

Five things you need to know today

Budget, bikes, pubs and ceilidhs all feature in our round up of what is important to know about in Edinburgh today.

Budget Day

Today Finance Minister, Shona Robison, will deliver the Scottish Budget which she says will focus on delivering progress for the economy. Ahead of that, Ms Robison visited Logan Energy, a leading clean energy technology manufacturer whose products are designed, developed, and manufactured in Scotland.

Ms Robison said: “This will be a Budget that delivers progress for Scotland, by Scotland – laying the foundations for long-term success.

“We will invest in measures to tackle the climate emergency in a way that maximizes opportunities to create jobs and provide new economic opportunities for businesses and communities. Our ambition is for Scotland’s green energy to be central to the decarbonisation of transport and industry at home and abroad, and for our expertise and innovation to be providing climate solutions, like Logan Energy, that are made in Scotland and sold to the world.

“The First Minister has made clear his focus on delivering on people’s priorities – eradicating child poverty, growing the economy, improving public services like our NHS, and tackling

the climate emergency.

“Unlike the UK Government’s Budget which treated Scotland like an afterthought, today we will publish a Budget that puts the people of Scotland first.

“We have listened carefully to the needs and priorities of organisations and businesses, and the people of Scotland. This is a budget that will deliver for them by building on the positive change we’ve delivered for Scotland, creating more jobs, and putting more money in people’s pockets.”

Scottish Labour Finance spokesperson Michael Marra said that his party would rather go to the polls than support a bad budget. He said: “This budget is an opportunity to turn the page on 17 years of SNP failure – anything else will not do.

“Every single institution in Scotland has been left weaker by SNP mismanagement and waste.

“Our NHS is dangerously overstretched, with almost 1 in 6 Scots stuck on an NHS waiting list – but the SNP has no plan to fix this mess.

“Our education system is falling down the international league tables, our justice system is in chaos and trust in public institutions is collapsing.

“More of the same will not cut it – Labour has delivered record levels of funding for Scotland and the SNP must use it to deliver a genuine change in direction.

“Scottish Labour will fight an election before backing a bad budget and subjecting Scots to another year of SNP misery.”

Pubs and restaurants need 100%

rates relief

Lothians Conservative MSP, Sue Webber, has urged the SNP government to deliver 100 per cent relief for local pubs and restaurants this week.

Ms Webber's call comes after it was revealed that pubs in Scotland are closing at a higher rate than anywhere else in the United Kingdom.

Ms Webber said: "Pubs and restaurants across the Lothian Region are really struggling and are desperate for support from the SNP in their Budget this week.

"I am urging SNP ministers to back the Scottish Conservative plan to give pubs and restaurants in the Lothian Region 100 rates relief for the year ahead, meaning they won't pay any rates relief at all.

"Pubs and restaurants are closing at a higher rate in Scotland than anywhere else in the UK. I know ones in the Lothian Region have suffered due to the shameful failure of the SNP to pass on rates relief delivered by the UK Conservative government over the last three years.

"Their struggles have now been compounded by the new UK Labour government's tax-raiding Budget.

"Pubs and restaurants are the lifeblood of the community across the Lothian Region and need a shot in the arm. The Scottish Conservatives are on their side and the ball is in the SNP's court. If we are to save our local pubs and restaurants, then the SNP must show some common sense and back our plan to avoid pubs and restaurants paying a penny in rates relief in the year ahead."

"This is a ferociously competitive market for food and drink and giving the owners the relief their counterparts in the South are receiving will give them a better chance to survive

and thrive. They are already being thumped with Labour's National Insurance raid and a healthy hospitality sector is vital for the whole city economy."

Cycle Hire scheme for Edinburgh

We may get a cycle hire scheme again in the city by next summer, depending on negotiations between the council and likely service providers.

The key aims of the scheme must be to operate within the city centre, operate on a no-cost to the council basis, and the service will be based on e-bikes.

According to the Transport Convener, Stephen Jenkinson, Scotland is the worst area of the UK for cycle hire schemes being targeted by vandals. Certainly that was one of the reasons for the failure of the Just Eat scheme, but the council is keeping an open mind on introducing dockless stations in the capital.

Cllr Jenkinson said: "We want to make it easy and accessible for residents and visitors. Our goals are to increase active travel, reduce emissions, and this is a positive step. I think if we were able to develop a successful e bike scheme, I think that it would be a welcome addition to the public transport network that we've got, and this ties in to our goals of increasing active travel."

[The papers for next week's Transport Committee meeting are published here.](#) Anyone can watch proceedings online or as a recording after the meeting has finished.



Just Eat Cycles Photo Martin P McAdam

Christmas Ceilidh at Dovecot

Dovecot are hosting a ceilidh on Saturday with The Jig Show Band.

The evening's entertainment will begin at 7pm and "the 4-piece alt folk powerhouse" will have you dancing until 11pm. [Book tickets here](#)

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/christmas-ceilidh-the-jig-shows-christmas-shindig-at-dovecot-studios-tickets-1048972233187>

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the Edinburgh Reporter

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EDINBURGH'S

NEWSPAPER...A CAPITAL READ FROM START TO FINISH



Santa's on track

By **PHYLLIS STEPHEN**

ALL ABOARD THE TRAM to get to the city centre for Christmas fun. Santa's in town ready to meet children just next to the tram stop in the Piccolo Spiegeltent in St Andrew Square, where there will be stories, a letter writing

station and a post box to send any missives direct to Santa's workshop.

The newest attraction in Edinburgh is the Christmas Tree Maze which is one of the UK's largest illuminated Christmas tree trails. Step free access but anyone who wants to explore the maze is advised to buy a ticket in advance

- and remember the EH postcode discount.

A spokesperson for producers, UniqueAssembly, said: "Edinburgh's Christmas is finally here, and with a seven-week programme packed full of family favourites, this year promises to be one of the biggest and best ever. Whether sipping on cool

cocktails in our brand new Ice Bar, enjoying a festive treat at the Coorie Inn or showing off your skating skills on the Ice Rink, there's something for everyone at Edinburgh's Christmas."

edwinterfest.com/edinburgh-christmas/

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