

Council to look at rebuilding Ross Bandstand

The council's Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee considered this morning whether to proceed with plans to renew the much-loved, but now rather historic Ross Bandstand in West Princes Street Gardens.



Edinburgh Ross Bandstand – credit City of Edinburgh Council

City hotelier Norman Springford who runs Apex Hotels has come forward with an offer to be the major benefactor for the development working in partnership with the council. The ambition is to renew the gardens and run the area for year round benefit of communities and visitors. There will have to be some fundraising and the council plans to consult heritage bodies, festival producers and residents.

The bandstand was built in 1935 with a capacity of 2,400 and was a gift to the city by William Henry Ross who was Chairman of Distillers Company Ltd.

The bandstand is deemed no longer fit for purpose, and might be better equipped with 21st century technology to allow it to be used more easily for events in future. An independent steering group was set up to look at the way this could be externally funded. The council will have to lodge a private bill at Holyrood to amend the 1991 District Council Act as the site is 'inalienable Common Good land'.

Councillors discussed the feasibility of the project and approved moving forward with a further report with a timetable for the rebuilding programme and of course the details of it will be considered in June.

Council Leader Andrew Burns, Convener of the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee, said: "Connecting the Old and New Town halves of our UNESCO World Heritage Site and in the shadow of Edinburgh Castle, West Princes Street Gardens offers one of Scotland's most beautiful and iconic locations.

"Scores of famous acts have graced the Ross Bandstand stage and while it remains a key venue for the city's famous Festival Fireworks and Hogmanay Concert in the Gardens, it is more than 80 years old and is nearing the end of its useful life. It has been a long held ambition of the Council to create a new facility as part of major renewal of the Gardens but is not, in the current financial climate, a project we could undertake alone.

"We are extremely grateful to Mr Springford for his personal commitment to the project. Princes Street Gardens are a major source of residents' pride in the city and it is important that we get any changes to the park right. There are a lot of considerations, from the fact the area is Common Good land to the implications of building in public parks, and so there is still much work to be done."

Norman Springford said: "Whilst it has been a personal ambition to see redevelopment, the opportunity for this to become a reality arises from a real spirit of public/private co-operation. I'm sure we are all looking forward to being given the chance to deliver a project which the city can have pride in. "



Ross Bandstand during Edinburgh's Hogmanay
2015 – credit Chris Watt

Peter Houston 'glad to be making it tough for Hibs'



Falkirk manager Peter Houston is looking for three points tonight against Hibs at Easter Road which would go a long way to claiming second place in the Championship.

The Bairns currently sit six points ahead of Hibs who have two games in hand and whoever finishes second will have the advantage of avoiding the play off quarter finals against an in form Raith Rovers.

Hibs looked to be in the driving seat after last week's win over Livingston however a shock defeat to relegated Alloa Athletic coupled with Falkirk's last minute winner against St Mirren has swung the pendulum back toward Houston's men.

After Saturday's victory, Houston told the club website: "I wasn't really thinking about elsewhere. Obviously I know about it and it does us no harm, but I always felt that we had to get the three points.

"We have to focus on ourselves, I'm glad we are making it tough for Hibs, because of their resources many people felt that it would be between Rangers and Hibs, but with three games to go a wee club like Falkirk are six points ahead."

"I don't like going into football matches to try and play for a draw. I think we have to try and win the game, while being solid and tight. They have got talented players and guys who can cut you open, but we can go there with confidence simply because of the way our season has went."

Lee(Miller) has been great all season for us, when he's called upon he puts himself in good positions and gets a lot

of headers and knock ons for us. He takes a lot of knocks as well, but that's part of football. He's willing to dust himself down and go in where it hurts so that's a credit to himself. He's played at a higher level and you can see why he's played at a higher level."

"I thought there were some top performances from Tom Taiwo, Lee Miller and Will Vaulks at the back. We've got Peter Grant, Paul Watson and Conor McGrandles all out injured, our squad has been depleted, but I've got guys who will fill in and Will did that for us on Saturday. We are down to the bare bones and because of that we've got likes of Cameron Blues on the bench, but if it came to it and I had to put him on in the middle of the park I'd have no fear in doing that."

Alan Stubbs looks ahead to tonight's game against Falkirk



Hibs' Head Coach Alan Stubbs is happy to get back in action quickly after Saturday's shock defeat to Alloa Athletic and he insists that his players know what they have to do for the remainder of the season.

Hibs face second place Falkirk tonight at Easter Road, knowing that a victory would put them in a strong position to finish above the Bairns but defeat would mean that they would have to rely on others.

The clubs have met three times this season with Hibs winning

one and drawing the other two but Stubbs' side have suffered a string of poor results, winning only one of their last six league games.

Speaking to Hibs TV, Stubbs said: "I'm happy that we have a game so quickly after Saturday. It's a chance for us to respond to Saturday and to get back to the performances that we have had during a large part of this season which have been very good.

"March was disappointing, not always in terms of performance but in the results. We need now to get back to working hard as a group and making it hard for teams to play against us, as well as making good decisions on the pitch. That's the only way to turn things around. Sometimes you can try too hard.

"The players know exactly what they have to do and they are working very hard to turn it around because we still have potentially a fantastic end to the season and the chance to achieve what we wanted to do.

"The most important thing is that we as a group stick together and that is the case. We believe in what we are doing here.

"Falkirk are a team that is very organised, they don't give a lot away, they stay in games and they've got players that can cause you problems. We know based on our head-to-head, that there is not a lot in it.

"We may be slightly behind, but tomorrow is a game for us to get back on track."

Five things you need to know today



- **Edinburgh PFI Schools update**
- **Grow your own in National Gardening Week**
- **Edinburgh Festivals Forum has a new chair**
- **New M&S at Chesser**
- **Rush Hour Concert**

While 17 schools remain closed today the council is making alternative arrangements for some 2000 S4 S5 and S6 pupils to be accommodated in high schools in the city. These are the pupils who will have exams soon and the council already said they would give them some priority.

The pupils the final three years at Firrhill, Drummond and Royal High Schools will return to their own premises on Wednesday of this week, as their buildings were only refurbishes and not built as part of the PPP1 project.

Pupils from Gracemount and Craigmount may hear later today what arrangements are being made for them.

The Council is contacting parents directly and full details of the arrangements once they are finalised will be on the [Council website](#).

Other bodies such as Standard Life and the University of Edinburgh have offered their spare space for use as classrooms meantime.

Chief Executive Andrew Kerr said: “We have plans in place to ensure all primary and special school pupils will be back in schools by next week subject to the Council getting access to the closed schools.

“Our focus is very much on getting our school children back into education as soon as possible. That remains our priority, particularly for those pupils preparing to sit their exams in May.

“Edinburgh Schools Partnership are continuing with their programme of inspections which began on Friday, and have committed to providing new information as and when it becomes available.

“I fully recognise the significant inconvenience to parents caused by these closures and I want to thank them for their patience as we continue to work through this issue. I can assure them that as soon as we have new information, we will pass it on. Daily updates will also be available via the council website.

“I also want to pay tribute to the response from a number of city organisations, both public and private sector, who have come forward with offers of help. There’s been a real sense of the Edinburgh community pulling together and we are very grateful for that.”

Early indications are that the issue that prompted the decision on Friday has been identified in other buildings but as yet the council is not able to determine the full extent of this or the potential impact it may have.

The Council will update parents via the www.edinburgh.gov.uk/schoolclosures and via the Council Twitter [@Edinburgh_CC \(external link\)](#) on a daily basis.

Sign up here for a daily email from The Edinburgh Reporter

[mc4wp_form id="169103"]

Central Scotland Green Network is encouraging Edinburgh

residents to get involved with National Gardening Week this week 11-17 April by growing their own food.

According to their recent research there is an increase in community growing in the five years to 2015.

