

Five things you need to know today

SNP Leadership contest

All candidates have now declared and been validated with support from at least 100 SNP members. They have until one month today, 27 March, to set out their aims for the leadership, and have their say on anything asked from gender recognition reforms to EU membership – and to emerge as winner.

The final candidate to declare her candidacy was Ash Regan, MSP for Edinburgh Eastern. Regan who said there had been “petty differences” and “personal agendas dividing the SNP movement for too long.

She set out what she would do about independence: “During my first 100 days as First Minister, the Government will concentrate on running the country wisely, fairly and competently.

“In tandem we will make the case for Independence by reconvening and emboldening the council of economic advisors, amongst other bodies bringing the best minds in Scotland and outwith, to help ready Scotland for Independence.

“We must move on from the Growth Commission, as too much has changed.

“The referendum mechanism has been exhausted, including the ‘so-called’ de facto referendum proposal.

“Under my leadership the SNP policy will be to explicitly declare on line one of our party manifesto in any election going forward, that should we (in conjunction or not with

other parties) achieve a majority of seats and votes cast, then collectively we will 'begin independence negotiations' on day 1 of the new Parliament.

"This is the 'Voter Empowerment Mechanism', and it is designed to let the people of Scotland decide when they are ready.

"I will hand Independence back to the people, where it belongs."

We interviewed her at the launch:

Good news

The best news at the end of last week was that the fundraising for the £35.6 million King's Theatre refurbishment has now reached a point where work can begin.

The work will preserve the theatre for the next century and will improve the acoustics, while also making the venue much more accessible, modern and vibrant. There will be an on-street café and other attractions to ensure that people can visit the theatre for some reason every day.

Fiona Gibson CEO of Capital Theatres which runs the King's Theatre said: "We are absolutely thrilled by the generous additional investment of City of Edinburgh Council and Scottish Government in the redevelopment of the King's at a level which makes it possible for us to begin construction works as planned. We are immensely grateful to the many people who have supported us on this challenging journey – we could not have come this far without you. Our major funders alongside the many trusts and foundations and corporate sponsors and individual donors will make the transformation of the King's possible and save this beloved theatre for Tollcross, Edinburgh, Scotland and preserve it for future generations. Long Live the King's!"

[Read more here.](#)



The King's Theatre – architect's vision

Cockburn is looking for a new Chair

After six years in the job, Professor Cliff Hague, OBE, has intimated he will retire as [Chair](#) of the Cockburn Association in May this year. The association is now recruiting for his replacement.

The Cockburn was founded in the 19th century to promote and encourage care and conservation of the city's unique buildings and landscape. This is one of the oldest conservation bodies and takes its name from Lord Henry Cockburn who died in 1854 and who was a renowned lawyer, judge, and literary figure. He was also one of the country's finest conservationists.

His publication *A Letter to the Lord Provost on the Best Ways of Spoiling the Beauty of Edinburgh* (1849) provided the inspiration to establish a public organisation and it remains as relevant today as when it was written. Lord Cockburn's civic contribution was recognised in 1859 by naming a new

thoroughfare 'Cockburn Street'.

More information about the Association, which will be 150 years old in 2025, can be found at www.cockburnassociation.org.uk

Election Hustings on Tuesday

Murrayfield Community Council is holding a hustings event for the forthcoming City of Edinburgh Council by-election, which will take place on 9 March 2023. The SNP and LibDem candidates did not speak at last week's hustings so this will hopefully be an opportunity to meet up with all candidates.

Tuesday, 28 February 2023 at 7.30pm at Murrayfield Parish Church Main Hall, 2b Ormidale Terrace.

Read more about last week's hustings [here](#).

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the Edinburgh Reporter

February 2023

EDINBURGH'S FREE LOCAL NEWSPAPER... CAPITAL READ FROM START TO FINISH



Simply Oarsome

Porty team cut through 40 days of Atlantic waves to complete the 3,000 mile voyage

By **STEPHEN RAFFERTY**

FIVE PORTOBELLO rowers are finding their land legs after an epic 39 day 3,000 mile journey across the Atlantic which raised more than £30,000 for young persons' charities. The crew of Atlantic Body & Soul completed the world's toughest rowing test, the Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge, overcoming 20ft waves and an overnight power outage when they had to hand steer the boat in pitch darkness.

Sean Watters, Matt Callin, Ed van der Ven, Alec Martin and Cal MacAninch - all members of Eastern Amateur Coastal Rowing Club - sailed into English Harbour in Antigua to a hero's welcome and the sound of the bagpipes - a fitting end to a six week journey from La Gomera in the Canary Islands.

Overcoming physical and mental exhaustion, the quintet and hundreds of supporters have raised much needed funds for two charities which support young people, Body & Soul and The Junction.

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