

#GE2017 Fireside chat with Tommy Sheppard MP for Edinburgh East



It was just a short time ago that we interviewed Tommy Sheppard MP about his chances of becoming an MP to represent Edinburgh East. He then went on to make a barnstormer of a maiden speech without notes, and has been active in many Westminster debates since.

Following last week's announcement that there is to be a snap General Election we met up with him to have what turned out to be a long chat about the reasons behind an election called by Theresa May on 8 June 2017.

All SNP MPs have now been selected to stand in the seats they currently hold, so three years ahead of when the next election would have taken place, Mr Sheppard is faced with about seven weeks of campaigning to keep his seat. He won Edinburgh East with a majority of 9,106 votes in 2015.

[The Edinburgh Reporter – fireside chat with Tommy Sheppard MP](#) from [Phyllis Stephen](#) on [Vimeo](#).

TER : We probably didn't think we would be back here quite so soon!

TS : Well it's crazy times. I went down to Westminster on the train after the bank holiday weekend. I looked at my diary and thought this looks like quite an uneventful week. It's going to be quite dull.

Then within an hour and a half of getting on the train suddenly we are in general election mode! Never a dull moment!

TER : Why do you think Theresa May has called this election?

TS : Oh I think there are three reasons fly she has called the

election. The first is that she thinks she can crucify the Labour Party in England because of the poll ratings that she has.

The second is that Brexit is going to get pretty messy in the years ahead, and that's going to come back on the government, so she wants to cut and run to the electorate now before that starts.

The third reason is that if she leaves it for another couple of months several dozen of her members of parliament might well be facing legal charges for election fraud from the last election, so she does not want to take that risk either.

So this election is being done entirely for the convenience and benefit of the Conservative party. In that sense I think it is a monstrous abuse of the democratic process, and they're putting party political advantage above the public interest.

But it is what it is. It's on now and we will fight it, and fight it to win."

TER : Here in Edinburgh East do you know yet who your political opponents are going to be?

I don't know. The runner-up last time was the Labour Party candidate and former MP, Sheila Gilmore. I don't know whether Sheila is going to stand again. I don't know if anybody even regards Labour as the challenger to the incumbent this time round.

I suppose the SNP is in the fortunate position of having most of the MPs already there and wanting to stand again. We have all been confirmed as candidates while other parties are, fairly desperately I should imagine, trying to get candidates in place. They've only got two weeks to do it, it's not a long time.

TER : Do you think there is enough time between now and 8 June to have a reasonable campaign?

TS : No I don't. I think this is a cut and run election which is being done by the government with undue haste. I think they are trying to play the advantage they sense they've got in the polls down south.

I worry there is quite an authoritarian streak creeping in to the Conservative party to be honest.

It seems that a majority of 30 is not enough, they have to have 130. They don't want any opposition at all it seems.

Anybody who does oppose anything they say is branded as a

saboteur or disloyal to the country.

These are not good times that we are in to be honest.

Theresa May's refusal to take part in TV debates is all part and parcel of this. I think that is going to come back to haunt her.

Of course it is worth noting that this is the second year in a row where the Westminster ballot has interfered with the timetable of a Scottish election.

Last year they put the Brexit vote in June, despite us trying very hard and voting to have it in September to keep some distance from the main Scottish Parliamentary election.

But they went ahead and had it a month after, and now we've got just five weeks between the council elections which are already underway and this general election. It's not enough time, of course it's not enough time.

This is what the Fixed Term Parliament Act was meant to prevent. People were meant to know that the elections were on a five year schedule, so you didn't get the advantage of being the government and being able to fiddle the dates and the press and policy announcements.

That was supposed to be behind us we were supposed to be cleaning up politics by doing that, and now Theresa May has driven a cart and horses through that for her own advantage.

TER : Has anything changed with regard to what the SNP will be campaigning on this time round?

TS : It's going to be pretty much the same things to be honest. We haven't, sad to say, achieved what was in our 2015 manifesto. In fact we may be facing a government, after this general election, which feels itself stronger and even further to the right in the United Kingdom, and trying to do the things that we are seeking to oppose with even more vigour.

The road ahead is going to be a rocky one, but we remain committed to fighting this government's austerity programme, to making the case for investment in public services. We will be proposing again that we go for steady and sane growth in public spending, in order to be the engine of economic recovery.

The two years in between has not changed that. The whole thing is a lot more murky and uncertain, because no one knows exactly what the Brexit deal is going to be.

I think pretty much 90% of the manifesto we had last time we

can dust down and represent to the electorate.

The other added dimension to this is of course the debate about Scotland's future.

We are adamant that when the Brexit deal is known, probably in a couple of years time, and before it's too late to do something about it, then the people of Scotland ought to be able to choose whether or not that is indeed the type of United Kingdom they want to remain part of, and the one they voted to stay in in 2014.

I think it's reasonable to say that should happen at a time when all 27 other European countries will be deciding if that Brexit deal is satisfactory.

If the unelected House of Lords can have a vote on that agreement, I think the people of Scotland ought to be able to express a view on it as well.

But that is for the future, and we are not seeking a mandate for that at this General Election because we already have a mandate for that in the Scottish election from last year. The Scottish parliament has already decided that that is what it wants to do.

What this will be a judgement on though, is Theresa May's refusal to respond to these requests from the Scottish Government; her refusal first of all to seek any compromise solution, any differentiated solution that would allow us to protect Scottish interests in the Scottish economy and respect Scottish public opinion.

She has refused that.

TER : What do you think the mood is at Westminster? On Tuesday morning there must have been quite a lot of confusion. What's the mood amongst your fellow MPs?

TS : When I got into the Houses of Parliament on Tuesday lunchtime shock and surprise was the first thing.

You sensed the Tories were fairly chipper. They really think they have pulled a fast one here. They think they're holding all the cards. They think they are going to crush in their own words the Labour opposition in England. They're very cock-a-hoop about it.

I think they may get their comeuppance to be honest. Seven weeks is a long time in politics. The Labour MPs looked pretty depressed about it. Some of them are sitting on very thin majorities, and are feeling very unnerved and uncertain.

I think generally the biggest feeling was one of annoyance. We are only two years into the parliamentary term, the government has a majority, no one is trying to prevent it implementing its programme. This is an unnecessary election it's not one that many people wanted, and it's being done entirely for the benefit of the Conservative Party."

Field hockey – Forsyth joins son on Malaysia trip with Team GB



Derek Forsyth (blue shirt) on the bench with Scotland. Picture Nigel Duncan Media

Derek Forsyth, Scotland's senior men's hockey coach, will join Great Britain's men's team as assistant coach for the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup tournament in Malaysia from 29 April to 6 May 2017.

The Scot will team-up with Bobby Crutchley who leads his new-look squad for invitational tournament which features four of the world's top eight teams.

Included are the current World Champions and Champions Trophy holders Australia, plus New Zealand, Japan, India and Malaysia.

Forsyth said: "It's a great opportunity to see close-up how the Great Britain set-up works, contribute to the coaching team and to work in that environment at a high-profile tournament."

