

Five things you need to know today Edinburgh



Delays possible finalising council budget

Inverleith Park gym equipment

West End elephant

Fundraising for Sick Kids

Rick Astley at The Queen's Hall



The City of Edinburgh Council may need to consider delaying the finalisation of the city's 2016/17 Budget due to the severity of the local government settlement announced earlier this week.

Edinburgh's proposed settlement figure sees a headline revenue reduction of some 4.5%, which is double that which was anticipated prior to Wednesday's announcement.

Council Leader, Andrew Burns, said: "A reduction in revenue funding of the scale now being proposed, will undoubtedly have a negative impact on a whole range of vital services that local government is responsible for delivering: the children in our care, the elderly struggling with dementia whom we look after, and vulnerable adults whom we assist daily; all these individuals rely on the support that only a council can provide.

"Of course we will continue to work with our colleagues in COSLA, to try and reach an improved negotiated settlement, but given the Scottish Government has confirmed their final Budget will not be approved by Parliament until the end of February, we may now have to seriously consider delaying the finalisation of the city's own budget for 2016/17."

Council Deputy Leader, Sandy Howat, added: "A revenue cut of

this scale would be very damaging for jobs and services within Scottish local government generally, and here in Edinburgh specifically – the harsh reality is that this will translate to real job cuts that hit real families, in real communities throughout our capital city. Everyone will be hurt by this.

“The City of Edinburgh Council is already facing significant workforce reductions, and very challenging budget decisions – Wednesday’s announcement makes all of that even more difficult, and we may well need to consider delaying the finalisation of our own budget for the city.”



Are you interested in having gym equipment in Inverleith Park that is particularly suitable for older / less mobile people? Friends of Inverleith Park are looking for help to make it happen! You can donate and read more at the following website: <http://www.mypark.scot/edinburgh/>



Edinburgh’s West End welcomed an exotic new resident as part of a drive to establish the city’s ‘plinth’ for public art last month.

Baby Elephant, by Scottish sculptor Ronald Rae, has been installed on the corner of Hope Street and Princes Street, which has been earmarked as a space for visiting art by the Council.

The three-tonne, life-sized sculpture follows close on the hooves of the Kelpies maquettes, [which occupied the corner over summer](#).

Rae, who also created the Lion of Scotland in St Andrew Square, loaned the Baby Elephant to Edinburgh to highlight the endangered status of the Asian elephant, of which there are only around 2500 left in the wild.

Have you seen it? Will you share some photos with us if you have?



Edinburgh restaurateurs Maria and Rosario Sartore raised £2000

for The Edinburgh Sick Kids Friends Foundation by hosting a traditional Italian Sunday lunch and a raffle at their Italian restaurant, Locanda de Gusti.


Maria Sartore commented: *"Rosario have I have 4 children, all of whom have been cared for at Sick Kids, either for minor procedures, appointments and long term aftercare. We wanted to thank all the doctors, nurses and staff for their care, support and dedication, by raising funds for the foundation. Our Italian Sunday lunch was a great day for a great cause."*



Did you know Rick Astley is playing at the Queen's Hall next April?

He has a brand new album to promote and will include the capital on his UK tour.

Tickets (in case this is of interest to you for a wee last minute Christmas present!) [here](#).

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David Gray praises character of Hibs' team-mates



Hibs' captain David Gray has praised the character and team spirit of his team-mates during yesterday's Championship victory over a stuffy Queen of the South at Easter Road.

The players knew that league leaders Rangers had been beaten by Falkirk before the game started and that a victory would take them level on points at the top of the table but for long spells it looked as though they would have to settle for a share of the points.

The winning goal came in controversial circumstances in the last minute of time added on. The ball struck Queens' winger Kyle Hutton on the face and he stayed down, forcing the referee to stop play when the ball was at the other end of the field. Hutton then 'recovered' hoping that he would not have to leave the field of play, but his plea was rejected and he had to go off.

At the other end of the field, the referee played a 'drop ball' which landed at the feet of Liam Fontaine who passed to John McGinn on the left wing. McGinn did well to beat his marker before sending a long cross field pass to Henri Anier who did well to control the ball before setting Gray up on the overlap. The former Manchester United player somehow found the energy to beat the Queens' full back before sending in a perfect cross which Dominique Malonga headed into the ground and bouncing up into the net.

The goal sparked angry scenes from the 'Doonhamers' who surrounded the referee and the ill feeling carried on after the final whistle.

Speaking immediately after the game to Cliff Pike of Hibs TV Gray said: "It, once again, shows the character and the team spirit that we have got at the minute and sets it up nicely for next week.

"Obviously I'm delighted to get the win and at one stage you were thinking 'is it gonna come?', but in the last ten minutes

I felt we really pushed on. The fans were great and really spurred us on. It was a relief to get the goal.

“It took an eternity to get over the line and I thought it might go over the bar, but I think Dom (Dominique Malonga) and Henri (Anier) when they came on really changed the game. They were more physical up there.

“Dom has shown how to deal with being left out the team. he was disappointed to be left out today but that is how to react to being left out and he has come on and won us the game. It shows the strength in depth we have in our squad at the moment and it really sets us up for next week.”