There are more than 300 sites where community growing takes place in allotments, community orchards and community gardens. Since 2010 allotments in central Scotland have increased by 7% and there are now 6,700 individual plots on more than 160 sites.



Keith Geddes, Chair of the CSGNT, which drives forward delivery of the CSGN, said: “As Europe’s largest greenspace initiative, we are working to increase the area of land used for growing plants, fruit and vegetables across the region and what better way for locals to get involved than by taking part in National Gardening Week.

“Our research highlights a significant increase in the number of sites and area of land used for community growing since 2010 and interestingly, it is community gardens, which tend to be the smallest sites, which are experiencing the fastest growth, demonstrating that even very small community growing initiatives at a local level can contribute to the wider goal.”



The Edinburgh Festivals Forum is pleased to announce that Professor Susan Deacon has been appointed as Chair of the Forum to replace Lady Susan Rice CBE, who is stepping down after nine years’ service.

Susan Deacon brings a wealth of experience to the role of Chair from her work across the public, private and voluntary sectors in Scotland and the UK. She is currently Assistant

Principal External Relations at the University of Edinburgh and was recently appointed as Chair of the Institute of Directors in Scotland. She holds a number of other non-Executive positions.

Ken Hay, Chair of Festivals Edinburgh, commenting on the appointment said: 'On behalf of the Board of Festivals Edinburgh, I would like to thank Lady Susan Rice for her outstanding contribution in support of our festivals over the last nine years. The Festivals Forum has been crucial in the continued success of the Festivals and in developing the milestone Thundering Hooves 2.0 report.

'We're delighted that Susan Deacon is taking up the post of Chair of the Festivals Forum as we look ahead to the challenges and opportunities of the next period. Her breadth of experience across business and public life will be invaluable in helping the Forum foster the collaborative effort needed to take forward our shared strategic vision.'

Susan Deacon said: 'Edinburgh's Festivals are a real jewel in Scotland's crown. A great many people and organisations play their part in making our Festivals the success that they are. It is a privilege to be appointed as Chair of the Festivals Forum and to be part of such an important team effort to maintain Edinburgh's position as the world's leading festival city. It is an exciting time to be taking on this role as we start to build for the Festivals' 70th anniversary year in 2017.'



M&S Food are to open a new shop at Chesser Avenue at West Edinburgh Retail Park on the site of the old Chesser Avenue fruit market.

The 9000 square feet of retail space will open on 27 April 2016 employing 60 staff and offering 4,500 food and drink

products. There will also be a 42 seater cafe with a takeaway menu.


Alyson Crombie, Store Manager, said: “Our new store at Chesser marks an exciting milestone in the redevelopment of the old fruit market site and we can’t wait to open our doors this month.

“It’s fantastic that we’ve been able to recruit local people from the surrounding areas to work at the store.

“We’re really looking forward to becoming part of the Chesser community and getting to know our local customers here. We hope lots of people come out to join us on the 27th!”

The new retail park will offer shoppers with 286 free car parking spaces. As well as a food ordering service, customers will also be able to take advantage of the popular “Shop Your Way” next day delivery service, which gives shoppers the option to have their M&[S.com](#) orders delivered to the store for free.



 If you are reading this article in print and would like to visit The Edinburgh Reporter website then simply scan the QR code here with a smartphone or tablet.

Scottish Greens to launch bold manifesto



Scottish Greens To Publish Manifesto For Bolder Holyrood

Later today the Scottish Greens will publish an election manifesto to “meet the challenges of today”, pledging to deliver a bolder Holyrood and a better Scotland.

With opinion polls suggesting Green MSPs will be elected from across the eight parliamentary regions, and the party enjoying a membership surge to over 9,000, the Scottish Greens aim to tap into a public appetite for bolder action on issues such as:

- The decline in North Sea jobs
- Poor pay in social care
- The housing crisis
- The threat from fracking

A spokesperson for the Scottish Greens said:

“As serious questions are asked about Labour’s PFI/PPP legacy, the Scottish Greens’ manifesto will demonstrate the importance of investing in public services rather than cutting corners. And as public anger grows over the latest tax-dodging revelations, we will show how our commitment to real land reform can ensure Scotland leads the way.

“Our progressive policies will reduce inequality and raise extra funds to improve the education, health and social care that we all need.

“Our manifesto will underline the strong track record we have in parliament and in communities across the country. Our belief is that Scotland can be better, with lasting jobs,

opportunities for young people, and good homes for all. Our manifesto is full of the kind of fresh ideas that are needed to meet the challenges of today.”

Police hunt female after theft from pensioner in Brunswick Street



Police are appealing for witnesses following the theft of an elderly woman's purse which took place around 4.30pm on Sunday on Brunswick Street.

The 84-year-old victim was walking up Brunswick Street, towards Montgomery Street, when a woman offered to carry her shopping bags.

A short time later, the suspect stole the victim's purse while she was distracted.

The suspect is described as white, around 30 to 40-years-old with shoulder length straight black hair who spoke with a local accent.

She was wearing a navy knee-length coat with black leggings, and was carrying a black and white patterned handbag.

Police Constable David Lee, of Leith Police Station, said: "This is a shocking crime where the person has deliberately taken advantage of a vulnerable elderly woman.

"The victim is understandably shaken and upset.

“Shoppers leaving a nearby Tesco or anyone in the surrounding area may have seen the suspect talking to the victim.

“I’m appealing to anyone who saw a woman that fits this description around that time on Sunday to contact us.”

Those with any information can contact Police Scotland on 101 or alternatively the charity Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 11.

Hibs offer to help children affected by school closures



Hibs have offered to help Edinburgh schoolchildren affected by the ongoing closure of 17 local primary and secondary schools because of potential structural issues.

The Club has approached City of Edinburgh Council, which is drawing up contingency plans for dealing with the thousands of young people affected.

Leeann Dempster, Chief Executive, said: “We have contacted the Council and offered to do what we can. We have a lot of good quality space at Easter Road Stadium which we are happy to use to help our local young people, particularly those facing into a critical point in their education with examinations coming.

“Our young people are the future, and we are keen to do what we can to ensure that we play any part we can in helping to provide a temporary solution.”

Petition to reinstate community council in Northfield and Willowbrae

A group of members of the former Northfield and Willowbrae Community Council are launching a petition to the council to get the body reinstated later this year at community council election time.

A spokesman said: "The Northfield and Willowbrae Community Council was brought to a close in November because of continued disruption by people largely from outwith our area. However, the Community Council believed that it was performing a useful function and had put in place some improvements which might not otherwise have been possible.

"Elections for community councils across Edinburgh will take place on the normal 3 year cycle in September. The terms of office of all members come to an end and each has to be elected again, if they are nominated.

"In Northfield and Willowbrae this will not happen unless a petition is made to the City Council. Twenty signatures are needed for the petition to be considered, it 'must be signed by 20 residents in the area who are recorded on the electoral roll'."

If you wish to sign the petition then you must use the form below and hand it in to Piershill Library who will collect them.

Anyone with any questions can email secretary@northfieldandwillowbrae.org.uk.



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Witness appeal following series of thefts in Penicuik



Police are appealing for witnesses after a series of thefts in Penicuik yesterday.

A Honda motorcycle was stolen from outside a property in Eskvale Crescent between the hours of 7 pm and midnight.

Around 8pm a house in Harlaw Grove was entered and various items were stolen including a set of car keys, a Volkswagen Polo was subsequently stolen from the garage.

A garage in Greenhill Park was broken into between 6pm and 9.30pm and various tools, metal detectors and a bicycle helmet were stolen.

Officers are now keen to speak to anyone who saw anything suspicious in these areas on Sunday.

Sergeant Michele Lindsay, of Penicuik Police Station, said: "Given the nature of the offences and the proximity of where they occurred, we're keeping an open mind to the possibility that they're linked.

