

Five things you need to know today

Our February issue

Our February issue is out today. With more on our exclusive story about Chief Constable Jo Farrell revealed in our centre spread and our new columnist to entertain you with news of all the theatre you must see, we are pleased with this month's issue.

[If you would like to make sure that you don't miss any of our monthly newspapers then sign up here.](#)

Dashing deeds

Student flats appeal has council on hop
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Chief cosies up

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the Edinburgh Reporter

February 2024

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



Year of the Dragon

Bringing success and opportunity

By PHYLIS STEPHEN

THERE WILL BE a full programme of events in the capital to herald the start of the Year of the Dragon and celebrate Chinese New Year 2024.

The entertainment in Edinburgh firms the largest celebration of its kind in Scotland and it runs from 3 to 13 February. There is a wide range of activities including the Official Chinese New Year Concert at Usher Hall which has become an annual fixture in the civic calendar.

The programme includes dragon and lion dances, a bilingual ceilidh, tai chi sessions, calligraphy and tarot card reading, all of which help to promote local businesses and to reinforce the links between Scottish and Chinese culture.

The Dragon is a significant emblem in Chinese culture symbolising power, nobleness, honour, luck and success, and it is predicted that the new year will bring opportunities, changes and challenges.

The festival in the capital is supported by Heriot-Watt University and Hainan Airlines, and is coordinated by Edinburgh Tourism Action Group (ETAG). This forms a large part of the group's China Ready initiative and ETAG will hold their annual conference during the week at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre with training sessions and industry meet-ups.

For a full run down of this month's events to celebrate turn to page seven

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Transport and Environment Committee today

The council's Transport and Environment Committee will meet today to discuss which option for a second tram line in the

city it will progress to a 12-week consultation. (There is also a huge amount of other matters to discuss meaning this is likely to be a long meeting).

All of the discussion about the proposed second tram line will have to sit within the council's [City Mobility Plan](#), (CMP) which was adopted in 2021, and is today to be reviewed for the first time. The implementation plan relating to the CMP is included in the papers to be approved today by councillors.

One of the overarching themes is that the council intends to reduce car kilometres in the city by 30% by 2030. This runs alongside The Scottish Government's aim of achieving a 20% reduction in the same timescale. The council has also set out its stall to create more walkable communities with better active travel and public transport. By 2032 around 44,000 new homes will be needed in the capital to accommodate the number of people expected to live here by then.

According to Transport Convener Cllr Scott Arthur, he believes this is the line which should have been built first, (but that is said today when the tram has already been operating for almost ten years with an extension successfully added only last year and with the benefit of hindsight).

Cllr Arthur said: "I don't know any other city with a first tram line connecting the city to the airport. I think that connecting these massive employment centres, massive destinations, and massive development opportunities is probably what should have gone in first. Also with this second line we will connect the Western General Hospital to the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh."

Cllr Arthur had previously explained to The Edinburgh Reporter that this would offer staff at the hospitals a good direct mode of transport between the two, and it is believed the staff members would create a considerable part of the tram patronage.

The preferred route from Roseburn to Granton is proposed by officers following “detailed evaluation of the potential mass transit options from Granton to BioQuarter and beyond”.

The proposals have caused much social media chatter over the last few days since the papers for the meeting were published, but the interesting thing this time round is not whether or not the next part of the tram line should be built – it is much more about which route it should take.

There are options to consider and all are set out in the lengthy reports on the council website.

[Watch the Transport and Environment Committee live or afterwards in a recorded version by clicking here.](#)

[READ MORE HERE.](#)



18/09/2023 Picture Alan Simpson

Kite flying on Portobello Beach



On Friday afternoon the [Edinburgh International Children's Festival](#) EICF invites everyone to bring a kite to fly on the beach at Portobello. The EICF takes place from 25 May to 2 June 2024.

"Kite flying in solidarity with the children of Gaza on Friday 2 February 2.30pm, Portobello Beach (Edinburgh)

"Come and fly a kite with us, as we gather to remember the mass kite flying event that took place on Al-Waha Beach in July 2011, when the children of Gaza reached a world record by flying 12,350 kites simultaneously in a symbol of resilience. This family-friendly event open to all is a celebration of the strength and joy they found on that day, a reminder of their current suffering and a symbol of hope for their future.

Details:

14:30: Meet on Portobello Beach in front of Straiton Place Park (at the bottom of Marlborough Street)

14:45 – 15:30: Kite flying

Making a kite:

If you have your own kite, please bring it. Otherwise find out how to do it here:

Coorie In in Newhaven



5th February

REFRESHMENTS, INFORMATION STALLS
FROM HEART PARTNERS & GROUPS,
VISIT THE HERITAGE SUITE AND
VICTORIAN SCHOOLROOM

Cookie in for
Winter

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US!**

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and groups! Find out what's on offer here at
The Heart and how you can get involved.**



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Edinburgh Health and
Social Care Partnership

Montgomery Street Park

The new play park at Montgomery Street Park has opened with the new play equipment but sadly not the historic helter skelter which locals tried to have restored to use. Locals are enjoying using it according to the Friends of Montgomery Street Park Facebook page.

Cllr Jack Caldwell is delighted and tweeted last week:

<https://twitter.com/JackRMCaldwell/status/1750527315656991201>



The Friends of Montgomery Street Park are working to try to save the historic helter skelter PHOTO Alan Simpson