Police name pedestrian who died on A1 near Torness



Police in East Lothian have confirmed the identity of the female pedestrian who died on the A1 near Torness on Wednesday (16th December 2015) as 67 year old Patricia Rose Grey from Newcastle.

A police spokesperson said: “Officers would like to thank the public and media for their responses to our witness appeals, we have now traced the stationary vehicle seen at Thurston Manor junction.

“Inquiries into the full circumstances are ongoing”

Rugby – Stewarts-Melville v Watsonians, BT National League, Div 1.

Watsonians stay on top with win at Inverleith



For parts of Saturday's Edinburgh derby at Inverleith, the casual observer would have wondered which of Watsonians and Stewarts-Melville were leading the BT National League's Division 1 as the top side travelled all the way to Ferry Road to play the team in ninth.

Playing into a stiff breeze, the home side were out of the traps from the off and deep into the visiting 22, winning an early penalty for crossing, which Mike Hanning saw over for the three points.

However, while they were still patting themselves on the back, Watsonians scored the first try of the match. Centre, DJ Innes carried the ball over halfway and, just before the tackle came in from his opposing number, Sebastian Trotter, he got the pass away to No. 13, Scott Mcleod, putting the outside centre through a huge hole in the opposition defence. He carried into the 22, where he passed the ball onto the accompanying full back, Scott McKean. Stew-Mel's Sean Murchie made the tackle but McKean's momentum took him over for the score. Andrew Chalmers missed his kick but Watsonians were into a 7-3 lead.

By 20 minutes in, Watsonians had increased their tally to 19. The first of the two tries followed a period of Watsonians possession, driving deep into the home half of the field. Keeping the ball moving, Watsonians eventually found themselves within range and No. 8, Matt Coles then received the ball which saw him crashing over for the second try. Chalmers successful conversion then took the lead out to 12-3.

Four minutes later, they had their third.

Once again, Watsonians drove upfield from the off, but Stew-Mel were keeping them at bay and holding territory when the 12/15 combination struck again. Another offload got McKean up into the line and quick recycle ball from a tackle found wing, Mark Bertram who sailed through under the posts for the second visitor's try. Once again, Chalmers slotted the conversion for a 12-3 lead 15 minutes in.

Once possession was secured from 'Sonians restart clearance, Stew-Mel went to work.

Sean Murchie ran the ball back into the visitor's half before handing over to No. 8, Adam Howie. His offload put No. 6, Hugh Lindsay through, but his run was brought to a halt by Torrie Callandar. However, his tackle was deemed to be too high for the referee's liking so, once the momentum was stopped, the advantage was played and Stew-Mel went for the lineout.

Fortuitously, the loose throw – blame the wind – found Lindsay and recycled ball from the resultant ruck was handed to No. 5. Alexander Rappestad, who took half the Watsonians' pack with him for the touch down.



Hanning kicked his second successful kick of the day and, a couple of minutes from the away side's third try, the home

side were up to 19-10.

The remainder of the half was played out without further additions to the score board, but Stew-Mel, probably, had the upper hand in the run down to the break.

The second half started well for Watsonians, and they came close to scoring five minutes in, but the attack was held out and possession eventually turned over.

But on 53 minutes a successful penalty in the difficult conditions from Chalmers stretched the lead to 22-10.

Then it was Stew-Mel's turn to switch on the pressure. Another loose lineout, once again, fell into friendly hands and the wave of attacks began. Firstly, Hanning was put through five metres out and the stand-off battled his way over the line. The combination of Innes and McKean grappled with Hanning on the floor, but he struggled round and grounded the ball. Unfortunately, the ref had already decided he had been 'held up' so awarded a five-metre scrum rather than the try.

Another couple of scrum followed, with Hanning almost getting clear again, but the ball was eventually turned over and cleared upfield.


The 65th minute then saw the bonus point try for Watsonians. A fairly simple passing move from near half way, put Rory Steele into space enough for the wing to gallop 20-odd metres in for the try. With the wind whistling round the south side of the Inverleith stand, Chalmers kept the ball low for the conversion and added the points for a 29-10 lead.

The home side now took up the cudgel again and, in a series of penetrating moves, shifted the match into 'Sonians' 22. Winning a succession of penalties in the five metre zone, the pack rumbled and battered their way to the line, eventually finding a gap for Michael McDonald to burrow through for the try. Hanning scored the conversion, but the game was over and,

with a bout of fisticuffs and a red card for Fraser Strachan for overuse of the boot in a ruck to gee up the support for the final few minutes, the match drew to a close, 29-17 to Watsonians.

Images from the match will appear [here](#) over the next few days.

Fife Man in Epic Journey?

 *One suspects The Edinburgh Reporter's Mike Smith has been partaking in some early Christmas 'festivities' of an alcoholic nature so the story below should be taken with a suitably sized serving of salt. Or should it...?*

Major Tim Peake hit the headlines last week with his journey into space but next week will see a Scot embark on an equally trying adventure which will test his resilience to the full.

On Thursday, Major Trauma will set out on a journey which is expected to see him away from home for up to six months as he boards a train at Leuchars hoping to arrive at Edinburgh Waverley at some point in 2016.

Major Trauma spoke exclusively to The Edinburgh Reporter.

"This isn't something I've decided on a whim" he said. "I'm not foolish enough to just turn up at the station without a ticket and hope to enjoy a hassle-free journey to Scotland's capital city.