"As such I would be very keen to hear from anyone who noticed any suspicious behaviour near Eskdale Crescent, Harlaw Grove or Greenhill Park on Sunday 10th April.

"Similarly anyone who has information relevant to our

inquiries or who has been offered goods that they believe to be stolen, contact police as soon as possible.”

Anyone with information can contact police on 101 or anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

#SP16 Gordon MacDonald SNP candidate for Edinburgh Pentlands

✖ Gordon MacDonald took this seat from the incumbent MSP the late David McLetchie by 1758 votes in 2011. Now he hopes to build on his reputation as a hard working local politician to reclaim the seat and go on to serve Edinburgh Pentlands for the next parliamentary term.



Born in Glasgow, MacDonald previously worked as a management accountant with the council-owned Lothian Buses, so it is fair to say that he had an understanding of many local issues before becoming an MSP.

The Edinburgh Reporter met him on a cold day in Wester Hailes where he posed in front of the underpass opened to the public late last year, which he helped campaign for.

[The Edinburgh Reporter #SP16 Gordon Macdonald Edinburgh Pentlands](#) from [Phyllis Stephen](#) on [Vimeo](#).

“I’ve worked hard to make sure that the constituents are aware that I have been campaigning hard for them. When I was

elected in 2011, I quickly decided that like the doctor, the dentist, the lawyer and the banker I was there to provide a service to my constituents. We quickly established the Longstone office in the heart of the constituency which acted as an advice centre, and over the years we have helped thousands of people.



The SNP group of MSPs elected in 2011 at Holyrood the day after the election

" The three issues that affect many people in this area are housing, traffic congestion and air quality. In terms of housing we have got to get the balance right. We desperately need houses that are affordable in this area and with that in mind we have over the last five years built affordable housing in Broomhouse, in Ratho and in Fairmilehead. We are currently building affordable housing at Curriehill and at Harvester's Way in Wester Hailes. North Sighthill will come on stream later this year. We have to have that balance right with private developers who wants build on all the available green space and that has an impact on traffic congestion especially along the Lanark Road and the Calder Road which at peak times is the biggest car park in the west of the city.

"We have to get the balance right. I think that in the west of the city we have huge problems with air quality and as a result three of the four arterial routes currently fail the air quality standards. We are also in a difficult position in that in West Lothian there is a lot of housebuilding along the eastern boundary all of which is commutable into Edinburgh.

"We know there is going to be increased traffic coming into Edinburgh and so it seems crazy that we are looking at allowing development on the likes of the Garden District or in Wallace Land. We have to remember that this is good arable

land that we could be building on.

During his time at Holyrood and mainly because of his background in the bus industry, MacDonald was appointed to the Infrastructure and Capital Investment Committee. There he was able to persuade The Scottish Government to put up a community bus replacement fund to the tune of about £1 million. He was also latterly on the Education and Culture committee looking at the Higher Education Bill. He managed to secure an amendment to ensure that student sabbatical officers were not excluded from standing for the university court. As originally drafted the legislation would have prevented that.

He also sat on the Economy, Energy and Tourism committee and in that role they looked at 'fair work' and he hopes this will allow the government to support councils to pay the living wage for careworkers.

The MSP was also involved in the reinstatement of the underpass next to the Wester Hailes Healthy Living Centre. He said: "When we sat down to discuss the development of the centre a few years ago the council wanted to leave the underpass much as it was, but putting in a dog leg ramp. Along with Wester Hailes Community Council I said this was not acceptable because we have a history of problems with underpasses in the area. I just did not see the sense in replicating the mistakes of the past. After a lot of discussions and pressure from the Community Council, we managed to persuade the council, the health board and the owners of the Westside Plaza to agree to build this more acceptable underpass.

"I may be an SNP candidate, but I am definitely not complacent. I have worked hard with the community over the last five years. As much as the parliamentary timetable allows I go to as many community council meetings as possible, gala days, public meetings and I meet NHS Lothian and the council on a regular basis. I try to promote what is needed in

this area.

“For example we are in the process of upgrading WHEC, Oxbgangs Primary School was upgraded by adding on extra classrooms and we have a new 3G pitch at Broomhouse Primary School thanks to Cashback for Communities money. In terms of the community during the summer I try to get involved with litter picking with the friends of Peatland Hills Country Park, I painted the Broomhouse Market, I helped build a dry stand dyke with Youth Vision and with the members of Currie Community Council I filled potholes on Donkey Lane. I feel that it is all about becoming part of the community both as a politician on all the issues which are important, but also taking part.

” Although our manifesto is yet to be launched but the main drivers of the Scottish Government has been to make life better for the people of Scotland. The living wage for caseworkers is one example of that. The fact that we spend 7% more on health than they do south of the border is another.

” We reorganised colleges to give them the same status and standing as universities, and that has been quite successful. We have invested in Modern Apprentices raising these from 16,000 in 2011 to 25,000 now with a goal of 30,000 by 2020. Hence the reason in the Edinburgh area about 95% of children leaving school have positive destinations which is the highest it has ever been.

“I will be happy if my constituents recognise the amount of work that I have put in to the area to make this a better place.”

#SP16 Alex Cole-Hamilton LibDem candidate for Edinburgh Western



Alex Cole-Hamilton has taken over the office of the former MP Mike Crockart on St John's Road. I had interviewed Mr Crockart there just ahead of the General Election so I had a sense of déjà vu, but there were not just as many staff in the office this time round.

This is a feet on the ground lean campaign which is being run by the Liberal Democrats, who are getting round the doors as much as they can.

And their Edinburgh Western candidate thinks it is working.

[The Edinburgh Reporter #SP16 Alex Cole-Hamilton Edinburgh Western](#) from [Phyllis Stephen](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Cole-Hamilton works with children's charity, Aberlour, and he has been a candidate in the past, but the LibDems are in the doldrums at this point in the election campaign. All the polls suggest that there will be an SNP whitewash in this seat despite any fallout from the faint scandal which still surrounds the Westminster representative Michelle Thomson, who has been suspended from the party amid allegations about her property dealings.

It was Thomson who established the SNP office right next door to this one, but it is Tony Giugliano who is occupying it at the moment, and running a fierce campaign to retain the seat for the SNP. Giuliano is the SNP candidate in place of former MSP, Colin Keir who left Holyrood in March 2016.

Cole-Hamilton has worked for the last 15 years in the children's charity sector, working with some of the most vulnerable children and families in Scottish society. He says that he sees day in and day out the kind of social problems that the Scottish Parliament has still failed to adequately deal with in his view. He assured The Edinburgh Reporter that as an MSP he would be up to the job: "I see the potential solutions and think that if all of us just come together to take tough decisions it would actually change the lives of hundreds of thousands of Scots who are still living in poverty, without affordable housing and really struggling with a range of social issues."

At the last Scottish Parliamentary election he stood in the Central constituency. He explained: "This is the constituency where my three small children will grow up. I've been living here for the best part of five years now and we've settled here in the community of Blackhall. It's home to me and I have a lot of love for this constituency. I had my first job here, so I know what makes it tick. I see the problems that local residents have to deal with, because I have to deal with them every day. That gives me the motivation to really want to represent Edinburgh Western in the Scottish Parliament."

"There are a range of problems here. For example due to the ever-expanding nature of the city, there are constantly new planning applications for housing developments in the western expansion of the city. This puts unnecessary pressure and burden both on congestion, on local amenities like schools and doctors' surgeries. We have just recently learned that two of Edinburgh's arterial routes, Queensferry Road and St John's Road, are two of Scotland's most polluted streets in the country."

"These are all issues that exercise the minds of local residents and will form priorities that I will bring to the fore if I am elected to the Scottish Parliament."