One of his two sons, Alan, who plays for top English side

Surbiton, is included in the 18-strong playing squad.

The former Kelburne striker, who has been Scotland's Player of the Year, is the highest scorer in the men's Premier Division in England with 20 goals.

Field hockey – Grange slip allows Kelburne to claim title

Division One men: Grove Menzieshill 4, Watsonians 0; AAM Gordonians 3, Uddingston Deans Eng 2; Hillhead 1, PSL Team Sport Clydesdale 1; Grange 2, Western Wildcats 3; Edinburgh University 0, Kelburne Bromac 2

KELBURNE Bromac coach Gordon Shepherd saluted his squad who came from behind to snatch their 13th Division One title.

The Dundonian admitted that he did not expect Edinburgh-based league pace-setters Grange to slip up but they lost 3-2 at home to Western Wildcats, Kelburne's arch rivals, after being 2-0 ahead.

Shepherd's men then comfortably disposed of Edinburgh University 2-0 at Peffermill and Shepherd said: "When I woke up this morning I didn't expect this.

"Before the game we talked about preparing for next week when we play in the Scottish Cup Final.

"I didn't think that Grange would slip up and but there was no way we could hide the score from the players.

“Just before they stepped on the pitch they found out what they had to do and they controlled the game totally.”

Ben Peterson in the first-half and Lee Morton converted in the second-half to wrap up the title.

Across town, Grange coach Davie Knipe and his squad admitted the 3-2 defeat by Western was hard to take.

He added: “They played a really good game and we made mistakes.”

Dom Wilde and Todd Mills fired Grange, who last won the league in 2002, ahead but a double from Adam MacKenzie and a single from Roshan Anderson saw them spoil Grange’s party.

Meanwhile, Edinburgh University women were crowned Division One champions for the third time in four years after a 6-1 win over city rivals Watsonians with Amy Brodie netting a treble .

Josh Campbell, Kane O’Connor and Yrick Gallantes graduate into the Hibs’ Academy



Josh Campbell, Kane O’Connor and Yrick Gallantes all graduated into the Hibs’ Academy professional ranks at the Player of the Year Awards, sponsored by Carabao, last night.

16-year-old Josh has been involved in the Development Squad for the last year despite his young age, and scored a memorable late winner in a 2-1 win over St Mirren in September

2016 for the side.

Kane, a central defender, has enjoyed a landmark season so far, with the teenager involved with the Development Squad in their league and cup campaign, as well as featuring for Scotland at under-17 level, notably in the Victory Shield.

Yrick, who signed his professional contract last week, has shown great promise and has continued his development at Hibernian, with the attacking player making his SPFL Development League debut at the age of 15. He has been involved in Development Squad matches this campaign and recently scored against St Johnstone in a 5-0 victory for the side.

Eddie May, Head of Academy Coaching at Hibernian, is pleased for the three young players as they make the transition into the full-time set-up at the Club.

He said: "Josh, Yrick and Kane have all performed incredibly well in training sessions and in matches, and it is a testament to their ability that they have all contributed to the Development Squad in what has been an exciting season for the team.

"The next step is to advance as players and get to the level required to be first-team players with Hibernian. The coaching staff here have full belief in the players to make that transition, and we will support their efforts to achieve their targets."

The Hibernian Development Squad are in action on Tuesday afternoon at Oriam against Partick Thistle in the SPFL Development League, with the game kicking off at 2pm.

Ice hockey – Britain win with Brooks earning first cap

World Championships, Division One, Group B: Great Britain 4, Croatia 2 (in Belfast)

Brendan Brooks became Great Britain's 400th cap when he iced in the national side's 4-2 win over Croatia in their World Championship, Division One, Group B, clash in Belfast.

The Canadian-born, Fife Flyers star, who has also played for Braehead Clan, was one of three debutants along with Sir Rod Stewart's son, Liam, who plays for Coventry Blaze, and Sam Duggan who ices for a Swedish club.

Croatia made the home side work hard and they were level going into the final session after Croatia equalised in the second period but Britain won the period 3-1 to take the points.

Nottingham Panthers forward Robert Dowd, Russell Cowley (Coventry Blaze), Evan Mosey (Rockford Ice Dogs, USA) and David Clarke (Nottingham Panthers) scored for Britain.

Scottish-born coach Peter Russell must now prepare his squad to face Estonia in the second game on Monday night.



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Man and woman charged after

drugs valued at £500,000 recovered in Oxbgangs



A 25-year-old man and a 29-year-old woman have been charged by police after a substantial quantity of drugs were seized from within properties in the west of the city.

Officers from the CID Pro-Active Unit searched addresses in Redford Road and Oxbgangs Street and recovered heroin, cocaine and cannabis with a street value of almost £500,000.

Both are due to appear at Edinburgh Sheriff Court today.

Detective Inspector Alan O'Brien from Gayfield CID said: "Police Scotland has a zero tolerance policy towards drug related offences and we will continue to deal with any offences reported to the police using every resource at our disposal.

"Tackling the supply of drugs, and the often devastating consequences it has on our communities, is a top priority and we will continue to take action to identify those involved in drug related crime.

"The public can assist greatly in helping police tackle drug related offences and I would urge anyone with information to come forward by contacting Police Scotland on 101 or contact the charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111."

Speedway – Monarchs roar back and Tigers shoot down Comets



Red-hot Ricky Wells punched up the numbers as he continued his fine form at Scunthorpe Scorpions. Picture by Nigel Duncan Media

SGB Championship: Scunthorpe Scorpions 37, Edinburgh Monarchs 53.

Scunthorpe: Ryan Douglas 7, Carl Wilkinson 6, rider replacement for Lewis Kerr, Michael Palm Toft 8, Dimitri Berge (guest) 7, Richard Hall (guest) 6, Josh Bailey 3

Edinburgh: Sam Masters 8, Josh Pickering 6, Erik Riss 12, Max Clegg 4, Ricky Wells 12, Mark Riss 11, Mitchell Davey 0

Edinburgh Monarchs powered to victory at Scunthorpe Scorpions after surviving an early scare.

The Armadale combine were 16-8 behind after four heats but got into gear to win ten straight heats to stay on top of the ten-strong SGB Championship.

They ran out 53-37 winners to complete an early league double over Scorpions.

Ricky Wells continued his fine form with 12 points and German racer Erik Riss roared back after a disappointing score against Redcar Bears on Friday to also collect 12 points.

SGB Championship: Glasgow Tigers 46, Workington Comets 44

Glasgow: Aaron Summers 12, Dan Bewley 2, Richard Lawson 11, Nike Lunna 5, Richie Worrall 11, Tom Perry 3, Jack Smith 1

Workington: Craig Cook 13, Mason Campton 4, Ty Proctor 4, Adam

Roynon 7, Thomas Jorgensen 6, Matt Williamson 9, Rob Shuttleworth 1

Glasgow Tigers were forced to come from behind to shoot down fired-up Workington Comets.

The home side lost the first two heats to go 8-4 behind and only drew level after the seventh race at 21-21.