I have an important meeting scheduled in Edinburgh in 2016 and with the Forth Road Bridge being closed and travelling from Fife to the capital taking longer than the Space Mission to the International Space Station, I knew I had to give myself

plenty of time for the journey. By leaving the day before Christmas I hope to have a decent chance of arriving for the meeting at a relatively early stage of 2016”

Planning ahead has been a crucial part of his preparations. “I purchased my ticket several months ago but I know I’m still unlikely to get a seat as it’s probable an elderly woman will be sitting in my reserved area not realising this is for me. With this in mind, I fully expect to spend some time in cramped conditions with limited privacy. I don’t know how long it will take me to get to my destination but I’ve told my wife not to expect to see me again before June.

I’ve taken my mobile phone and laptop but the Wi-Fi access is very limited on some of these trains so I don’t know whether I’ll be able to keep in touch with them.”

Major Trauma said he had trained for his journey by travelling on the Fife Circle and he believes the primitive conditions he endured there would stand him in good stead.

“It’s going to be difficult” he continued, “but I’ve undergone extensive training. I know I will encounter horrific conditions – points failure, leaves on the line, signal problems, drunks on the line at Inverkeithing – but the journey will give me valuable insight into whether there really is intelligent life out there in the rail network.

What I will need to get used to in my long journey is the blackness of the view from the train. Dark, bleak, desolate and a feeling of emptiness – but I’m hoping we won’t be in Kirkcaldy too long...”

Asked what he will miss most in the months ahead, Major Trauma said that, apart from his wife and children, the thing he would miss more than anything would be proper nourishing food.

“I know I will need to adapt to the tasteless, almost inedible fare on offer” he said, “but this is a horrible necessity I

will need to overcome. As well as the food, being in a cramped environment with little room to move and conditions completely lacking in heating and atmosphere will be challenging as well as dangerous with the real threat of scalding hot coffee being spilt over me as I try to clutch at a polystyrene cup tossed in my direction.”

With the Forth Road Bridge closed, Major Trauma’s trip will be a daunting one. The Edinburgh Reporter will look to make contact with him again for an update on his epic journey as soon as possible – probably around Easter...

Five things you need to know today Edinburgh



More work on Water of Leith Flood Prevention Scheme to start soon

Laing’s the Jeweller open on George Street

Hello from the Burgh side

Petition against cut in music tuition

Rare visitor to Figgate Park



New work is set to begin on the multi-million pound Water of Leith Flood Prevention Scheme (WoLFPS) following the signing

of a contract by the City of Edinburgh Council.

[McLaughlin and Harvey Ltd](#) has been appointed to design and construct the second phase of the scheme, and around 1.2km of flood defences will be built along the Water of Leith at Murrayfield and Roseburn.

Once completed, the defences will provide protection for local homes and businesses against flooding.

Construction works are now set to begin in January 2016 and are scheduled for completion in the first quarter of 2018.

Transport and Environment Convener, Councillor Lesley Hinds, said: "I am pleased that we are about to begin the second phase of the project, which will provide protection for hundreds of properties at risk of flooding.

"We are working closely with the community and stake holders, and I'm confident McLaughlin and Harvey Ltd will deliver the second phase efficiently."

Work will include the construction of new walls and embankments alongside flood gates along the waterway, while two new bridges will be built over the river at Baird Drive and Saughtonhall Avenue. As part of the development, contractors will carry out landscaping to improve the appearance of the surrounding area.

A site office will now be established with construction work to commence in January.

The [Water of Leith Flood Prevention Scheme](#) (WoLFPS) is a key infrastructure project to help protect hundreds of properties in vulnerable areas of the city from future flooding.

Following the completion of the first phase, which included defences at Veitches Square, Stockbridge Colonies, Warriston, St Mark's Park and Bonnington, funding was approved for the second phase in September 2014.

A Public Information Day will also be held at Roseburn Primary School from 4pm to 8pm on 13 January, where local residents can meet contractors and Council officers to find out more about designs and plans.

Find out more about the Water of [Leith Flood Prevention Scheme](#) on the Council website.



Following their recent announcement that they were about to move into new premises on the corner of George Street, Laing the Jewellers opened the doors on Friday at their new flagship store.

A spokesman said: "The stunning store windows will give us the opportunity to showcase our diamonds, jewellery and watches in their full glory in a store that can do justice to their beauty. With the original beauty as our starting point and a £1.3 million refit, we have what we believe will be the best shopping experience for jewellery, diamonds and watches in Scotland.

"Michael, Richard and the rest of the Laing team simply cannot wait to welcome you into the new store."

We must have been good this year to have the best present of all, our new store at 72 George Street is now open!
pic.twitter.com/Crj1TENMm6

– Laing Edinburgh (@LaingEdinburgh) [December 19, 2015](#)



Saskia Eng has recorded a parody of the hit Adele song Hello directed at the Forth Road Bridge. You can watch it here!

[Hello \(from the Burgh side\)](#) Sometimes its good to have a bit fun so this is just for fun ☐ but it may only make sense to uk people on this page .. its a parody to Hello called Hello

(from the Burgh side) and its at the Forth Road Bridge

Posted by [Saskia Eng](#) on Thursday, 17 December 2015



According to the Scottish Chamber Orchestra The City of Edinburgh Council has proposed a 75% cut to the budget which funds Edinburgh's instrumental music tuition service and all of the Edinburgh Schools orchestras and ensembles.