"I have launched a five point action plan to tackle pollution in the city, particularly in St John's Road. That means weekly spot checks on emissions to find any vehicles operating outwith legal limits, a complete moratorium on house building in the west of the city so that no additional pressure is put on these arterial routes.

"I want to see a massive investment in active travel, in the cycle path network and encouraging people out of cars. I want to see a faster roll-out of electric buses, and I would like to encourage a much greener approach to travel in the city.

And the fifth point would be to reduce congestion in St John's Road by introducing an airport bus lane along the A90 corridor. This would kill two problems at once. There is still a problem in Corstorphine with car dumping by commuters and holidaymakers who leave their cars this side of the city to take advantage of the Aircoach on St John's Road. It would also reduce congestion as people would be using the alternative route to the airport along Queensferry Road.

" The Lib Dems have announced a flagship policy of an extra 1p on all tax bands to reverse the swingeing cuts on education that we have seen under this SNP government. We recognise that education makes a country great. It's a great leveller, and is the silver bullet. We are prepared to say that everybody should make that little contribution to put Scottish education right up in the highest echelons of global success. We believe the successes of the LibDems at Westminster in terms of increasing the income tax threshold have made it a more progressive proposition than it would have been. We would not have done this ten years ago, but because the poorest families are not paying income tax at all now we can afford to do this and it makes it a far more progressive policy."

When asked about the legacy of the Conservative/LibDem coalition and also the legacy of a poor result in the General Election 2015, Cole-Hamilton was nonetheless pretty positive.

“People recognise the damage that we have suffered as a result of being in coalition, but there is definitely a sense that people have got past that. People are a little surprised but very happy to see a Liberal Democrat candidate at their doors, but it reminds them that this is the kind of local service we stand for. Night after night I get people who did not vote LibDem at the General Election, but are reminded through the fact that we have delivered fourteen leaflets across the constituency with local news, local issues and taking action on the issues that matter to them, that in us they get a local champion.

“Things are changing and the mood has definitely improved. It gives us great heart and great encouragement for a really strong result here.”

Expanding on this Cole-Hamilton explained that two things point to that being more than a possibility:

“The fact that I get actual case work every day shows that people are already turning to me as if I am their elected representative and can help them. The second thing is the belief on the doorstep which makes me think I have a really good chance of taking this seat back for the Liberal Democrats.”

Last chance to get Hibs ‘Early Bird’ season ticket



Today is the last day for Hibs' supporters hoping to take advantage of the discounted price on a 2016-17 Season Ticket

in the Early Bird period.

Season Ticket prices for the next campaign will remain at the same levels as 2015-16, and will not change at the end of the season, with prices for children starting at £25 in the Famous Five Lower.

Additional savings will be made by those who purchase during the Early Bird period, with supporters also being able to take advantage of the 11 month payment plan, which has proven to be popular in the past.

Fans can visit lifewithhibs.com for more information on the Season Ticket packages, plus the added benefits of being a Season Ticket holder

Edinburgh Airport announces March figures



Yet again the capital's airport has announced best ever figures.

In March 927,200 people passed through Edinburgh Airport which is the busiest March ever. International passengers make up a large part of this which have risen to 493,200 this year from 358,450 in 2015. *(Our photo shows The Chief Commercial Officer, Marwan Koleilat of Qatar Airways being greeted by Gordon Dewar the CEO of Edinburgh Airport on the occasion of the inaugural flight in 2014)*

Welcoming March's passenger figures Gordon Dewar, Edinburgh Airport's Chief Executive, said:

"These record breaking passenger figures from March underline Edinburgh Airport's growing international ambitions and are very welcome indeed.

"We have seen a massive increase of 37.6 % in the number of international passengers and this highlights the ever-increasing draw of Edinburgh as a destination. This growth not only creates new jobs but offers greater international links for this city and for all of Scotland.

"Offering greater choice is key to our success. In conjunction with our partner airlines we are continuing to offer new routes and more destinations – and passengers are responding by flying in and out of Edinburgh directly in greater numbers than ever before.

"A recent independently prepared economic impact study shows Edinburgh Airport contributes £1 billion annually to Scotland's economy; this proves that success at Edinburgh Airport is good news for the whole country and we plan to keep offering even greater choice and delivering even more success."

Leith Food Assembly – what's it all about?

- ❌ Leith Food Assembly has burst onto the Edinburgh foodie scene with an idea of bringing great local produce to

customers on demand.

'great quality food from farm to fork'

The [website](#) explains that you order from local producers large and small and then go along to Jeremiah's Tap Room to collect your shopping while meeting up with like-minded people.

We met up with David and Stuart who are two of the three hosts. They met studying a gastronomy course at Queen Margaret University, a course which takes a holistic approach to food. They developed a passion for sustainable tasty food while studying there, and this brought them to the food assembly model.

[The Edinburgh Reporter News Leith Food Assembly](#) from [Phyllis Stephen](#) on [Vimeo](#).

The idea behind a food assembly is that if enough people order the products then producers can be persuaded to bring the produce to them. The food then travels an average of about 28 miles to the distribution point, meaning that you get what you order, the producer has to bring only enough to satisfy orders and you get to chat to the people who make your food.

Some of the producers include :

[The Bearded Baker](#)

[Fruitful Woods](#)

[Williams and Johnson Coffee](#)

[Kitsch All Natural Soda](#)

[Feast](#)

[The Health and Beauty Juicery](#)

[Mara Seaweed](#)

[Breadshare Bakery](#)

[Supernature Cold Pressed Rapeseed Oils](#)

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[Hugh Grierson Organic](#)

[Peelham Farm](#)

Hotel data made snappy with Snapshot



SnapShot GmbH, the hotel data and analytics company, has planned a series of roadshows to demonstrate SnapShot Analytics to hoteliers and they are coming to Edinburgh this week.

In the coming months, teams of experts from SnapShot GmbH will conduct a series of briefings on hotel analytics and hotel data usage in key cities in Germany, Austria, the UK, and Belgium.

The company will also demonstrate the full capabilities of its flagship product, SnapShot Analytics, and will offer a series

of one-on-one demo sessions.

Dr. Stefan Tweraser, CEO said: “The presentation part will give valuable insights on how hotels are impacted by big data and how they can use it to benefit their operation. Hoteliers will then have the chance to experience the functionalities and benefits of SnapShot Analytics first-hand in one-on-one demo sessions. “

SnapShot Analytics, the highly anticipated, flagship product of the company, is a cloud-based hotel analytics tool that presents a comprehensive overview of a specific's hotel data on a powerful yet intuitive dashboard.

The product was publicly introduced for the first time at ITB Berlin 2016, the global travel's industry leading trade show, where it was received with great interest by hoteliers and data experts. The upcoming roadshows are part of SnapShot GmbH's strategy of growth, and aim to raise awareness among hoteliers on the key features and benefits of SnapShot Analytics, a new, essential tool for any hotel management team.

Dr Tweraser continued: “Access to SnapShot Analytics offers new, previously unavailable ways for hotel management teams to unlock new potential for any hotel.”

SnapShot will be in Edinburgh on 12 April 12th, Vienna and Glasgow on April 13th, Liverpool on May 11th, Manchester and Brussels on May 12th and in Hamburg on May 24th.

Five things you need to know today



- **Edinburgh School closures**
- **First Minister's Tax return**
- **Telferton Allotments**
- **Murrayfield Community Council**
- **Scottish Parliamentary Elections 2016 – calling all candidates**

The council decided late on Friday that 17 schools either built or refurbished in a 2003 PPP1 deal would not open this morning after the Easter holidays, leaving around 7,500 pupils with nowhere to go today.

The council explained on Friday that this resulted from a revelation that the company which runs the buildings under the deal could not confirm their safety, despite assurances earlier last week that the buildings were safe.

The council published FAQs on their website to try and help explain the problem they now have.