Battling Tigers went ahead for the first time after Heat 12 with a 37-35 scoreline and it was tense after that with the sides entering the final race with Tigers leading 43-41.

Former Edinburgh Monarchs star Craig Cook won the heat but in-form Richie Worrall and skipper Aaron Summers took second and third places for a 3-3 and a 46-44 win.

Summers was Tigers top scorer with 12 while Worrall and former Comets rider Richard Lawson collected 11 points each.

Cook was Workington's best with 13 points but their Reserves could have been the difference.

Tom Perry and Jack Smith scored four points for Tigers while Matt Williamson collected nine and Rob Shuttleworth one for the visitors.

Two new bus routes to take you to Fort Kinnaird

Lothian Buses numbers 18 and 49 will take you shopping at Fort Kinnaird more often.

The number 18 will go to the shopping centre from the Royal

Infirmary Edinburgh by way of Little France and Greendykes Road.

Number 49 will connect up Leith, Lochend, Portobello and Fort Kinnaird.

There are also additions to the number 30 service in the early morning and evening too.

Liam Smith, Centre Director at Fort Kinnaird, said: "We are delighted Lothian Buses is increasing its services to Fort Kinnaird. We will now be better connected than ever before to areas within, and on the outskirts of, Edinburgh via public transport.

"From speaking to our customers and staff, we are confident these new routes and additions to the timetables will be very welcome indeed. We also look forward to welcoming new customers who will find it easier to travel to our one-stop shopping, dining and leisure destination."

Fort Kinnaird shops are open until 10pm on weekdays and 6pm at the weekends. The new bus services will run into the evenings with the Service N30 providing a 24-hour link to the centre, so people can enjoy a post-shopping meal or late film.



Keith Finlay, Business Development Manager at Lothian Buses, said: "We are delighted to be extending services 18 and 49 to Fort Kinnaird, which will complement our existing service 30. Recent development and growth at the shopping centre is incredibly encouraging and we are optimistic that there is now sufficient customer demand for these additional links. With significant employment, shopping and leisure opportunities we are sure both services will be well received, helping increase the overall attractiveness of the destination and the number of journeys made by bus."

Fort Kinnaird has 70 leading brands including Marks & Spencer, Primark, Outfit, TK Maxx and HomeSense, TGI Fridays, Five Guys and Odeon.

To view the timetables, please visit www.lothianbuses.co.uk

What's on at the Queen's Hall this week

 Tinariwen, Tuesday 25 April 2017, doors open 7pm

Grammy Award-winning group of Tuareg musicians from the Sahara Desert region of northern Mali who have been playing since 1979. Special guests include Kurt Vile and Mark Lanegan.

[Booking details here.](#)

Bagpipes Gu Leor, Wednesday 26 April 2017, 7.30pm

This extraordinary concert celebrates the rich diversity of instruments and musical styles present in Scottish folk music, featuring music from the Borders to South Uist.

[Booking details here.](#)

The Lorna Red Quintet, Thursday 27 April 2017, 8pm

The Quintet features Euan Stevenson (piano); Konrad Wisniewski (saxophone); Jim Drummond (drums); and Jim Allan (bass). The band play both jazz standards and originals. Special guests.

Edinburgh Academy Concert, Friday 28 April 2017, 7pm



Pupils perform an entertaining and varied programme of music, including concert bands, chamber choirs and solos from senior pupils.

[Booking details here](#)



Al Stewart, Saturday 29 April 2017, doors open 7pm

Back To The Bedsit Tour featuring Dave Nachmananoff and Tim Renwick. Performing from his legendary album Bedsitter Images and Year Of The Cat and many more.

[Booking details here.](#)

Building a brighter future through fishing



Dusk on the Union Canal near Edinburgh, a venue for some coarse fishermen. It is instruction on coarse fishing which is helping inspire young people. Picture by Nigel Duncan Media

Get Hooked on Fishing ([ghof](#)) is an angling charity which creates opportunities for young people, building a brighter future for them, their families and local community.

It was set up in 2000 by Mick Watson, then a policeman in County Durham, who used angling, which was his passion, to

engage local young people in a rewarding activity divert them from anti-social behaviour.

Its success in improving school attendance rates and involving participants in positive alternatives to criminal behaviour resulted in interest from politicians and local agencies across the country.

The Home Office Positive Futures said: "Most Youth Service professionals who have encountered the Get Hooked on Fishing scheme have sensed something special about the project. There is an apparent synergy of vision, commitment, process and tangible outcomes."

Some schemes are based on coarse fishing, some on sea angling and some on fly fishing.

The trust works with partners like the Environment Agency, the Angling Trust, the Angling Development Board, Positive Futures, charitable trusts, central and local government.

Most importantly, the charity seeks to engage with local communities, particularly those who have high level of economic or social deprivation.

[More information here.](#)

ScotRail Alliance using smart technology



In its second 'Summer of Smart' the ScotRail Alliance is

converting its most popular tickets to Smart Technology. Over the next three months, the switch will help customer beat the queues by allowing them to preload their Smartcard before they travel.

After the success of last year's program, which saw every route in Scotland upgraded to enable Smart ticketing and also moved all season tickets electronic, this summer they will offer Flexipass tickets, single, returns and off-peak tickets as they increase the convenience for travellers.

Promoting the use of the Smartcard; a benefits package has been constructed with high street brands that allow customers to gain a little more value for their money.

ScotRail Alliance Commercial Director Cathy Craig believes "Switching to Smart means no more standing in queues to purchase tickets. Customers can buy at home and then just tap through the gates. This takes some of the hassle out of travelling and will make it easier and faster for people to get about Scotland.

"Alongside the introduction of our brand new faster, longer, greener trains – and the arrival of our fleet of fully refurbished inter-city trains, Smart ticketing is helping transform rail travel."

"With every route and every station in Scotland now equipped with Smart ticketing facilities and a further plan to combine these tickets with bus and ferry travel companies this really is the 'Summer of Smart' for Scottish travellers."

Three Edinburgh pubs feature in new publication

Three Edinburgh pubs are celebrated as traditional coaching inns of historical significance in the latest publication from the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA).

Historic Coaching Inns of the Great North by beer writer Roger Protz features The Tolbooth Tavern, The Beehive, and The White Hart, the city's oldest inn which dates from 1516.



The publication includes maps showing key roads for each section of the route, practical information including recommendations for local visits and quirky anecdotes to convey the history and legends of the Great North Road.

Mr Protz said: "The Great North Road is part of British folklore, which is still alive today thanks to the survival of these magnificent coaching inns.

"Travellers can use this guide to retrace old routes and enjoy some of Britain's most fascinating traditional pubs while learning about the history and culture that is draped along this iconic road."

You can order the publication from today for £12.99. [CLICK HERE.](#)

James Keatings wins Hibs' 'Goal of the Season' award for Falkirk strike



James Keatings has won the Hibernian FC 'Goal of the Season' award for his late strike against Falkirk which resulted in a vital three points in the race for the Championship.