They have set up a petition to try and make the council change its mind which you can read [here](#).




Look at this lovely wee duck that someone spotted in the Figgate Park!

There was a rather special little visitor in the Figgate Park today. This is a Mandarin Duck. As the name suggests they'...

Posted by [Figgate Friends](#) on [Saturday, 19 December 2015](#)



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Alan Stubbs' verdict on Queen of the South victory



Hibs' Head Coach Alan Stubbs insisted that results are more important than performances at this stage of the season after watching his players grab all three points in dramatic fashion against a stuffy Queen of the South at Easter Road yesterday.

Hibs moved level on points with Rangers at the top of the Championship thanks to a last gasp goal from Dominique Malonga after some good work from skipper David Gray and Stubbs was quick to praise the former Manchester United full back for his delivery.

Speaking immediately after the game to Hibs TV he said: "You have to give credit to Queen of the South. They worked really hard as a team, but for us today there was a lot of 'nearly things.'

"Where we are now, at this stage of the season, it's not about performances. Yes we all want to see us play really well and dominate possession. We want to win games 3-0, but I have to say that is in cuckoo land at times. We have to play realistic football.

"Over the last couple of weeks we have shown real character and you have to do that in order to achieve anything and from my point of view that's a very pleasing aspect to see.

"I said to David in the dressing room that he had done some good things defensively, but going forward we wanted a little bit more quality and thankfully he saved his best bit of quality for the 92nd, or whatever minute it was.

"We want him to pick people out in that final third and he's

dinked a lovely ball in for Dom who is in the perfect position between the goals. I've had to look twice to make sure it has gone in. It's a really exciting way to win a game.

"It's not an exciting position to be in for me but for the players and fans its fantastic. I'd have liked it to have been earlier. I'd like us not to put ourselves under that pressure."

Alexander Earns Ten-Man Hearts Point in Perth

St Johnstone 0 Heart of Midlothian 0

Ladbrokes SPFL Premiership, Saturday 19 December 2015 – McDiarmid Park

A backs-to-the-wall performance by ten-man Hearts secured a point in a goalless draw with St. Johnstone in Perth on Saturday. The Maroons knew that defeat would see the Perth Saints leapfrog them in the Ladbrokes SPFL Premiership and things looked ominous when Spanish striker Juanma was ordered off with less than half an hour gone. However, Robbie Neilson's men fought for the maroon cause and came away with a point which many would have settled for before the afternoon's events unfolded.

Head Coach Robbie Neilson made two changes from the team that

lost a late goal at Aberdeen seven days ago and neither of the changes were surprising. Miguel Pallardo – replaced in the first half in the Granite City – and Jordan McGhee, whose inexplicable hand ball cost Hearts the game last week – were left out and replaced by Morgaro Gomis and Juwon Oshaniwa respectively.

The visitors had the first decent chance of the afternoon after eight minutes when strong play from Juanma set up fellow striker Osman Sow and the Swedish striker's low shot was saved by Saints keeper Mannus.

Prince Buaben then fired in an effort from twenty yards which went wide.

As at Pittodrie last week, the game seemed a tad on the physical side with Hearts keeper Neil Alexander suffering a head knock and there were 'meaty challenges' from both sides.

The home side should have gone in front when Anderson rose unmarked to head Craig's corner but his header lacked power and the recovered Alexander saved well.

After threatening to boil over, the game did so in the 28th minute. Juanma and Saints Wotherspoon went for a ball with the former Hibs player hitting the floor. Wotherspoon picked himself up and appeared to aim a kick at the Hearts player who then aimed a head butt towards him. Although there was no contact the intent was there and referee Kevin Clancy duly sent Juanma packing with a straight red card and Hearts were up against it. The striker appeared reluctant to leave the field and had to be ushered off by Callum Paterson.

St Johnstone should have made their numerical advantage count moments later when Fisher set up Davidson but the Saints player dragged his effort on goal wide when it seemed easier to score.

Former Jambo John Sutton then headed over as Hearts were keen

to get to half-time with the scoreline still blank.

Half-time St Johnstone 0 Hearts 0

Robbie Neilson re-organised his troops during the break but Hearts still had to rely on keeper Neil Alexander to keep them on level terms early in the second half when he pushed away an effort from Easton.

However, Hearts weren't completely out of things. A great cross from the hard working Sam Nicholson was met by Osman Sow but the striker's effort on goal took a deflection. Then Prince Buaben set off on a lung-bursting run of fully forty yards but his effort on goal was saved by Mannus.

O'Halloran had two chances for the home side but was denied by Paterson and Alexander.

Then came what looked like a costly mistake by the visitors. Substitute Pallardo brought down Kane in the penalty box resulting in the inevitable penalty kick to the home side. However, MacLean incurred the wrath of the home support by blazing his spot kick over the bar and Hearts breathed again.

Kane was proving a handful for Hearts and he had great chance to snatch victory for the Saints but he was denied by a brilliant save from Alexander. The Hearts keeper denied the home side again moments later with a block with his feet and Hearts held on until the final whistle to claim a draw in trying circumstances.