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Detailed surveys are now being carried out on all buildings before they will be reopened.

[Read more here.](#)



As a result of queries during last week about the Prime Minister's tax affairs, the First Minister has published her tax return online in common with all the leaders of the main political parties in Scotland. It shows that she along with other Scottish Ministers claim their salary at 2008/09 levels and that she has paid over £30,000 in tax. She has also given an assurance that she will publish her return annually.

This is Ms Sturgeon's tax return for 2014/15:




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The SNP said that First Minister's only income is the salary she receives as an MSP and First Minister.

Nicola Sturgeon pays tax on her full salary entitlement but only draws her salary at its 2008/09 level – the balance is automatically paid to the Scottish Government for use in general public spending.

As a result, in 2014/15 the First Minister paid around £3,000 into the Scottish Government consolidated fund.

Since the start of the voluntary pay freeze on 1 April 2009, Scottish Ministers have made an additional £250,000 available for public spending from their own pay packets.

Within that total, the First Minister and her predecessor have forgone some £20,000 over the same period.



The council will later this week recommend that an application to build houses on a historic allotment site should be refused.

The site was laid out as allotments for use by the workers at the Portobello Power Station around 1923/24 and has been used as such even after closure of the power station in 1977.

The planning committee will hear a report from officers which recommends refusal. There were 278 objections and an online petition from the allotment holders with 3032 signatures was also submitted.

A spokesperson for the Craigentenny and Telferton Allotments said: "We believe the plans are misleading; they suggest the developer will create new allotments, whereas, for the last 90 years, the site has been in continual use as allotments, worked and managed by the local community."

“The developer is trying to give the impression that they will be gifting allotments to the City of Edinburgh, but in actuality they are proposing a loss of over 50% of the site.

“Our use of the site as allotments has been recognised by the City of Edinburgh Council, who awarded the site a Certificate of Lawful Use last September.

“The developer has suggested the site is not well managed, however the allotments are maintained to a very similar standard to that of Edinburgh Council allotments.

“Craigentinny & Telferton Allotments have been accepted on to the Scotland’s Gardens Open Day scheme, and when they inspected the site they found it to be charming and attractive.”



Murrayfield Community Council will meet next week. The draft minutes of their last meeting are here



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Sign up here for a daily email from The Edinburgh Reporter

[mc4wp_form id="169103"]

The Edinburgh Reporter has some further interviews today with candidates for the Scottish Parliamentary Elections 2016. If you are one then please get in touch soon to organise an interview!

Send an email to editor@theedinburghreporter.co.uk

☐ If you are reading this article in print and would like to visit The Edinburgh Reporter website then simply scan the QR code here with a smartphone or tablet.

Surveys to continue on PPP1 schools from Monday

☐ The Chief Executive of the City of Edinburgh Council and senior education officials have met with directors of the Edinburgh School Partnership (ESP) this afternoon (Sunday 10 April) to receive an update on the programme of detailed structural surveys which is underway on the PPP1 schools.

More detailed structural surveys, arranged by ESP, continued over the weekend and will carry on over the course of the next week, with updated information being confirmed as early as possible in respect of each school.

As a result of the surveys on Friday last week (April 8) the Howdenhall Secure Unit stayed operational as only the gym area that was identified as needing remedial work.

The surveys are now focussing on secondary schools as a priority, with S4, S5 and S6 pupils preparing for exams in the coming weeks. The affected secondary schools are Gracemount, Craigmount, Firrhill, Drummond and Royal High.

It is hoped a clear picture on the secondary schools, including alternative arrangements if required, will be available by Tuesday.

The Council's Chief Executive has been in regular contact with the Scottish Government, which has offered support with providing additional structural engineers to complete the work, as well as general support with contingency arrangements.

The Council is working to ensure that pupils from Oxbgangs Primary, St Peter's Primary and Braidburn Schools can continue to use alternative contingency arrangements that were put in place prior to the Easter break.

It is anticipated that this will take place from Tuesday (April 12) subject to the necessary transport arrangements being put in place. The Council will update parents of these schools, directly on Monday.

Alternative arrangements for other schools are being actively looked into and the Council will update parents via the Council website (www.edinburgh.gov.uk/schoolclosures) and via the Council Twitter [@Edinburgh_CC](https://twitter.com/Edinburgh_CC) on a daily basis.

The Council has received several offers of support from other partner organisations across the city, including Edinburgh University, offering support to put contingency arrangements in place.

Chief Executive Andrew Kerr said: “I today sought assurances from Edinburgh Schools Partnership that their ongoing programme of inspections would give us the confidence to reopen our schools. I have offered to help them secure the necessary resources to complete this as quickly as possible.

“I also reminded them of their contractual and financial obligations and want to assure Edinburgh residents that they will not be left footing the bill.

“The safety of children and our staff is our main priority and I’m simply not willing to compromise on this. I fully recognise the significant inconvenience to parents caused by these closures but I am sure they will understand why we had to take these steps.

“Officers are continuing to work on contingency arrangements and we will provide regular updates to parents and carers as and when further information becomes available.

“I am extremely grateful to those partner organisations who have come forward with offers of assistance and accommodation.”

Witnesses sought following hate crime in Princes Street



Police are appealing for witnesses following a hate crime in Princes Street on Saturday afternoon.

At around 5:10pm a man was heard making several offensive remarks including racial abuse towards passing members of the

public as he stood outside the H&M store between Frederick Street and Hanover Street.

Local officers are now appealing for anyone who witnessed this incident to come forward.

Sergeant Grant McCulloch of the Divisional Violence Reduction Unit based in Leith police station said: "It is completely unacceptable for innocent members of the public to feel targeted or unsafe.

"From our inquiries it would appear that this individual was not provoked yet chose to shout offensive comments at a number of people including children.

"I want to hear from anyone who remembers this man and in particular a young family that were subjected to racial abuse.

"Tackling hate crime is a priority for Police Scotland and I would urge anyone who has been a victim or witness of this to speak to a local officer, contact Police Scotland on 101 or make an anonymous report through Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111."

David Gray refuses to blame artificial surface for Hibs' defeat



Hibs' Captain David Gray insisted that the artificial surface was not to blame for his side's defeat away to Alloa Athletic yesterday.

The result was Alloa's first home win of the season and dents Hibs hopes of finishing second although that still remains within the players own hands.

The right back also revealed that the players will be training today (Sunday) in preparation for Tuesday's game against Falkirk at Easter Road and he is confident that the players have the ability to win all the remaining games this season and gain promotion to the top flight via the play offs.

Speaking to Hibs TV immediately after the game, he said: "I think it was the decision making, we can't use the pitch as an excuse at all – it's the same for both teams. We've got enough quality in the dressing room.

"There can be no excuses, we've been here often enough and we all knew what we were expecting. sometimes we need to adapt to the surface but we just didn't perform on the day, it wasn't good enough.

"The only positive we can take is that we have a game on Tuesday which is a massive 'must win game. It would have been worse f we had a whole week to stew on today's result.

"We will be in tomorrow (Sunday) and get everything on the table and be ready for Tuesday.

"We need to win every game now. Falkirk have been there all season. They are not going away, we know that, but I know from looking around the dressing room that we have enough quality to win all the games until the end of the season."

Freddy Fabris First Worldwide Exhibition



Burgeoning Edinburgh art gallery Urbane will proudly host the first European exhibition of a new suite of work by internationally renowned photographic artist, Freddy Fabris this month.

The Renaissance Series by Chicago-based photographer Fabris quite literally portrays the mechanics of art. That is to say the works depict auto repair workers in poses from famous Renaissance artists including Michelangelo and Rembrandt.

All at once, the images are clever, innovative and pin sharp. Fabris has taken mechanics in oily overalls and produced remarkable parodies of instantly recognisable works of art. These include The Last Supper by Phillippe de Champaigne and Michelangelo's The Creation of Adam.

