

Five things you need to know today

Love the Fringe

At this year's Edinburgh Festival Fringe a new subscription service, Love the Fringe, is being introduced to allow audience members to double the value of their tickets. The way this works is that subscribers will pay one of five tiers, each of which is designed to enhance the festival experience. The scheme is open to anyone involved with the Fringe and the income it will raise will go directly to artists and venues presenting shows at the festival.

[More details here.](#)



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Awesome aurora was something to see
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Boyack reflects on 25 years at Holyrood
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No negativity for snapper looking back on his life
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the
EdinburghReporter
June 2024

EDINBURGH

FREE LOCAL NEWSPAPER...A CAPITAL READ FROM START TO FINISH

Thomas Haywood Photography



By **PHYLLIS STEPHEN**

IT IS NOW TEN YEARS since Edinburgh Trams began running the passenger service

from Edinburgh Airport to York Place. Actually on the first day the service began at the Gyle Stop with many people trying to be the first passengers to get on board.

Edinburgh Trams have now carried more than 60 million passengers in the last decade on a fleet of 27 trams and employ around 300 people in Edinburgh. Except during Covid

tram income has risen year on year. In 2014 the half year income was £4.782 million and this rose to £23.9 million in 2023.
More about Edinburgh Trams on page 7

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Airport officially has a new owner

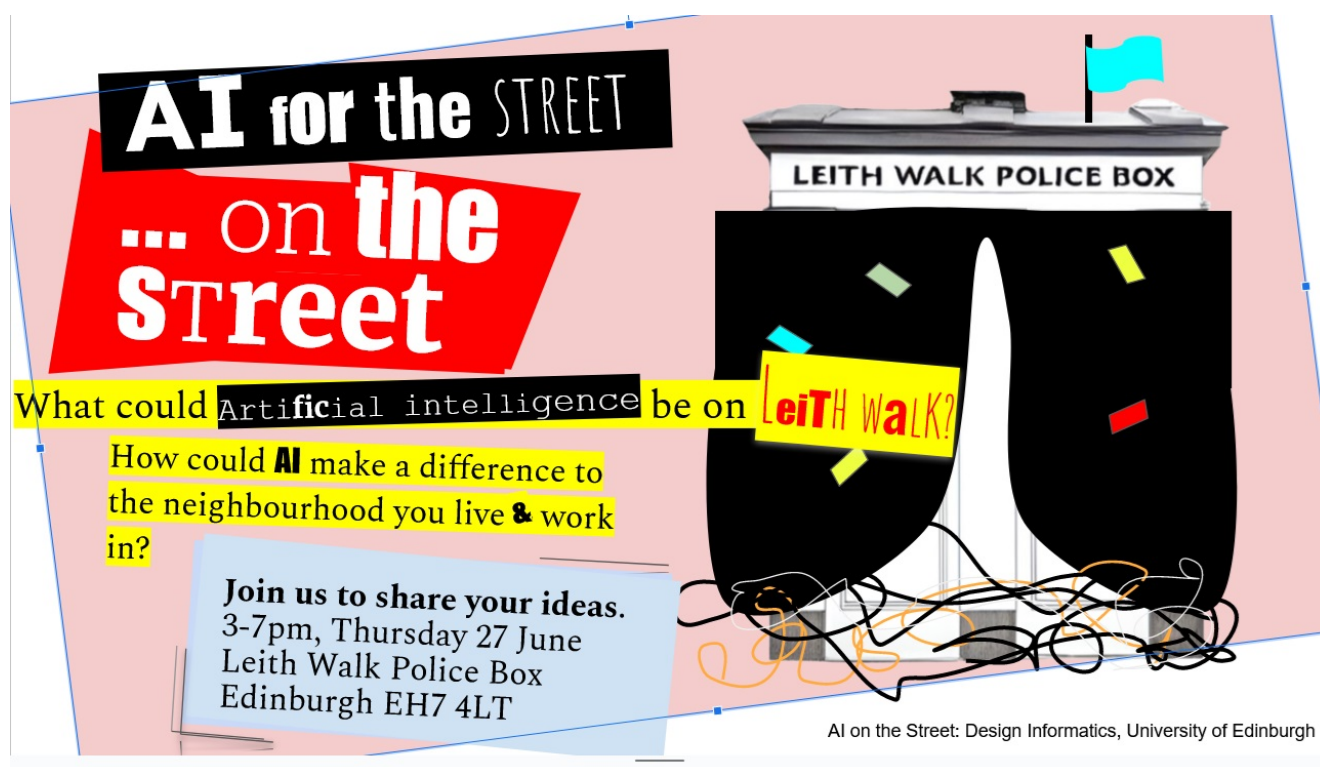
VINCI Airports has officially completed on the deal to buy

half of Edinburgh Airport in a similar deal to that entered into for Gatwick. The company now owns the majority shareholding (50.01%) which it bought for £1.27 billion. The existing owners Global Infrastructure Partners (GIP) retain the balance of 49.99%. Edinburgh is the sixth biggest airport in the UK and largest in Scotland.

All the shareholdings have now been transferred and a press conference is being held later to celebrate the deal.

AI at Leith Walk police box

Join University of Edinburgh Informatics team who will be at the police box on Thursday to discuss all the ways that artificial intelligence could make a difference to the neighbourhood.



Council meeting today

There is a full council meeting today – the last until August as councillors enjoy recess in July.

Councillors take this opportunity to formally ask questions of each Convener and receive written replies.

The questions and answers for this month are numerous – there are 29 of them. [You can read them all at this link here.](#)

One reply is a matter raised during election campaigning – particularly by Labour candidates as the party proposes putting VAT on private school fees. As a quarter of all children in Edinburgh are educated at private schools there could be some who will have to change to state schools if the fees become unaffordable for their parents.

The Education Convener has confirmed that there are around 10,000 places available at all schools in Edinburgh at present, but a steering group is already in place to discuss the implications of any new VAT policy.

One of the replies has listed 20 cultural or leisure organisations which have received the highest amount of funding from the council.

Edinburgh Leisure top the list receiving £11.15 million with a huge gap then to the next body, the Edinburgh International Festival which received £1.9 million this year.

Several SNP councillors have asked questions of the Transport and Environment Convener about a lack of refuse collections and received a fairly terse reply saying that it would have been more helpful to residents if they had spoken to council officers or the Convener direct rather than using this “formal and much slower approach”.