In the end it was a decent point for Hearts but, not for the first time, Juanma's discipline let him down.

Robbie Neilson attempted to explain the striker's actions after the game. "He is a big boy and he gets targeted a lot," Hearts Head Coach told BBC Scotland.

"It's difficult for him coming from a different culture and there are things that happen on the pitch that in Spain result

in a free-kick – but not in Scotland”

Hearts fans will be hoping he learns his lessons soon.

St Johnstone: Mannus, MacKay, Anderson, Davidson, MacLean, Wotherspoon, Sutton (Kane, 70'), Fisher (Shaughnessy, 84'), Easton, Craig, O'Halloran.

Hearts: Alexander, Paterson, Augustyn, Rossi, Oshaniwa, Gomis, Buaben (Pallardo, 70'), Djoum (McGhee, 86'), Nicholson, Sow (Reilly, 74'), Juanma.

Referee: Kevin Clancy

Att: 4,780

Top man: Neil Alexander

Hibernian 1-0 Queen of the South



Hibs moved level on points with Rangers thanks to a controversial last minute goal from substitute Dominique Malonga against Queen of the South at Easter Road this afternoon.

Head Coach Alan Stubbs made two changes to the starting XI that drew with Falkirk last weekend at Easter Road with goal-scorer Martin Boyle replacing Malonga up front and Liam Henderson taking over in midfield from Paul Hanlon who dropped to the bench.

Lewis Stevenson recovered from a head knock and John McGinn was available after his red card was downgraded to a yellow.

Dylan McGeouch, Marvin Bartley and Farid El Alagui failed late fitness tests although Islam Feruz returned to the squad after recovering from a cold.

The Hibs' fans who had generously donated over two tonnes of food for a foodbank were in good fettle following the news that league leaders Rangers had lost to Falkirk in the days early kick off.

Hibs started brightly and created several early chances but should have opened the scoring in the 9th minute. A McGinn corner reached Henderson who beat his marker before sending a perfect cross into the six yard box however the normally reliable James Keatings miscued his header and the ball flew well wide.

Shooting 'downhill' toward the Famous Five stand, Hibs dominated possession although the 'Doonhamers' looked dangerous on the break and Mark Miller almost opened the scoring with a long range free-kick which Mark Oxley did well to tip over the bar.

Moments later a long pass from Fraser Fyvie was well controlled by Jason Cummings but his powerful effort was well saved by Robbie Thomson.

In the 22nd minute, Cummings showed tremendous skill to beat three defenders but he was unable to get his shot away, then Boyle went close after good work from McGinn.

Hibs went close with two free kicks before half time then ten minutes after the break Keatings fired just over the bar after McGinn had been brought down on the edge of the area.

By this stage, the Hibs' fans started to become impatient and Stubbs made a double substitution with Malonga and Henri Anier

replacing Boyle and Cummings.

Malonga almost scored moments after coming on but his goal-bound effort was headed over the bar by a Queens' defender.

Henderson went close when his strike was deflected just past the post then Liam Fontaine headed just wide from Henderson's cross as Hibs pressed for an opener.

Feruz replaced Keatings in the 82nd minute and Hibs had a penalty claim denied five minutes later when Malonga went down after a challenge by three defenders.

Hibs eventually scored the decisive goal in the 93rd minute in controversial circumstances. Kyle Hutton went down with a head injury and with the ball at the other end of the pitch, the referee stopped play. Hutton then tried to get up before the trainer entered the field to prevent him having to go off however the ref insisted that he do so.

The referee then ran to the other end of the pitch and dropped the ball at the feet of Fontaine who immediately found McGinn on the left wing. The midfielder beat his marker and crossed the ball to Anier who did well to control it before slipping it into the path of Gray. The skipper beat the Queens' full back and cross the ball into the danger area when Malonga was on hand to head the ball into the net from five yards to the delight of the Hibs' fans.

The Queens' players surrounded the referee complaining that the drop ball was given to Fontaine but the decision stood and the three points remained at Eater Road.

Hibs: Oxley, Gray, Henderson, Fontaine, Fyvie, Stevenson, Boyle, McGinn, Keatings, McGregor, Cummings. Subs: Reguero, Hanlon, Malonga, Stanton, Feruz, Anier, Forster

Queen of the South: Thomson, Kidd, Dowie, Higgins, Millar, Lyle, Conroy, Russell, Jacobs, Hutton, Marshall. Subs:

Atkinson, Brownlie, Rutherford, Pickard, Moxon, Smith, Coogans

Referee Brian Colvin

Attendance 9163

National Galleries of Scotland will have an international flavour in 2016

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS LEAD NATIONAL GALLERIES OF SCOTLAND'S EXHIBITIONS IN 2016



The work of a hugely influential forerunner of the Impressionists, 400 years of artists' self-portraits, and the story of four legendary collections of Surrealist art are among the subjects to be explored in a programme of major exhibitions at the National Galleries of Scotland in 2016.

Next year has an international flavour at the National Galleries, with the three summer exhibitions all being organised in collaboration with major European and American institutions, including the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam and the Hamburger Kunsthalle. Each of these exhibitions – *Inspiring Impressionism: Daubigny, Monet, Van Gogh*; *Surreal Encounters*; and *Facing the World: Self-Portraits from Rembrandt to Ai Weiwei* – will have its only UK showing in Edinburgh.