Owners of Urbane Art Gallery – which opened only two years ago – are Tracey and Archie Roxburgh who 'hand-pick' contemporary works from around the world to reflect an edgy and expansive aesthetic.

'Naturally, we are thrilled to be able to bring work of such significance to Europe,' says Tracey. 'It is a great honour that such a respected artist has selected Urbane for this important exhibition.'

Urbane's owners are dedicated to bringing both emerging talent and established artists to a wider audience.

With the eight-part Fabris exhibition (opening times below), Urbane has moved deftly into a new league in the crowded and highly-competitive international art market.

Urbane Art Gallery 25-27 Jeffrey St, EH11DH

April 9-30 from 11:00am to 5:00pm

Submitted by [Tracey Roxburgh](#)



Hidden Door Festival ignites excitement with a press launch



Photo by Chris Scott



Photo by Chris Scott

For a festival that has so much excitement behind it and a great deal of support in terms of numbers, at its press launch, there was a clear lack of understanding as to the purpose of this event. With a line-up of performers who appeared to be from last year's bill, it was not entirely obvious what an evening of spoken word and song actually contributes to the festival which will hit our radar late May, early June.

Beginning with spoken word by poets who don't appear comfortable, let alone confident performing this press launch seems somewhat amateur. Monotonal and with an urgent pace, highlighting nerves, there was a distinctly student-run feel to this event.

Rachel Plummer who was up for the Scottish New Writers Awards 2016 for her poetry was next on the bill. Receiving very little respect from the chattering audience, she appeared awkwardly unable to peak with her performance, which is disgustingly shameful, as the imagery within her poetry about the dark and hidden depths of Edinburgh's under layer is

pervasive.

Following on from the spoken word, the audience was subjected to an artist intently looking at his laptop and twisting knobs whilst occasionally looking shifty.

To highlight that he is not in fact playing YouTube and muting explicit videos, it would be worth his time to reconsider this stage presence, even if it was just something as simple as the angle he performs.

Urvanovic, a band ranging wide in talent and instrument but actually lacked any degree of tightness. Attempting some kind of Explosions in the Sky/Sigur Ros-influenced sound the vocals lacked the poetic oomph, which was more apparent after the set list of spoken word flair. It was reminiscent of Iceland Airwaves with the obscure Scandinavian sound (except with the head nods to Snow Patrol). Some clichés appear to have spawned from their lead singer, Gary Lightbody, as the lead vocalist glances to the venue lights, pensive whilst his badly-written ballads persisted.

Following in the same vein, the second band within this night's programme, Exit The Theatre, were implementing some rather unnerving side-stepping choreography whilst on stage. With more verve than the last they succeed more in grabbing the audience's attention away from their chat, whilst yet also having the presence of any band that we all knew from our days of hitting the open mic session at our local public bar.

Woodenbox had the edge, if there was to be a band that held it together nicely. Somewhat of a country Franz Ferdinand with trumpet, these boys, sporting some beards, woollen hats, and low-hanging jeans, screaming both hipster and yet Australian, were actually an enjoyable listen, albeit not to my personal taste.

With some further spoken word and a "hidden cinema" well sign-posted, there was a notion from some that more was expected at

this event intended to launch their programme for later in the year.

With little mention from performers, or compere about the themes or art installations we can look forward to, as far as a press launch goes, it was disappointing.

However, judging from previous years, it will be pretty much guaranteed that the festival itself will in fact bode well with residents. The sheer number of people attending this event was indicative of this.

Man assaulted and robbed in Craigour Avenue



Police are appealing for witnesses after a man was assaulted and robbed in Craigour Avenue at around 3am on Saturday 9th April.

The man, who is in his 20's, had been walking in Craigour Avenue near its junction with Moredun Park Road heading north when an unknown male and female approached him from behind.

They then attacked him causing injuries to his head and body.

The victim fell to the ground and the suspects then stole his mobile phone and wallet before making off on foot in an unknown direction

The injured man made his way to the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh and was treated for facial injuries. He has since been discharged.

Police are now carrying out various lines of inquiries in an effort to trace the suspects and want to hear from anyone who can help identify them.

The male is described as white, around 20-25 years old, between 5ft 1ins – 5ft 5ins tall , slim build with short dirty blonde hair.

The female suspect is described as white, around 5ft 1ins – 5ft 3ins tall, slim build, shoulder length dark hair and wearing blue jeans.

Detective Constable Gavin Watson who is based at Gayfield said: “Our inquiries are at an early stage however anyone who was in the Craigour area around 3am on Saturday, April 9, and who saw anything suspicious should contact police immediately.

“Similarly anyone who recognises the description of the suspects or who can assist in locating them should also come forward.”

Those with information can contact police on 101 or the charity Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Alan Stubbs' verdict on Hibs defeat to Alloa



Hibs' Head Coach Alan Stubbs has admitted that his team did not deserve an 'awful lot' from yesterday's game against Alloa Athletic.

Many thought that last Tuesday's victory over Livingston at Easter Road could be a turning point after a series of poor results, particularly with the 'feel good' factor following Martin Boyle's wonder goal, however once again, Hibs have lost a game they were expected to win.

The result leaves Hibs six points behind second placed Falkirk, whom they meet on Tuesday night, with two games in hand, although one of these games is against champions Rangers.

After the game a disappointed Stubbs told Cliff Pike of Hibs TV: " We didn't look comfortable on the pitch, simple as that.

"There were too many disappointing decisions with the ball. We didn't move the ball the way we should have done and to be honest we didn't deserve an awful lot from the game.

"We wanted to run with it when we wanted to be passing it. We just made too many wrong decisions when we were in possession of the ball. When we weren't in possession we didn't work hard enough to win it back.

"Basically we didn't work their keeper enough.

"I've seen replays of the goal again and it's not conclusive so how the linesman can give it at that speed is very surprising but recently we have had quite a few decisions go against us and it has cost us and today is another one.

“We have another game on Tuesday against Falkirk which we look forward to and the fact that its a big game is a help to them and the players have to respond.”

Hibs lose to controversial goal at Alloa



A controversial goal from Michael Duffy's gave relegated Alloa Athletic a 1-0 win over Hibs at the Indodrill Stadium this afternoon.

Once again Hibs dominated possession but were unable to break through the Wasps' defence and the result dents the Easter Road side's hopes of a second place finish in the Championship.

Head coach Alan Stubbs made three changes to the starting XI that beat Livingston in midweek. Niklas Gunnarsson replaced Darren McGregor in defence whilst Fraser Fyvie returned from injury to replace Kevin Thomson and James Keatings took over from the injured Farid El Alagui.

Both sides had early chances and both Jason Cummings and Keatings had efforts before Liam Henderson set up Anthony Stokes at the back post but his header went just wide.

It was the home side however who took the lead just before half time when a Duffy strike hit the underside of the bar, and was deemed to have crossed the line by the assistant referee on the far side.

Hibs fought back in the second half and Fyvie went close with

a deflected effort and a David Gray header from a Henderson cross went past the post.

Both Stokes and substitute Martin Boyle went close as Hibs piled on the pressure but Alloa were able to hit on the break and it took a great save from Mark Oxley prevented Duffy adding a second.

Mitch Megginson also went close with a drilled strike but despite Hibs late domination they were unable to create any worthwhile chances and Alloa held on to secure the three points.

Hibs fans leaving the stadium had another shock when news came through that Falkirk had scored a late winner over St Mirren, leaving them six points clear although Hibs have two games in hand.

The pair meet at Easter Road on Tuesday night in a game that could go a long way to deciding who finishes second.

Alloa Athletic: Gallacher (D. Crawford, 25), McAusland, Hill, Hamilton, Marr, Duffy, Holmes, Caddis, Falnnigan, Megginson, R. Crawford (McManus, 75). Unused substitutes: Ferns, Layne, Finnie, Hynd.