With Hibs drawing 1-1 at home, the former Hearts' striker latched onto a Brian Graham knock down and cut inside to his weaker foot before curling the ball into the top corner of the net, sparking wild celebrations from the supporters.

That result virtually ruled Falkirk out of the race for automatic promotion and within a couple of weeks the title was wrapped up.

Speaking at the awards ceremony to Hibernian TV, Keatings said: "It was a very good feeling to score that goal. The thing that stuck in my mind when I scored was the feeling I had last season when we got knocked out by Falkirk, so it was obviously good to get the winner against them this time and it was a great goal. I managed to get in onto my right foot and caught it perfect.

It came in the 92nd minute when we were going for the title against a team that have caused us problems for the last two years so it was a good time to score.

"Winning promotion feels great. It's been a long season and it dragged out near the end but it was great to finally get over the line and get this club back to where they belong."

New tech encourages active Young Scots

A new national digital development which rewards young Scots for being physically active has been launched by Scotland's youth citizenship and information charity, Young Scot.



'Connect Your Tech' gives young people aged 11-26 the opportunity to sync their wearable fitness devices (such as Fitbits and Misfits) or mobile phone apps to the Young Scot Rewards programme.

Using the free system, young people receive Reward points for being physically active. The Reward points can then be collected and then redeemed for unique experiences and rewards.

Currently, young people receive points for a 20 burst of physical activity or by completing at least 7,000 steps per day. In the future, Scot plan to develop further challenges and ways to use the technology to encourage physical activity.

To sign up users should [CLICK HERE.](#)

The project is part of Active Rewards and programme has been supported by the Scottish Government through the Commonwealth Games Legacy fund. The Legacy fund supports programmes and help deliver a programme of activity which will continue to remove barriers and encourage Scots to become more physically active. 'Connect Your Tech' will be promoted through local authorities and the sportscotland Active Schools Network.

Minister for Public Health and Sport Aileen Campbell said: "Having an active lifestyle has a positive impact on physical and mental health, so it's exciting to see Young Scot

using innovative technology to help young people to be more active, more often, backed by Legacy 2014 funding.

“We want to encourage a behaviour change across Scotland and get people of all ages and abilities to get more active and we are working to provide the opportunities that will lead to that.”

“We want to encourage a behaviour change across Scotland and get people of all ages and abilities to get more active and we are working to provide the opportunities that will lead to that.”

Louise Macdonald, Chief Executive of Young Scot, said: “Being active doesn’t just mean sport – it could be everyday activities like walking to school or college, and dancing along to your favourite music.

This is a great example of technology being used to tackle a wider issue. This is just the start for the ‘Connect Your Tech’, and it will be further refined and developed. It’s an exciting time ahead.”

The system works with a wide variety of devices and most smart phone applications to reward all types of physical activity including walking, dancing, swimming, cycling, running and a huge range of activities.

Users need to be part of the Young Scot Rewards programme, a free service for all Young Scot card holders. There are currently over 80,000 young people signed up to the Young Scot Rewards programme.

Users can save up and redeem points for Rewards such as driving lessons, tickets to top events and work shadowing opportunities. A special series of active rewards have been created with sporting equipment and tickets for sporting events.

iMultiply's quiz raised over £3000 for Maggie's Centres

iMultiply's annual charity quiz raised over £3000 for [Maggie's Centres](#) at another sell-out event.



A spokesperson said: "We would like to thank all those who supported, attended and assisted this year. It wouldn't have been such a success without the support of everyone and the businesses that donated prizes for the event. Big thanks to Colin the quizmaster who delivered yet another well thought out and engaging quiz.

"A massive congratulations to the winning team "Team Stormborn" who won this year's trophy with an impressive 44 points.

"Runners-up were Tom's Tremendous Plums who came second place after *just* losing the tie-break!"

Council Elections 2017 – Manifestos for local

government



The main political parties have now published all their manifestos with pledges on a variety of local government issues.

Conservatives

The Conservatives in their local election manifesto and on other local leaflets we have seen are very much using this as an opportunity to resist any second independence referendum, although this is not the remit of local authorities. Otherwise they say that they will put life back into the local economy, with more money staying in everyone's pay packets.

They would like to introduce a more flexible local government structure with better accountability through directly elected provosts. But they also admit that this cannot be a one size fits all approach.

The Conservatives say that economic growth should not however be driven at the expense of the environment, and they would like to establish a 75% recycling rate by 2035.

Green Party

The Greens want to place the power in the hands of the electorate, by having participatory budgeting so that citizens can decide how council money is spent. Pupils parents and teachers will have a real say in how schools are run, and care workers will receive the Living Wage Plus.

Under the Green Manifesto council rents will be cheaper, as will buses, and there will be a broadband action plan for every council within a year of the election.

Community groups will have a say in running parks and energy

schemes, and green spaces will be protected.

Liberal Democrats

The Scottish LibDems claim that they are on the rise again and will play a major part in Scottish councils after the 2017 elections. They aim to raise the quality of local government and fight poverty and oppression.

Their aims at national level are to decentralise power to local authorities, and to get improved resources for councils from The Scottish Government.

With an emphasis on excellence in education and on mental health, they say they have a can do will do attitude to local government and would deliver excellent services.

Scottish Libertarian Party

The party has a number of candidates in some of the wards across the city. They say that they “stand with the people of Scotland in favour of individual liberty, a free and sound economy, foreign neutrality and political independence”.

SNP

The SNP want more money for classrooms giving more power direct to schools, more affordable housing promising to build 50,000 new affordable houses across the country and they plan to devolve 1% of council budgets to local projects.

As well as backing local business and boosting jobs, they ask you to vote SNP to protect local services.

Here are all the manifesto pledges for you to read in full.




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Walking Football sessions in and around the capital



Walking Football has seen a surge in popularity in recent years with teams and projects developing in settings from football clubs, local authorities, community groups, sports clubs and in healthcare settings.

The sport is aimed at keeping people aged over 50 involved with football if, due to a lack of mobility or for other reason, they are not able to play the traditional game.

Though based on association football, the key difference in the rules, from standard football, is that if a player runs then they concede a free kick to the other side. This restriction, together with a ban on slide tackles, is aimed both at avoiding injuries and facilitating the playing of the sport by those who are physically disadvantaged

Walking Football has the potential to improve people's lives. Benefits include increased physical activity, improved mental health and wellbeing, access to additional sources of support

and the opportunity to form new friendships for those living in isolation.

The sport is now so popular that a national tournament is scheduled to take place at Glasgow Green in June and a national league is due to start later this year with games taking place at Ravenscraig.

Sessions currently taking place in the Edinburgh area include:

Edinburgh City at Meadowbank every Thursday 12.30 to 2.00pm

Hearts at World of Football every Tuesday from 12.00 to 1.00pm

Heriot Watt at Riccarton Campus every Wednesday from 12.30 to 1.30pm

Heriot Watt at Riccarton Campus every Friday from 2.30 to 3.30pm

Hibs at the club's Training Centre at East Mains every Tuesday from 3.30 to 5.00pm

Midlothian at Bayne Memorial Hall, Loanhead, every Wednesday – 14.00 to 16.00

Midlothian at Ladywood Leisure Centre, Penicuik every Friday – 10.00 to 12.00

Contact numbers for all the Edinburgh and Lothian sessions can be found [on the website here](#) and anyone interested should make contact in advance to confirm sessions are on.