Among the other highlights of the programme, and closer to home, autumn 2016 will see the opening of a fascinating new exhibition which explores the working methods of Joan Eardley,

one of Scotland's greatest twentieth century artists, by drawing upon a remarkable and largely unknown archive of her drawings and photographs.

Surreal Encounters, which will be at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art between 4 June and 11 September, will bring together some of the finest Dada and Surrealist works in the world, while telling the story of four remarkable collections, put together with passion and discrimination by Edward James (1907-84), Roland Penrose (1900-84), Gabrielle Keiller (1908-95) and Ulla and Heiner Pietzsch.

The first two, now largely dispersed, were built up in the 1930s and many of the works were acquired directly from the artists, with whom both men were on close terms. James was an important supporter of Salvador Dalí and René Magritte in particular, while Penrose was first introduced to Surrealism through a friendship with Max Ernst. These seminal collections also included masterpieces by Joan Miró, Giorgio de Chirico, Dorothea Tanning, Paul Delvaux, Leonora Carrington, Yves Tanguy and Man Ray. Many significant works from the James collection that will be on show are now in the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, including Dalí's famous *Mae West Lips Sofa* (1938) and Magritte's *La reproduction interdite* (1937), in which James himself appears.

The Keiller and Pietzsch collections were built up after 1960. Gabrielle Keiller devoted herself to collecting Dada and Surrealism following a visit to the Venice home of the celebrated American art lover Peggy Guggenheim, which proved to be a pivotal moment in her life. She not only acquired key works by Alberto Giacometti, Kurt Schwitters, Magritte, Ernst and Marcel Duchamp but was also passionate about the literary aspect of Surrealism, putting together a magnificent library and archive, full of rare books and manuscripts. Ulla and Heiner Pietzsch, who still live in Berlin, have acquired works from a broad range of sources in their quest to build up an historically balanced collection of high-quality surrealist

art. They include many outstanding paintings by Francis Picabia, Pablo Picasso, André Masson, Leonor Fini, Ernst, Tanguy, Magritte and Miró; sculptures by Hans Arp and Hans Bellmer; and works by André Breton, the leader of the Surrealists.

Surreal Encounters will examine the different impulses behind these four extraordinary collections and, by showing them together, will be able to present a fuller and richer picture of the surrealist movement as a whole. The exhibition is jointly organised by the SNGMA, the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, and the Hamburger Kunsthalle. It will be shown in Hamburg and Rotterdam after Edinburgh.

Inspiring Impressionism, will be the first large-scale exhibition to examine the relationship between Charles François Daubigny (1817-1878) and the generation of painters that followed him, including Claude Monet (1840–1926), Camille Pissarro (1830-1930) and Vincent van Gogh (1853-80). Daubigny was prolific, successful and played a major role in making the landscape a major subject for painting in France in the nineteenth-century. The exhibition, which will be at the Scottish National Gallery from 25 June to 2 October, will demonstrate how this now relatively overlooked artist anticipated and influenced many of the practices associated with Impressionism – routinely painting outdoors, adopting new compositional schemes, and developing a radically ‘unfinished’ style and a brighter palette.

In his later years, Daubigny explored a more subjective interpretation of nature in his sunsets and nocturnes, inspiring not only Monet, but Vincent van Gogh, who spent the last two months of his life close to Daubigny’s home and studio at Auvers-sur-Oise.

Inspiring Impressionism is a collaboration between the Scottish National Gallery, the Taft Museum of Art in Cincinnati, USA, and the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam, and

will bring together around 95 works from around the world. The exhibition will create a series of fascinating and often surprising juxtapositions between works by Daubigny, Monet, Pissarro, Van Gogh and others, highlighting the interactions and mutual influence between the older artist his younger colleagues.

Facing the World: Self-Portraits from Rembrandt to Ai Weiwei at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery will explore the intense fascination with which artists have turned their gaze upon themselves, and will offer a very rich survey of self-portraiture from the sixteenth century to the present day.

Facing the World will highlight the outstanding strengths of three great European collections, those of the Staatliche Kunsthalle, in Karlsruhe, Germany, the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lyon, in France, and the National Galleries of Scotland. It will feature an astonishing selection of over 140 works, spanning six centuries, in a wide range of media, including drawings, prints, paintings, photographs, video and social media.

Highlights will include one of Rembrandt's most memorable self-portraits, painted at the age of 51, and stunning works by Simon Vouet, Allan Ramsay, Hyacinthe Rigaud, David Wilkie, Gustave Courbet, Edvard Munch, Paul Klee, Andy Warhol, Marina Abramovic, Douglas Gordon, Sarah Lucas and Annie Lennox. It will also bring together many superb works unfamiliar to British audiences, including self-portraits by the Italian Futurist Gino Severini, and the German Expressionist Ernst Ludwig Kirchner. In an age when issues of identity and questions about how we present ourselves to the world are being widely addressed this ambitious international project will prove thought-provoking and inspiring. *Facing the World* will also feature interactive installations which will allow visitors to make portraits of themselves, and so contribute to a vibrant composite digital self-portrait of

those who have taken part.