Hibernian: Oxley, Gray, Gunnarsson, Hanlon, Stevenson, Fyvie, Henderson, McGinn, Keatings (Boyle, 62), Stokes, Cummings (Dagnall, 75). Unused substitutes: Virtanen, Bartley, Handling, McGregor, Thomson.

Referee: Bobby Madden

Government to discuss school closures

Education Secretary Angela Constance said:

“The safety of children, young people and staff in our schools is paramount, and I recognise the concern of parents. I am reassured by the prompt action taken by Edinburgh City Council.

“While this is primarily an issue for the council, the First Minister and I have spoken to the council leadership this afternoon and offered the Scottish Government’s full support to keep disruption to children’s education at an absolute minimum.

“The First Minister will today chair a meeting of the Scottish Government’s resilience committee to ensure that everything possible is being done to help.

“It is too early to assess any wider implications for schools in other parts of Scotland. However, Scottish Government officials have written to all local authorities this weekend to ask them to carry out any necessary checks on their own estate as soon as possible. We understand that all of the affected buildings in Edinburgh were completed over ten years ago. We will ensure that, as more information about the nature of the issue in Edinburgh is established, this is passed on to other local authorities to assist them in this process.”

Letter from Scotland



They stretch in never
ending line

The daffodils are still blooming, telling us that despite Easter being over, we are only at the beginning of spring. Like young lambs, the weather is skipping along, cheerful but unreliable. The same as our election campaign.

But before we get on to politics, I have to report a truly shocking murder. On 24th March, a well-loved Glasgow shop-keeper, Asad Shah, was killed outside his convenience store in Shawlands. A man from Bradford was quickly arrested and this week he claimed responsibility for the murder and said he'd done it because Mr Shah had "disrespected the messenger of Islam, the Prophet Muhammad."

In a long statement, read by his solicitor outside the court, Tanveer Ahmed said: "If I had not done this, others would and there would have been more killing and violence in the world." Mr Shah's "disrespect" apparently consisted of being a member of a liberal Islamic sect and issuing a notice on Facebook wishing his customers "a very happy Easter and especially to my beloved Christian nation."

Now it's true that Mr Ahmed from Bradford may only be claiming to have carried out the killing. The police have yet to present their evidence in court. It may also be true that he is a one-off madman. But then so were the killers of Fusilier Lee Rigby in London. And what causes a man from Bradford to become so obsessed about "disrespect" for the Prophet Muhammad that he travels to Glasgow to kill – or claim to kill – a quiet, well-respected man innocently wishing his neighbours a Happy Easter. The evil of jihadism is obviously alive in some parts of Britain and it has just visited Scotland.

Not much wonder people are put off religion. This week we learned that 52 per cent of Scots told the latest Social Attitudes Survey they were not religious. That's up from 40 per cent in 1999. The Church of Scotland was the biggest loser with membership falling from 35 per cent of the population in 1999 to just 20 per cent today.

Out on the election trail, there's still no sign that the SNP are going to lose their majority in the Scottish Parliament on May 5th. Nicola Sturgeon still has the aura of Joan of Arc leading her forces to victory. However, the latest opinion poll, by TNS, puts the SNP at 56 per cent support, down 4 per cent on last time and in the second-vote regional poll, it is down 8 per cent at 47 per cent. It's not Labour who are gaining, surprisingly, but the smaller parties – the Tories, the Greens and the Liberal Democrats.

Ms Sturgeon has run into trouble over her dealings with China. First it emerged that she'd signed a deal last month with two Chinese construction companies who are contemplating up to £10 billion worth of investment in Scottish infrastructure projects. Then it turned out that one of the companies involved had a bribery scandal hanging over it. Ms Sturgeon explained that no specific project had yet been agreed and "due diligence" investigations would be carried out at that stage.

Meanwhile Labour's Kezia Dugdale was fending off allegations that she had changed course on her rebate for low-income tax payers and that she was willing to contemplate Scottish independence if Britain withdrew from the European Union.

There was a happy distraction mid-week when the Edinburgh Festival director, the chirpy Irishman Fergus Linehan announced details of this summer's programme. He's stirred some lighter ingredients into the mix this year with star appearances from actor Alan Cumming and comedian Barry Humphries. There's also to be more contemporary music and Scottish music. He's continuing last year's experiment with a spectacular opening ceremony, this time with a sound and light show around the 350m year old rock on which Edinburgh Castle sits. It's to be called "Deep Time" and will explore the geology of the rock and the first man to explain its origin James Hutton.

There was further light relief when Rangers finally made it back into the Premier League with a 1-0 victory over Dumbarton on Tuesday night. It's taken them four years and £30m to struggle back up through the divisions since they were sent back to square one for their oh-so-clever tax avoidance scheme. Their redemption is all the more remarkable when you remember the boardroom shenanigans and legal black holes the club fell into on the way.

And so with a spring in our step we tip-toe through the daffodils towards the next exciting or alarming week of Scottish history.

School closures – council will have a plan by Monday

✖ 17 schools will remain closed on Monday after the Easter holidays. All schools were included in the 2003 PPPI deal, and were either built or refurbished at that time.

The closures come after works to repair major storm damage to Oxbgangs Primary School revealed potential problems.

The City of Edinburgh Council have a page [here](#) which they say they will update with alternative plans for all the children involved. Detailed structural surveys will be carried out this week and the council says that some schools may open earlier as these are completed.

Council Leader Andrew Burns told the BBC this morning that he had no option but to close the schools as he only learned of the problems late on Friday. [Read more here](#)

You can also follow the council's Twitter account for further updates

Please be aware that all PPP1 schools will be closed on Monday. For full info FAQ's and updates <https://t.co/P5J7i6xndX>

– Edinburgh Council (@Edinburgh_CC) [April 8, 2016](#)

The premises that will be initially closed from Monday are as follows:

Schools: Braidburn, Broomhouse Primary, Castlevue Primary, Craighour Park Primary, Craigmount High, Craigroyston Primary, Drummond Community High, Firrhill High, Forthview Primary, Gracemount High, Oxbgangs Primary School, Pirniehill Primary, Rowanfield, Royal High, St David's Primary, St Joseph's Primary and St Peters RC Primary.

Other: Goodtrees Neighbourhood Centre and Howdenhall Secure Unit

Paul Hanlon believes injury break to prove beneficial during hectic run in



Paul Hanlon believes that his lay-off through injury could prove beneficial for himself and the team in the run in to the end of the season.

The dependable defender picked up an injury and was forced to watch from the stand as his team mates struggled to pick up points against teams they were expected to beat and this has resulted in Rangers winning the Championship much earlier than many thought they would.

The run coupled with postponements due to international fixtures meant that Falkirk have overtaken Hibs in the table and now sit three points ahead although Hibs do have two games in hand.

The pair meet next Tuesday in a fixture which could go a long way in establishing who finishes in second place.

Speaking to Hibs TV, he said: “ I’m really looking forward to the Alloa game and obviously we have a bit of confidence back after the win against Livingston in midweek.

“We went too long without winning a game so it was good to get back to winning ways and it was a great way to do it with Martin’s goal.

“Alloa’s relegation might mean that they are able to play with a bit more freedom than they did before but that could work in our favour as well if they come out and try and play a bit. there could be spaces for us to exploit and I’m sure that the manager and coaching staff are working on that.

“It was hard being injured. I’m not one that enjoys having to watch games, I need to be involved as much as I can. I worked really hard with the physios and feel as I have come back stronger for the rest of the season.

“The international break gave me some more time to get ready and I knew that if I did well in training the manager might put me back into the squad. Fonts (Liam Fontaine) picked up an injury which may have helped me get straight back into the team. It’s now up to me to play well and keep my place.