Regular player and member of the Scottish Walking Football Network Colin Mackay told the Edinburgh Reporter: "I was first introduced to walking football through the Hibs Still Game and Fit Fans in Training programmes almost four years ago. Through these excellent initiatives, I was fortunate to lose almost four stone in weight and improve my fitness levels, encouraging me to eventually go back to playing running

football at both 5/6/7 and even the odd 11 a side game.

“Although I thoroughly enjoyed this, playing against lads up to twenty-five years younger took its toll and injuries began to mount up so walking football seemed the perfect alternative.

“Hearts began walking football sessions in August 2015 and I have been a regular ever since and now play up to four times a week with Edinburgh City, Heriot Watt and Hearts including a trip to the Algarve to play in an international walking football festival in October last year.

“It is absolutely brilliant to be still playing the game as I approach my 66th birthday and, apart from the fitness and wellbeing benefits, I have met dozens of really great lads, many of whom have suffered life threatening illnesses and injuries yet are now enjoying both the physical and social opportunities that walking football provides.

“Everyone can play this variation of the game regardless of ability, fitness or age and at Edinburgh City Walking Football, where I am one of the organisers, we have a few lads who have played at professional level, ex amateurs and players who had previously little football experience. The ages range from 40 to an incredible 87 years young with an average age of around 63.2”

Photo : Hibernian and Gala Fairydean Rovers with the Scottish Cup

Police operation to highlight the space cyclists need to use roads safely



Plain clothed police are taking to Edinburgh's streets to highlight the space cyclists need for everyone to use our roads safely.

Operation Close Pass will see drivers who pass an unmarked police cyclist too closely pulled over and given advice using a specially designed mat which shows how much space a person on a bicycle needs when overtaking them.

PC Dominic Doyle from the Divisional Road Policing Unit is leading the initiative locally and said that the close passing of cyclists is a concern, with the sense of close passing vehicles often cited as a significant disincentive to cycle.

"A lot of drivers see a person on a bicycle riding on the road on in a cycle lane and don't consider that passing them closely puts all road users in danger. It could constitute careless or even dangerous driving and you would fail your driving test for that.

"Those drivers that we stop during this operation will be shown how closely they passed the unmarked officer by standing on our specially designed mat. You should allow at least as much room as you would when overtaking a car when passing a person on a bicycle, giving consideration to the maximum speed limit and time and distance available to you."

The initiative is being piloted in Edinburgh, having been originally developed by West Midlands Police, with the intention of rolling it out across Scotland. Three-hundred-

and-ninety-eight cyclists have been injured in collisions in the capital over the past two years, 62 seriously, and one has died.

The operation is running alongside Cycling Scotland's Give Everyone Cycle Space campaign. Keith Irving, Cycling Scotland chief executive, said:

"Operation Close Pass is a welcome new initiative by Police Scotland to improve road safety. Education and enforcement are essential to making safer roads for everyone, whether we are cycling, driving or walking. This initiative is one of the many we need to take to tackle the increase in serious injuries amongst people cycling. We aim to see the scheme rolled out nationwide so everyone will benefit, complementing the Give Everyone Cycle Space road safety awareness campaign which reminds people to drive and overtake safely around people riding bikes."

Chief Superintendent Andy Edmonston, head of road policing for Police Scotland, has welcomed Operation Close Pass.

"We are constantly working to make Scotland's roads safer for everyone, and I am very pleased to see this innovative approach being piloted in Edinburgh where a large number of people cycle to commute and for pleasure.

"I would encourage all road users to take responsibility for their own safety whilst respecting that of others, and any road traffic offences that are seen by officers during the operation will be dealt with appropriately. I would urge cyclists to make themselves as visible as possible to other road users through positioning and clear signals, reflectors and lights after dark and light-coloured clothing, and to ride safely according to the law."

International Parental Alienation Awareness Day 25 April 2017

Tomorrow is another awareness day but this one is marked from Australia to Zanzibar and back again.



The phrase parental alienation is the situation where one parent no longer sees their child on a regular basis, often due to influence of the parent who has residence. Some of that influence is brought to bear on the child themselves, and it can affect the whole family including grandparents.

Families Need Fathers Scotland is an organisation based in Edinburgh, and they are using the day to highlight the issue to politicians, judges, lawyers and other professionals who work with families.

Ian Maxwell, National Manager of FNF Scotland, says:

“As awareness grows of parental alienation and the damage that it does to all the parties concerned – even the alienating parent – we hope that ways of working with affected families to counteract and undo alienation can be developed and improved in Scotland. The family courts also need to develop an understanding of how best to handle such cases.

Families Need Fathers Scotland is marking Parental Alienation Awareness Day by launching a crowdfunding campaign to raise funds to support innovative work to counter alienation. We also are seeking to raise the topic in the Scottish Parliament

on the Awareness Day.”

Scotland's biggest ever Festival of Museums programme unveils exciting events in Edinburgh and the Lothians

Museums Galleries Scotland has launched its largest ever Festival of Museums programme, with a record-breaking number of events including 26 across Edinburgh and the Lothians.

From 19-21 May, over 130 events will take place in museums across Scotland in a celebration of culture and history.



Events in Edinburgh and the Lothians include:

- Vintage Gala Day, Prestongrange Museum, Saturday 20 May – a special time travelling gala day celebrating 65 years since the Pithead Baths opened in 1952
- An Edwardian Affair, City Art Centre, Saturday 20 May – inspired by echoes of genteel Edwardian Edinburgh, enjoy an Edwardian themed afternoon tea with us, served to you by our costumed performers
- Large Scale Animation of Edinburgh, City Art Centre, Sunday 21 May – fast-paced family animation session, create a large-scale 2D charcoal-drawn animation inspired by the magnificent 'Edinburgh Alphabet' exhibition.
- Public Art Trail: Scientists, Animals and Cells, Oh My!, The

University of Edinburgh Art Collection, Saturday 20 May – one-off guided tour of the history and heritage of the Kings Building Campus

- Tour of the Anatomical Museum, Anatomical Museum, Friday, 19 May – rare opportunity to take a 45-minute guided tour of the University of Edinburgh's Anatomical Museum.

- An Evening with Dark Edinburgh, St Cecilia's Hall: Concert Room & Music Museum, Friday, 19 May – a talk followed by workshop on how to create stunning images in Edinburgh given by the man behind Dark Edinburgh photography.

Museum venues across the country will welcome visitors with creative and hands-on activities, while spotlighting the wealth of culture in Scotland's best-loved attractions. For the festival's 11th year, there will be events for everyone, from little ones to big kids, both day and night – including treasure trails, public art events, theatre performances, historical re-enactments, a feast, a vintage gala day and even a silent disco.