Joan Eardley's career lasted barely fifteen years: she died in 1963, aged just 43. During that time she concentrated on two very different themes: the extraordinarily candid paintings of children in the Townhead area of Glasgow; and paintings of the fishing village of Catterline, just south of Aberdeen, with its leaden skies and wild sea. These two contrasting strands will be the focus of this exhibition, which will look in detail at Eardley's working process. It will draw on a remarkable archive of sketches and photographs which remains largely unknown and unpublished.

Eardley made literally thousands of working drawings, some of them slight sketches, while others are resolved pastel drawings, sometimes done on sheets of sandpaper. She also made hundreds of photographs, mainly of children playing in the street outside her studio, and commissioned a friend, Audrey Walker, to make photographs of specific sites, to aid her in her work. Precisely because she was an amateur photographer, and was seeking natural movement rather than staged poses or pin-sharp detail, Eardley's photographs have a haunting quality: childhood and poverty are explored in a manner which is factual rather than sentimental.

The Catterline paintings likewise develop from rough pastel sketches, many of them never previously exhibited. Many of these unpublished sketches and photographs come from a remarkable archive, donated to the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art by Eardley's sister, Pat Black, in 1984. Fragile testaments to Eardley's working procedure, they will be specially conserved and presented for this exhibition, where they will be seen for the first time. The exhibition, which will open at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art on 3 December, will also feature many loans from public and private collections, allowing the viewer to trace specific developments between the photographs, the drawings and the finished paintings.

For full details of the exhibition programme at the National Galleries of Scotland, please [click the following link](#).

Edinburgh councillor blogs – Councillor Maureen Child

✉ Dear All

The few **Syrian refugee families** Edinburgh has already welcomed to Edinburgh through the UK Government's Vulnerable Person's Relocation Scheme are settling in well thanks to a range of excellent public, private and voluntary sector partners. We expect to welcome more in the New Year. One of our key partners, very aptly named **The Welcoming**, are helping provide language classes and pathways into making friends – helping them form the kind of informal networks we all depend upon. The Welcoming have attracted a number of excellent new volunteers to help with their vital work, helping people settle in and make a real contribution to the life of Edinburgh. Find out more about The Welcoming here: <http://www.thewelcoming.org/>

You would be made very welcome to a **Christmas Light** service is taking place in '**Wellsprings**', 71 Whitehill Street, **Newcraighall** EH21 8QZ at **4pm on Sunday 20th December**. It will include; carol singing; a kids dance video, with a modern take on the nativity; kids Christmas crafts; candle lights; mulled wine/juice and mince pies. The offering will be taken in aid of Syrian refugees. More about Wellspring here: www.wellsprings.uk.net

Or you would be equally welcome in the **Robin Chapel**, for a more formal and cerebral Christmas experience with amazing choral singing: <http://www.robinchapel.org.uk/>

Several people from **Gilberstoun** have contacted me about the inconsiderate and quite **dangerous way people park right next to Brunstane Station** on Brunstane Road South. They said it was an accident waiting to happen. If you do ever leave your car near the station, do make sure the sightlines are clear for all other road users, cyclists and pedestrians. I was in touch with both local police and local roads team to see what we can do about it. I asked for cones to be put up again in the short term and more permanent measures be progressed.

I went along to a meeting of **Portobello Rotary** for the first time last week to hear Fiona Fitheridge speak about the **Thistle in Craigmillar** and all the work they do. It was the premier of a couple of short films where people talked about how the Thistle has helped them turn their lives around. Hugely impressive! This is only part of what Thistle do: <http://chronicleonline.net/2015/12/17/thistle-helping-you-manage-your-health/> Portobello Rotary is small but does great work and has a big impact. More here: <http://www.rotary-ribi.org/clubs/homepage.php?ClubID=110>

The Council's **local park rangers** team do a really great job, working alongside local communities and 'Friends of Parks'. They have put a few illustrated highlights here in their annual report, which deserves to be much more widely distributed and celebrated. More

here: <http://www.portobellocc.org/pccpn/2015/12/14/park-ranger-service-east-neighbourhood-newsletter-2015/>

On Tuesday I was in **St Francis RC Primary School** in Craigmillar presenting booklets to P5 children on the work they had done to develop themselves **'Agents for Change' in their community**. This is a fabulous programme run by the Jack Kane Community Centre. It really engages the interest and enthusiasm of the youngsters in learning how to be a good member of a community and get along with people. Having met the children, I am not surprised to hear the class teacher say that this happened to be most rewarding class she had ever taught – and she clearly had quite a few years of teaching experience. More

here: <http://jackkanecommunity.org/?s=Agents+for+change+&submit=Search>

I was delighted to be asked on to this year's judging panel for S5/6 young people at Castlebrae Community High School (CCHS) presenting on a charity of their choice that means a lot to them. Not an easy thing to do! This was part of the Scotland-wide Young Philanthropy Initiative which gave each group a chance to win their chosen organisation £3000. Last year, Kids in the Street (KITS) won and we heard from Kev Finlay all the prize money last year had enabled them to do. This year, the narrow winner was The Yard, with some really fabulous runners up. The choice was not at all easy and had to be based not on the merits of the charity, but how well the youngsters presented. The people who run the YPI venture said to us that four of those CCHS presentations were the best they had ever seen. Castlebrae Community High School is doing fabulous work in building the confidence of some wonderful, caring young people. Picture

here: https://mobile.twitter.com/ypi_scotland/status/6771347960

74713088/photo/1

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) is appealing to the public to **stay safe this winter** by taking the necessary steps to protect their families, homes, customers and communities. Read more here: <http://chronicleonline.net/2015/12/14/stay-safe-this-winter/>

