

# Five things you need to know today

## Council budget

All of the various political groups have set out their spending plans for the next year [which you can read here](#). These will be voted on next Thursday 22 February.

The administration is led by Council Leader Cammy Day who told The Edinburgh Reporter about the plans to raise certain fees to try and balance the budget, while adhering to The Scottish Government council tax freeze.

[Read more here](#).

If the council had not agreed to the council tax freeze announced without consultation with Cosla by the First Minister then there might have been financial consequences.

Responding to the news that council leaders are in a “fundamental position of dispute” with the Scottish Government, as Finance Secretary Shona Robison confirmed that councils will lose funding if they do not back the council tax freeze, Scottish Liberal Democrat Willie Rennie MSP said: “It takes some nerve for an SNP government who blew the budget on ferries that are years late to tell councils how to run their services.

“The hypocrisy and disrespect shown by SNP ministers is truly galling.

“The current demand on public services is huge, so the warning from local authority leaders of relations having never been so low is extremely worrying.”

# Traffic flow on North Bridge to change next week

The multi million pound repair project to North Bridge continues. If the tram extension to Granton is approved – and no matter which route it might use to get to Granton, a part of the tram extension will travel from the city centre to The Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh and beyond by means of the bridge, so it is clearly essential that this work has been carried out in advance.

Now the traffic will move to the other side of the road while works continue. [Read more here.](#)

## Changes to Adaptive Bike Sessions

Thistle which operates the adaptive bikes has announced some changes to their sessions.

Centre of Wellbeing, Craigmillar

From Tuesday 13 February 2024, our adaptive bike sessions that take place in Craigmillar will be entirely volunteer led. We need to make some changes to how we run the sessions that will support us to manage capacity.

Sessions will run from 12.30 – 2.30pm and will take place in pre-booked half hour slots for up to four people at a time. These sessions will only be available to anyone who has registered to take part in adaptive bike sessions since July 2023. If required, participants must be accompanied by their support worker.

If you would like to join a session in Craigmillar, they are now bookable via Thistle reception – 0131 661 3366.

Saughton Park

Our Thursday sessions, 1 – 4pm, in Saughton Park will also now

be led by our volunteers however, no booking is necessary and new participants are welcome to join these sessions.

A massive thank you to our volunteers for their continued support ☐ We look forward to seeing you there.



Relaunch of Adaptive Bikes hub at Saughton Park, 7th January 2022  
Thistle Foundation Team members (L-R): David Holmes, Gill Messenger, Bran Cervenak, Gail Begg.  
Photographer: Susan Allan

All Ability Bikes at Saughton Park

## Idea for Mothering Sunday

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All funds raised are in aid of the OneCity Trust  
a Scottish Charity, registration no. SC034165.

## Our February issue

Our February issue is out now. With more on Stephen Rafferty's 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. We hope you like it too – we have just been [nominated for an award.](#)

[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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**Pavilion pallava**

Budget cuts deepen eye hospital crisis  
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**Shawfair shock**

New gym not fit for purpose claims  
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**Chief cosies up**

More questions for Police Scotland boss  
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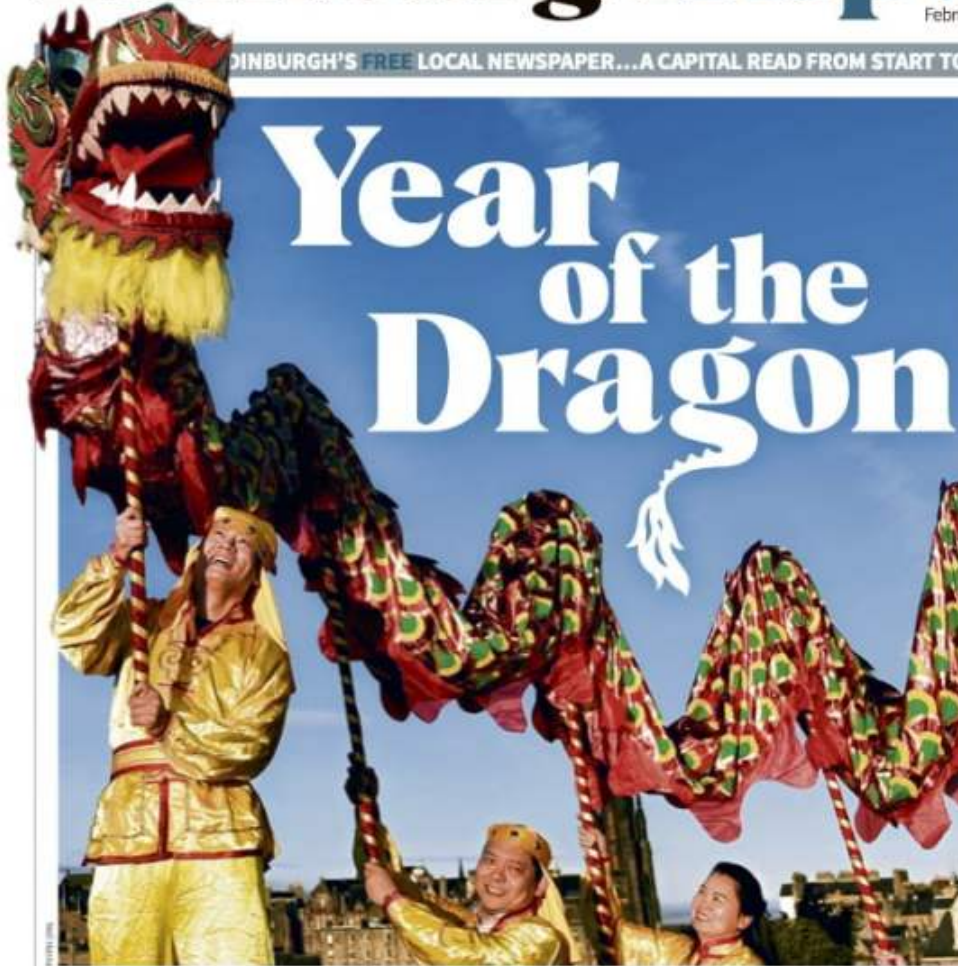
**Centre Stage**

Liam Rudden joins The Edinburgh Reporter  
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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 forms 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 celdadh, 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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