won his first Juno, for Far End of Summer, three years later and has now become established on both sides of the Atlantic.

Onstage Francey links his songs with seemingly off-the-cuff storytelling, drawing listeners into songs that reflect a fascination for reportage picked up from the newspapers he delivered as a boy in the village of Kilmaurs before the family emigrated to Canada in 1966.

He appears at Edinburgh Folk Club's new home at Summerhall multi-arts complex on Wednesday 21 September 2016.



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