Festival of Museums events will take inspiration from Scottish history – ancient and modern – from the lives of the Picts and Border Clansmen, the rich culture of the Vikings and the swashbuckling escapades of Scotland's pirates to the culinary choices of the glamorous Georgians and the genteel pastimes of the elegant Edwardians.

Joanne Orr, Chief Executive of Museums Galleries Scotland, said: "This year's Festival of Museums is bigger, bolder and more exciting than ever. The action-packed weekend will give visitors in Edinburgh and the Lothians a chance to celebrate culture, discover history and learn something new – as well as have some fun. We want to ignite imaginations and to encourage people to explore Scotland's incredible museums and galleries."

Culture Secretary, Fiona Hyslop, said: "I would encourage everyone to take part in the Festival of Museums, it offers a

packed programme of activities for all ages with 130 events expected to be held all across Scotland. The event has become a diary fixture with museums and galleries and raises their profile and reputation with visitors.”

The Festival of Museums is run by Museums Galleries Scotland, the national development body for Scotland’s museums and galleries. Museums across the nation, no matter how large or small, can get involved in the Festival of Museums by creating a unique event. Museums Galleries Scotland provides grant funding and a range of support for participating museums.

To view the full festival programme, visit:
festivalofmuseums.com

Lord Provost runs the London Marathon

Edinburgh’s Lord Provost Donald Wilson finished his third Virgin Money London Marathon today.

Here’s the [@LordProvostEdin](#) after completing the London Marathon ! Well done! pic.twitter.com/FJ6SwUoIk7

– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [April 23, 2017](#)

Running in his trademark ‘chain’ of office running gear, he completed the 26.2 miles to raise money for the One City Trust, adding to the more than £12,000 total he has raised for

the charity so far over the three marathons.

The money raised will be go towards fighting inequality in Edinburgh. The [OneCity Trust](#) has provided emergency funds to local Edinburgh organisations such as [Get2Gether](#), which helps young people with disabilities socialise and build friendships, and [Bridge8](#), which provides a gateway to Edinburgh's outdoors to support disadvantaged young people.

The Lord Provost's donation page will remain live until he completes another marathon on 28 May at <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/LordProvost>.

The Lord Provost said: "There's nothing easy about a marathon and I'm relieved to have once again made it to the finish line! If you told me a few years ago that I'd be running from Blackheath to Buckingham Palace once, let alone three times, I would have thought you were mad! This race has been a London Marathon hat-trick for me and it really has been an incredible experience. I would like to say well done to the thousands of other people who took part and thank the many people who have supported me every step and every mile of the way.

"That said, the challenge isn't over yet. After a short rest, I'll be back in training for the Edinburgh Marathon in just a few weeks' time! I'm still fundraising, running for Edinburgh and all of the groups and organisations that have and will be helped by the One City Trust, so my donation page is still live. Please help me make the training and pain worth it if you can!"

Edinburgh City Secure SPFL Status



Hibernian may have relinquished their hold on the Scottish Cup on Saturday but there was better news for their near neighbours as Edinburgh City secured their place in the SPFL next season after defeating Annan Athletic 2-0 in the Ladbrokes League Two game at Meadowbank.

Last season's Lowland League winners earned promotion to the SPFL nearly a year ago after winning last season's League Two play-off final against East Stirlingshire. Season 2016/17 has been a tough slog at times but City's form since the turn of the year has been impressive. City ensured they would not be involved in a play-off tie against either this season's Lowland League winners East Kilbride or Highland League winners Buckie Thistle when goals from former Hearts, Celtic and Scotland striker Craig Beattie and Lewis Allan secured victory over Annan Athletic.

Both teams had players sent off in injury time, with City's Chris McKee and Annan's Darren Ramsay seeing red.

City's splendid achievement is fitting reward for the hard work and dedication of manager Gary Jardine, assistant Ross MacNamara and the players.

For the next three seasons, Edinburgh City will groundshare city neighbours Spartan's Ainslie Park Stadium while Meadowbank Stadium is being redeveloped.

Dylan McGeouch praises character of team mates as Hibs exit Scottish Cup



Hibs' midfielder Dylan McGeouch praised the character of his team mates for coming back from a two goal deficit to draw level against high-flying Aberdeen at Hampden Park yesterday.

The Dons, who are likely to finish the season in second place behind champions Celtic took the lead in the 12th second after a mix up in the Hibs defence then added a second from a free-kick midway through the first half.

Derek McInnes's men looked to be cruising and Hibs' fans feared a hammering but a change of formation paid immediate dividends and substitute Grant Holt pulled one back before half time before McGeouch equalised on the hour mark.

The influential former Celtic player was then forced to leave the field with an injury and was replaced by Andrew Shinnie.

From them Hibs looked the more likely to win the game until a cruel slice of luck gave Aberdeen a late winner when Jonny Hayes' speculative effort struck Darren McGregor which wrong footed Ofir Marciano and rolled into the corner of the net.

After the final whistle, the Hibs players received a standing ovation from the 20,000 supporters.

After the game McGeouch told Hibernian TV: "It was an awful start and we gave them two goals and it could have gone three or four but we showed great character to get back into the game.

"The manager made a few decisions and changed the formation a

bit which worked in our favour then when we got back into the game it looked like we were the team who were going to get the winner but football's like that.

"Holty (Grant Holt) coming on gave us an outlet and we could put it long and pay off him and play in their half and get space. "I thought that Holty was great. He scored his goal and set up the other goal and all afternoon he was a nuisance.

"They got a goal and it's hard to take. The shot was probably going wide and the deflection could have gone anywhere, but overall we did well and we can take a lot from the character we showed to get back into the game.

"Overall it was an entertaining game and the fans appreciated the effort we put in this season, especially the cup run and we have a lot to look forward to. Its a good place to be.

"Promotion was the number one priority and we achieved that last week, now we have to get ourselves ready for next season."

Speedway – Summers has Cook in his sights



Craig Cook who comes to Glasgow Tigers on Sunday with Workington Comets and is considered a real danger man. Picture Nigel Duncan Media

Glasgow Tigers skipper Aaron Summers is relishing the

challenge of facing old rival Craig Cook at Ashfield on Sunday (tapes-up 5pm).

Success-hungry Tigers square-up to Workington Comets who are led by the Great Britain international who was also once captain of Edinburgh Monarchs.

Cook is in fine form and has 28 points in two matches this week in speedway's top league, the SGB Premiership, including a 15-point maximum away from home.

And the man nicknamed The Cookie Monster is a former track record holder at Glasgow.

Summers, who also once rode for Edinburgh, is the current record holder they go head-to-head in the opening race. and the Aussie said: "It's not like he's (Cook) unbeatable around there.

"He is good on a bike and he is talented, but anyone could come there and win a race if they've got the skills."

It is only Glasgow's third home match of the season and Summers said: "No match is easy so all the boys have to be on top form. If they are, we should do it."

Meanwhile, Edinburgh Monarchs travel to Scunthorpe Scorpions (tapes-up 5.30pm) and chairman Alex Harkess wants an improved performance.

His men beat Reading Bears 52-40 in the Championship at Armadale on Friday but Harkess felt they took too long to tame the visitors.

