

Five things you need to know today

At The City of Edinburgh Council this week

School pupils return to school on Tuesday but this is a slow week for councillors.

Monday, 21st April, 2025

Tuesday, 22nd April, 2025

Wednesday, 23rd April, 2025

- [2.00 pm Special Meeting, Pensions Committee](#) – Dean of Guild Court Room – City Chambers

Thursday, 24th April, 2025

Friday, 25th April, 2025

- [10.00 am – 2.00 pm Special Meeting, Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee](#) – Dean of Guild Court Room – City Chambers
- At this meeting the Housing Committee will be asked to relax the rules to allow the council to deal more effectively with the Housing Emergency in the city than has been the case in recent months – and to allow the council to stop breaking the law.
- Such a suspension will result in an increase in the supply of homes available for suitable temporary accommodation.
- If passed, the recommendation will mean that “In

suspending the Allocation Policy, other than for those with Gold priority there will be no properties advertised for rent until the Committee is assured the Council is compliant with housing legislation related to homelessness duties.”

- Gold priority means those people who are not living in suitable housing as they require an accessible home, perhaps a ground floor property adapted for their needs – they will remain on the housing list.

Void properties

- At the moment the council is not “compliant with the relevant legislation” and it means that although the council has brought 380 void or empty properties back into its housing stock (and so reducing the number of empty homes by more than half), there are still many more people presenting as homeless than the council can find homes for.
- The proposed suspension will last for an indefinite period until the council is again working within the legislation, and it follows an earlier suspension for a fixed time between November and January which allowed the council to bring more void properties back into use and ensured that any properties the council was letting complied with HMO regulations. (HMO is a House in Multiple Occupation – and where it is used for temporary accommodation there must be facilities such as separate cooking facilities.)

Increased rental income

- In one positive, the reduction in void homes (otherwise an increase in the number of council tenants) has

resulted in an increase in the rental income which the council can charge of around £3.4 million (which will be about £4.5 million in the year).

- The council has also bought 499 homes from private developers since January 2024 – 303 of which will be used for temporary accommodation, but not all of these are yet available for immediate rental.
- Cllr Lezley Marion Cameron said to The Edinburgh Reporter: “We’re doing our best to mitigate the problems. We’re acquiring, we’re building, we’re tackling voids. But there is a limit to what we can do with the resources available. That’s just the reality, and until and unless, government at both levels act – if we have more resources, we could do far more far more quickly. But it’s for committee to discuss and decide what the officers are proposing.
- “I’m not happy with the continuing pressures on the city. I’m not pleased that that’s not being recognised or tackled meaningfully by government. And I also think it’s not just the council that has a role to play in all of this. Obviously we work with a whole lot of other housing providers that are doing their best, and house builders and people who are investing in the city, but goodness knows what other events that we have no control over are likely to impact this.”

The report for this meeting (there is only one to consider) is below. The report shows that at 31 March 2025 some 7,866 households were assessed as homeless – 14,219 people, but the council was only able to assist 5,426 households at that date – 10,400 people. Out of this number, 970 households were living in unsuitable temporary accommodation. The council increased the housing budget by £12.5 million on the basis of 6,456 households requiring temporary accommodation. (Although it should be noted that the budget for tackling homelessness is now £80 million for 2025/26 but was £28 million in

2019/20.)

The council is in breach of the legislation.

In the last year the council has failed to house people on 3,263 occasions which is an increase of around 115% on last year, although the number would have been higher but the council has put teams of officers in place to prevent homelessness such as an early intervention team.

Housing officers say a further suspension of the council letting policy and council house repairs policy would allow them to again increase the number of homes available as stock for both temporary and permanent accommodation. This would also assist the council to prevent homelessness at all – which it has failed to do.

In November the council was still letting unsuitable accommodation to around 1,500 households per night – which has reduced to 970 by this month. The suspension would allow for a further push in ensuring compliance.

The council says it has already worked hard and at pace to bring back empty properties into their portfolio for rent. Now they say they have a monthly “churn” of around 120 properties which their trades people refurbish – and that can mean minimal work, simply checking utilities after a tenant moves out, or it can be a full scale refurbish.

But rough sleeping has risen in the city with around 59 people sleeping on the streets between November 2024 and March 2025 which is up from 37 last year at the same time. And that weekly number was 75 in the last week of March. There are other external factors which also mean more people presenting as homeless – and the council has a statutory duty to house them.

But the hope is that by using council homes to house people facing homelessness (rather than temporary B&Bs etc which prove a huge expense to the city) there will be considerable cost-saving.



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At Inch Park

The Friends of Inch Park will carry out a litter pick on Star Wars Day – 4 May 2025 from 10am to noon. Everyone is invited to dress how they like – themed costume is optional. Meet at the main entrance to Inch House. Equipment provided.

[More information here.](#)

At Dovecot

Join Dovecot Director Celia Joicey as she traces the history of 20th century art in textiles ahead of Dovecot's major exhibition *Magical Patterns* in partnership with the IKEA Museum.

Featuring the work of Georges Braque, Alexander Calder, Marc Chagall, Salvador Dalí, Sonia Delaunay, Raoul Dufy, Barbara Hepworth, Fernand Léger, Henri Matisse, Joan Miró, Henry Moore, Pablo Picasso, Ben Nicholson and Andy Warhol. Learn about the important objects in the exhibition and how during the 20th century ordinary people were able to engage with modern art in a personal and intimate way through their clothing and home furnishings.

Magical Patterns explores six decades of groundbreaking textile design by IKEA. The exhibition features 180 iconic fabrics that showcase the rich history of the Swedish furniture retailer's commitment to innovation, collaboration, and experimental design.

From the early days of bold patterns introduced by textile artists Bitten Højmark and Inger Nilsson, to the revolutionary works of the Swedish design collective 10-gruppen, *Magical Patterns* highlights how IKEA has supported the creative visions of some of the most influential textile designers, including Zandra Rhodes, Marimekko, and many others.

The exhibition provides a behind-the-scenes look at the creative process that has defined the iconic patterns of IKEA. Visitors will have the opportunity to discover the playful and vibrant designs that have shaped Swedish design, from the famous stripy RANDIG BANAN to the bold, colourful ANNIKEN broccoli motif. Featuring both vintage and contemporary fabrics, *Magical Patterns* offers a unique opportunity to experience how design trends and cultural movements have influenced the textile collection from IKEA.

[Book here](#) – Tickets £12.50 and some concessions available.



Ida Petterson ANNIKEN © Inter IKEA Systems B.V. 2025

Care & Repair turn 40

This year charity Care & Repair Edinburgh celebrate their 40th anniversary.

The body was established to provide practical help around the homes of the elderly and disabled residents of Edinburgh, and

with the intention of “helping elderly people who are in most need and whose homes require repair or improvement”. Forty years later the charity still provides affordable DIY and repairs for older and disabled residents of Edinburgh, however the services and the number of people being helped has dramatically increased. If you think someone you know could benefit from knowing about the charity then do share their details.

[Read more here](#)

Free parking

And in case you are interested – although the council always encourages use of public transport and active travel – this is a day when you can park in the city for nothing. Free parking

On Monday 21 April, you can [park for free](#) in public parking bays and on single yellow lines.

Bonus news

This is Juno – [find out all about her big win at the weekend here.](#)

The big race at Musselburgh was won by four-year-old Juno from Portobello against some fearsome competition – from the other corgis...

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– The Edinburgh Reporter ([@edinreporter.bsky.social](#)) [20 April 2025 at 10:15](#)