“It’s gonna be tough, but it’s what we want to be involved in and you want to play in as many games as you can and as many big games as you can. From now until they are all going to be big games.

“Maybe in the long run the few weeks that I had out might work in my favour and I feel fresh going in towards the end of the season. We’ve got players coming back that will make a big difference for us as well.”

Photo by John Preece

Five things you need to know today



- 17 schools to remain closed
- Scottish Parliamentary Elections 2016
- The Scottish Sale next week at Bonhams
- Community Council for Northfield and Willowbrae?
- New Town Community Cinema

17 Edinburgh schools will remain closed on Monday after the Easter holidays.

Remedial works taking place yesterday at Oxbgangs Primary School uncovered new issues relating to the school’s construction and ESP’s technical experts were unable to give council officers sufficient guarantees that Oxbgangs and other PPP1 schools are safe to open on Monday.

[Read more here.](#)

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The Edinburgh Reporter***

[mc4wp_form id="169103"]

Today Scottish Labour Leader Kezia Dugdale will be joined by the Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn MP at a town hall event at Portobello Town Hall.

They will talk about Labour's plans to use the powers of the Scottish Parliament to stop the cuts and invest in the future.

On Tuesday there is a hustings in Murrayfield:

MURRAYFIELD PARISH CHURCH and MURRAYFIELD COMMUNITY COUNCIL

invite you to a

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT ELECTION HUSTINGS

in

MURRAYFIELD PARISH CHURCH HALL,

2b Ormidale Terrace, Edinburgh EH12 6EQ

on

TUESDAY, 12 APRIL 2016 at 7.30pm

Chair: Rev Keith Graham

Participating candidates:

Alison Johnstone *Scottish Green Party*

Hannah Bettsworth Liberal Democrats

Sarah Boyack *Labour Party*

TBC *Conservative Party*



There are some lovely things on sale at Bonhams annual Scottish sale which takes place on Tuesday and Wednesday next week.

Scottish Colourist paintings by Hunter and Peploe are featured alongside an early 18th century cooking pot used by Bonnie Prince Charlie and a 36 bore pistol which is said to have belonged to James Boswell.

[Read more here.](#)



The community council in the Northfield and Willowbrae area disbanded last November and now some of those involved want to ensure that a new one is set up later in the year.

The only way this will happen is by making a petition to the council by the middle of May. There is a petition here which at least 20 residents who are registered on the electoral roll must sign for it to be considered by the Petitions Committee.

The petition is [here](#).



The New Town Community Cinema has a final film in two weeks' time on 22 April. This time in the season of city films they will show Taxi Tehran.

This is a great opportunity for you to support a community effort to maintain an important building in the city centre. But take cushions with you!

[Buy your tickets here.](#)

✖ If you are reading this article in print and would like to visit The Edinburgh Reporter website then simply scan the QR code here with a smartphone or tablet.

Hearts Stadium Plans Update



Heart of Midlothian Football Club have released the following press statement regarding their plans to redevelop Tynecastle Stadium. It take the form of Frequently Asked Questions:

Planning & Stadium Plans

Has planning permission been submitted to the City of Edinburgh Council?

We submitted a pre application notice to the City of Edinburgh Council on Monday 21st March 2016. This triggers a public consultation period which is legally bound to last a minimum of 8 weeks but could be longer. A full planning application will be submitted at the end of this consultation period.

Will we be able to see plans for the stadium anywhere?

We intend to show a number of the visuals for the stadium during the aforementioned public consultation period and full plans will be revealed at the time of the full planning submission.

Will our new stadium be equipped to allow us to play European football?

Yes it will comply with UEFA standards.

Time-line & Design

When will the stadium works begin and when will they complete?

Works are scheduled to begin in April on the Undercroft area (situated below the Wheatfield Stand) and subject to planning permission, work on the new stand is then scheduled to commence no later than November with a view to being available for use, early in season 2017/18. Fit-out work is then expected to continue throughout season 2017/18.

Will the build impact on any matches at Tynecastle?

We do not anticipate having to move any domestic fixtures away from Tynecastle.

What sort of disruption, can we expect?

It is hoped that the disruption will be minimal. Car parking will be affected for the period of the entire build and fan access may be slightly varied during the Main Stand build but it shouldn't have a huge impact.

Will there be better facilities at the stadium to encourage supporters to arrive at the ground earlier?

We are certainly working on an improved and more varied offering for fans at the stadium in general.

Will the support pillars be removed in the main stand and I will have a better view?

There will be no restricted views on sale in the new stand and no pillars.

Are there any plans for electronic scoreboards or big screens?

Yes, the club are currently looking at the options for two screens.

Are there any plans to fill in the corners of the stands?

No. This is not viable given the structure of the existing stands.

What will the capacity be after the completion of the new stand?

Capacity will rise to over 20,000 seats

Funding

How will the new stadium be funded?

It is anticipated that the full funding plan will be announced within the next three months and in advance of the full planning application being submitted.

Ticket Office & Club Store

Where will the new Ticket Office & Clubstore be?

In the short term, they will be situated in the completed Undercroft below the Wheatfield Stand but will relocate into the new Main Stand on its completion.

Temporary/Permanent Structures in the Wheatfield Stand

I understand the ticket office, FIFA standard changing rooms/facilities, Clubstore and administration offices will be moved to the Wheatfield Stand. How do I get there?

Access will initially be via Wheatfield Street.

What will happen to this space once the Main Stand is complete?

The changing rooms and football facilities will remain there permanently and the ticket office and Clubstore will be converted into other category of spaces for the fans and the community.

Will the first team be using the artificial pitch to train on during the week?

Only in exceptional circumstances, if at all. The artificial pitch is scheduled to only be used for youth and ladies football and community based projects.

Seating & Ticketing

I am a season ticket holder in the Main Stand, will I be able to sit here once the stand is built?

Existing Main Stand season ticket holders will be given first priority on the new seating within the new stand. If possible, we will attempt to keep blocks of friends together, if that is desirable to them.

Are there any plans to improve disabled facilities in the stadium?

There will be additional facilities for the disabled in the new stand.

Is there going to be a safe-standing area developed?

There are no plans for a safe standing area within the development.

How will the build plans affect my season ticket for 2016/17 and 2017/18...will the season ticket be valid for less than a full season?

It is anticipated that season tickets for any season will be fully inclusive as per the terms of any other season.

Is there any information available on the ticket prices in the new Main Stand?

Ticket prices will be outlined closer to the opening of the new, completed stadium.

Wheatfield, Roseburn and Gorgie Stands

Will anything be done to develop the existing stands?

We are looking at various ideas re the upgrading and reinvigoration of the three existing stands. This is likely to include improved toilet facilities and kiosk facilities.

Will the away fans still be in the Roseburn Stand?

Yes they will.

Hospitality & Conference and Banqueting

If I am a regular in the Willie Bauld Suite/Gorgie Suite/John Robertson Lounge or Bobby Walker Suite for match day hospitality. Where will I go now?

Details of the new suites and the different tiers of entertainment on offer in the new stand will be released during the period of the build. All four are anticipated to be open during the entirety of season 2016/17.

What will happen with the Gorgie Suite?

The Gorgie Suite has proven to be hugely popular over the last couple of seasons and we intend to keep it that way as we move forward with the new development.

Will I be able to use the new facilities on non-match days?

Yes, within our Tynecastle Events brand, we will be able to

offer some really unique spaces and competitive packages within the conference and events world; and indeed community space/use.

HMFC Museum and Stadium Tours

Will the work affect the Stadium Tours?

There will be some changes to the tours as work progresses and the club will probably increase the number of tours available for what will become our last year in the historic Main Stand.

Will the museum remain in the Gorgie Stand?

Yes the new club museum will continue to be situated in the Gorgie Stand.