And he said: "We can get better."

Neil Lennon criticises players after semi-final defeat



Neil Lennon criticised his players after Hibs' narrow defeat to Aberdeen at Hampden this afternoon and although he admitted that some may get accolades from the fans, he said that they would not get any from him and insisted that 'gallant losers were losers.'

Individual errors saw Hibs two goals down after 24 minutes before an inspired substitution helped level the game.

Hibs looked the more likely to score a winner however a speculative strike from Jonny Hayes deflected off Darren McGregor and wrong footed Ofir Marciano with minutes remaining.

After the game Lennon said: "Don't commiserate, it wasn't good enough. It was pathetic. Utterly pathetic. It was a semi-final, the pitch was good. We have been playing on quagmires all season. I wanted the players to go out and express themselves.

"You get set-backs, losing the early goal, but it didn't worry me because I have character in there but they just didn't show it. The first two goals were schoolboy stuff.

"I thought I was getting there but some old, bad habits started creeping back in there, players hiding, miscontrolling the ball and not being physical enough.

"We didn't turn up for 30 minutes then for the next 60 we were the better team by a long way.

"We scored two wonderful goals but you can't give any team a two goal start in a semi-final.

"People talk about tactics but it's about decision making. We got it back, the game could have gone either way but to be fair to Aberdeen they got a huge slice of luck for their winning goal, it happens.

"But for the first 30 minutes, I don't know, they need to have a good look at themselves. I don't mind conceding a goal after one minute because you have 89 to get back in, but we didn't show any responsibility. Two players did, Bartley and McGeouch.

"The rest looked like the boy band they've been over the last three or four years. It takes a 36 year-old (Grant Holt) to come on and change the game for us. I thought he was brilliant.

"We get back to 2-2 but it's not our day because we lose Dylan and that's been the story of his career. It was a blow at the time because we were on top and comfortable.

"We had a problem at centre half all day. Efe had an allergic reaction to something before the game. He took some sort of medication at half-time.

"They got a huge slice of luck for the goal but I still think Darren could have done better for the third goal too."

"We make the change and suddenly we come alive. We looked poor at the back at times, too poor for my liking. We didn't look comfortable enough.

"We could have won the game, if we hadn't have gifted two goals we probably would have.

"Okay, it was a massive stroke of luck for Aberdeen's winner, maybe Darren could have adjusted his feet better.

“But for the first two goals Aberdeen didn’t have to do anything. We just gave them the goals.”

“Coulda, woulda shoulda. Gallant losers are losers. Forget it. You all know me, I am not interested.

“Boyle’s in and should go down and it’s a penalty but he stays on his feet. Cummings is in and lets the ball run away from him. We have had opportunities to make it 3-3. McGregor kept winning headers in their box and we didn’t react to the second balls.

“They are the most important bits that make a difference. You might get a touch or a penalty, we were too static.

“They get no accolades from me, they might do from the punters, but no accolades from me. Not today.

“They should have won, the opportunity was there, and they will have loads of regrets about the game. I’m not here to pamper them or say well done after that it’s no good.”

Aberdeen end Hibs’ hopes of retaining Scottish Cup with 3-2 victory



Hibs’ hopes of retaining the William Hill Scottish Cup were dashed following a narrow defeat to high-flying Aberdeen at Hampden Park this afternoon.

After a dreadful start to the game, Hibs fought back from two

goals down to equalise only for a cruel deflection to end their dreams.

Neil Lennon made one change to the starting XI that defeated Queen of the South to clinch the Championship title last weekend with Marvin Bartley replacing Andrew Shinnie.

Hibs took almost 20,000 supporters through to the national stadium and they were in fine voice in the pre-match build up outnumbering the Aberdeen fans by almost two to one.

Hibs kicked off but found themselves a goal down after only 12 seconds. John McGinn was dispossessed in the centre circle then Marvin Bartley won the ball and passed to Darren McGregor who tried to find Efe Ambrose but Adam Rooney intercepted the pass and fired the ball low into the bottom corner of the net.

The Dons then dominated possession and added a second in the 24th minute. Fraser Fyvie was booked for a challenge on Kenny McLean then from the resultant free kick Ryan Christie curled the ball into the net at the near post with everyone anticipating a cross ball.

Neil Lennon then made a tactical switch with a visibly disappointed Fraser Fyvie replaced 36-year-old Grant Holt.

The substitution paid immediate dividends when Martin Boyle beat three defenders and sent a cross to the back post which Holt nodded past Joseph Lewis with his first touch of the game.

Hibs then dominated the remainder of the first half but were unable to grab an equaliser.

Hibs deservedly drew level on the hour mark when Bartley won the ball in midfield and passed to Dylan McGeouch on the half way line. The midfielder surged forward and at the edge of the box played a One-two with Holt, who flicked the ball back into

his path and he kept his composure to fire the ball into the net, sparking wild scenes from the large Hibs support.

Both teams had chances but the game was decided by a stroke of luck with four minutes remaining.

Jonny Hayes tried a speculative long range shot which appeared to pose no real threat to Ofir Marciano's goal until it took a deflection off the unfortunate McGregor and rolled into the corner of the net.

Boyle had a great chance but was denied by some excellent defending then in time added on Marciano came up for a corner which he headed towards goal, but Lewis produced an acrobatic save to ensure Aberdeen progressed to the final.

After the game Lennon told BBC Scotland: "We needed a 36-year-old (Grant Holt) to come on and get us playing.

"He was brilliant, Holt. We scored two fabulous goals and then we're in the ascendancy. They got a huge slice of luck with the third goal.

"The first 30 minutes was pathetic and totally unacceptable. It's nothing to do with tactics or formations, it's to do with decision making and individual errors.

"We didn't deserve to lose the game but you can't give a team like Aberdeen a two-goal head-start.

"Anything can happen once it gets back to 2-2. It just wasn't our day, but I'm not happy with the way we approached the game.

"All the old habits coming back in, people hiding, not taking responsibility. Gallant losers are losers."

"Darren (McGregor) has a lapse in concentration. You can't concede a goal [Christie's free-kick] from that angle. Aberdeen haven't worked to score three goals. The first two

goals are unforgiveable.

“They’ve got loads of character but they shouldn’t have to fight back in the first place.

“They’ll go away with loads of regret. They were as good as Aberdeen if not better.

“I felt we were good enough and had the players to go to the final and beat Aberdeen and it was certainly in evidence today for long parts of the game. ”

Hibs: Marciano, Gray, McGregor, Ambrose, Stevenson, Boyle, McGinn, Bartley, Fyvie, McGeouch, Cummings. Subs: Laidlaw, Holt, Keatings, Shinnie, Forster, Humphrey, Graham

Aberdeen: Lewis, Logan, Shinnie, Considine, Taylor, Reynolds, McLean, Christie, Rooney, Hayes, Jack. Subs: Alexander, McGinn, O’Connor, Pawlett, Stockley, Wright, Storey

Referee John Beaton

Attendance 31,969

SNP confirm all MPs to stand at #GE2017

The party’s NEC confirmed this morning that the SNP’s 54 MPs – who they say are the hardest working politicians at Westminster – will be reselected as candidates for the upcoming General Election.



The party will select candidates in five further constituencies currently not represented by SNP MPs by the end of the week following consultation with local members.

At the same meeting the fate of Edinburgh West MP Michelle Thomson was made clear. She will not be reselected and will stand down in June.

Ms Thomson issued the following statement: “‘At 1026 thIs mornIng (Saturday 22nd April) I was called from the ongoIng SNP NEC meetIng to be told a selection process for Edinburgh West would happen and that I would not be eligible to stand for selection.

I am very disappointed with the decisions of the SNP. I am grateful to both elected officials and local branch members who contacted me In recent days to say they had lobbied the NEC on my behalf.

‘Since I was elected 2 years ago I have been subjected to sustained personal attacks, starting with the malicious addition of an old email address to the dating website ‘Ashley Madison’. At the time I escalated it to Police Scotland and I thank them for their investigation. It’s a pity that those in the press who knew this failed to report it nor note any of the (male) public figures who were genuine additions to the database.

‘Since September 2015 there have been reports concerning a solicitor I used some 7 years ago. I have always made it clear that I have done nothing wrong and it is a matter of public record that it was the solicitor who was under investigation and not myself, that no charges have ever been brought and that I assisted PS on a purely voluntary basis.

No criticism of the time taken by my fellow public servants within Police Scotland and the Procurator Fiscal can be made and I anticipate they are subject to similar restraints as other public services.

I have been impressed by their professional and courteous manner and I have taken the view that the matter must be allowed to run its course. As such I shall not comment further at this time.

'I must note that, even in political parties the concept of natural justice must apply, as must the need for defined processes that are applied fairly, rigorously and transparently. I would advise the SNP to employ the services of an external body to help them develop a process as soon as possible.

'I have been proud of what I have achieved in the past 2 years despite the above events. Highlights from my work on the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Select Committee include a key role in encouraging Sir Philip Green to do the right thing for BHS pensioners, the continued focus on Sports Direct working practices and the recommendation for women to be represented equally in all FTSE 350 companies by 2020.

The work to make banking fairer for SME's will continue and I summoned the courage to speak out about being raped at the age of 14. Most importantly my office has supported many, many constituents and I thank my team for their efforts.

'I have been privileged to be the MP for Edinburgh West. After careful consideration I have decided not to stand again at this time and I would encourage all the political parties to avoid personal smears and instead focus on what people really want to hear about.

'I thank all those who have supported me, those who elected me, my family and my colleagues in Westminster who so vociferously and consistently spoke out on my behalf but to no avail."

Pedal on Parliament 2017

Several hundred cyclist gathered today (Saturday) in the Meadows to take part in the 2017 Pedal on Parliament. The event was policed fairly discretely by Edinburgh's Police Cycle Division, and was escorted on it's journey by Police Motorcycle outriders.

This was the sixth event and, this year, events were also taking place in Aberdeen and Inverness (Saturday), followed up with another in Glasgow (Sunday).





Ironically, considering the remit, the start was delayed by traffic congestion and road works on the Royal Mile.









Despite these slight setbacks, the event went off successfully

and the participants eventually gathered outside the Scottish Parliament building to hear a variety of speakers.



Greater Grassmarket's Vintage Weekend is back

A weekend of free entertainment celebrating all things vintage

The Greater Grassmarket Business Improvement District's (BID) free Vintage Weekend is back in Edinburgh for the second year on Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 April 2017 from 12pm – 5pm.

The catwalk Vintage Fashion Show will feature Edinburgh's finest vintage wares sourced from Greater Grassmarket retailers including Armstrongs Vintage Emporium and Godiva Boutique.

Taking place at 2pm, the catwalk show will focus on fashion for all occasions from evening to day wear plus vintage looks for the summer season.



Also returning this year is the Vintage Variety Show, hosted by burlesque and cabaret group Gypsy Charms, with performances taking place at 12noon, 1pm and 3pm. Acts include The Great Aziz, a multi-award winning magician, Scottish cabaret group the French Fling Showgirls, The Saw Guy who will be performing beautiful melodies in a peculiar way, and Deux Ailes, an acrobatic duo creating mesmerising routines both in the air and on the ground.

From 4pm each day, Glasgow-based rockabilly band, The Shiverin' Sheiks, will be performing their hits to get visitors dancing.

On Saturday, visitors can admire Edinburgh's most colourful hot rods and vintage cars, whilst on Sunday the Distinguished Gentleman's Bike Club will be showcasing their classic bikes alongside classic bike dealers such as Royal Enfield Edinburgh who will be offering information and advice to visitors on classic bike culture. From 12pm

– 5pm both days, visitors can pick up vintage clothing and classic bric-a-brac treasures from the Vintage Market. Throughout the weekend there will also be an array of performers taking to the streets to keep children entertained.

This event follows on from the successful 2016 Vintage Weekend which increased footfall to the area by 61%. The Vintage Weekend is one of a number free events that the Greater Grassmarket BID has lined up this spring/summer to attract

visitors to the area.

Norrie Stewart, Grassmarket BID Project Manager, says: “We’re excited to bring our Vintage Weekend back, and it’s even bigger and better than last year. With over 50 independent retailers in the area, many of which specialise in vintage goods and antiques, the Greater Grassmarket is the perfect destination for vintage lovers and collectors.

“Whether it’s shopping for vintage items, admiring the classic cars or enjoying the retro entertainment, we want our Vintage Weekend to encourage the whole family to celebrate all things vintage.”

Ice hockey – former Capitals star eyes world gold

Former Edinburgh Capitals netminder Stephen Murphy believes home advantage will be key as Great Britain host the World Championship, Division 1, Group B in Belfast from Sunday.

Dundee-born Murphy, who has also played for Paisley Pirates, Fife Flyers and Dundee Stars now ices for Belfast Giants.

And the 35-year-old admitted that appearing in the tournament on his home ice will be special.

Britain open the competition against Croatia on Sunday and also face Estonia, Lithuania and Netherlands and Japan.

The experienced netminder said: “We can achieve something special here but we have five tough games ahead of us.

“The home crowd can be very important. Then there is the GB

Barmy Army who support us across the world and are like an extra man.”

He added: “There are no easy games at this level but, hopefully, we can perform throughout the week to set us a chance of winning the gold medal and promotion.”

Meanwhile, the Elite League enjoyed a 12 per cent growth in fans last season.

More than 940,000 people watched league matches this season smashing last year’s record by almost 100,000.

It is the fourth straight year in which league attendances have gone up.

And the league now boasts the seventh highest average league attendance in Europe and Asia according to a recent IIHF study ahead of Austria, Slovakia and Denmark.

Chairman Tony Smith said: “This season has been one of the most competitive we have seen since the league was formed.

“It is a testament to the hard work that goes on every week at both club and league level that attendances continue to rise.

“With Guildford and Milton Keynes joining us from next season naturally we expect that trend to continue and we hope to smash the one million spectator mark next season.”