Nice photo of **Craigmillar Castle**, the impressive and superbly preserved, former fortified residence of Sir Simon Preston – as every child in Castlevew Primary School will be able to tell you, particularly by the time they learn all to be official tour guides for their peers in P6/7. <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=858618487589501>

From time to time I get asked – does this development have planning consent? Is it being built as approved? A refreshed **planning enforcement charter** sets out the enforcement process and how enquiries can be made. The dedicated online form ensures the enquirer provides all the information planning officers need to allow an investigation to proceed. The online form is easy to use and can also be accessed on mobile devices. The form and charter are available at: www.edinburgh.gov.uk/planningenforcement This means an improved and quicker service, with fewer delays, although paper-based enquiries are still welcome.

Planning Aid Scotland is now called simply PAS – which is confusing for those of us who use that acronym locally for **Portobello Amenity Society** (PAS)! PAS nationally offers

free, impartial and professional planning advice to help people understand and engage with the planning system. pas.org.uk PAS locally can and do help local people get to grips with the planning system. I am pleased to know that both organisations are lending support to the fight to retain the **allotments at Craigentenny/Telferton**. I was pleased to meet up with two of the campaigners to give them some advice on how to get their message across.

A Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) has just gone in to the planning service for the Local Development Plan proposed **Brunstane site** and Portobello Community Council have put details up on the their website. More here: <http://www.portobellocc.org/pccpn/2015/12/17/proposal-of-application-notice-received-for-brunstane/>

To get more details on this application, or any other, do go on to the Council's website www.edinburgh.gov.uk/planning You will get full details of how to comment or get involved with any live planning application or search any planning history of sites which interest you. An application been lodged on 30 November for a **cycling facility at Hunter's Hall Park** associated with the Jack Kane Centre. The reference for this one is 15/05530/PAN.

Here's a nice picture of **Portobello Hornets** young rugby players in their smart new strips – thanks to sponsorship by **The Espy!** [Photo](#)

Boating by **Portobello Beach and Pier**, 1885: This is the picture for July in the Lost Edinburgh Calendar for 2016. The

pier: [fb.me/7SADG0Bih](https://www.facebook.com/7SADG0Bih)

Portobello Town Hall's next regular Monthly **Ceilidh** 8 January 2016. Start the weekend in full swing, at the regular monthly Friday night ceilidh with great live music from the Canongate Cadgers, first Friday of the month. Dancing 8pm until 11pm, no need to book. Just pay for your ticket at the door.. Pay at the door £8 (£6 concessions), organised by Cadgers Music Factory. This Ceilidh Event suitable for all ages and abilities. All dances are explained – the band has a caller. Doors open 7.30pm (Dancing 8pm -11pm) No need to book, just pay at the door on the night. Under 16 's Free Entry. All welcome. <http://www.meetup.com/ceilidh-meetup/events/227163463/>

One of my constituents pointed out how many local roofs in Craigmillar and Niddrie now have **solar panels** retro-fitted. These may well be Castle Rock Edinvar Housing Association properties, fitted with energy saving solar panels under a scheme to tackle fuel poverty and reduce household energy bills. I am told that 105 properties in the EH16 postcode have benefitted from this investment. More here:

http://www.castlerockedinvar.co.uk/about_us/company_news/technology_trial_underway_in_£7_million_project_to_tackle_fuel_poverty.aspx

And finally – I hope you like the attached photo of our up-cycled bonsai Christmas tree (attached).

A Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all!

Best wishes

Maureen

Councillor Maureen Child | Labour Elected Member |
Portobello/Craigmillar (Ward 17) | City of Edinburgh Council |
City Chambers | High Street | Edinburgh | EH1 1YJ | Tel 0131
529 3268 | Mobile 07718 666 481| Twitter @MaureenChild1

p.s. My face-to-face Councillor Advice Sessions, or
'Surgeries', are usually every **Monday at 5.30 pm** in **Castlevue
Community Centre**, 76 Craigmillar Castle Avenue (Phone 661
4064) and then **at 7 pm** in **Portobello Library**, 14 Rosefield
Avenue (Phone 529 5558). Now also at Craigmillar Library, 101
Niddrie Mains Road, EH16 4DT, 1st Wednesday of the month,
drop-in session 5pm-5.30pm, thereafter by appointment only up
until 7.30pm.

Please phone me on Direct Line 0131 529 3268 or Mobile 07718
666 481, or email maureen.child@edinburgh.gov.uk to check
availability, make an appointment or request a home visit.

Rugby – Edinburgh v London Irish, European Rugby Challenge Cup

Edinburgh hang on for a narrow win



Following the previous weeks hammering by London Irish in

Reading, the Edinburgh side had a lot of ground to make up to keep their European Rugby Challenge Cup campaign on the rails and a narrow 18-15 win in the traditional, mid-group stage double header gave them that chance.

10 changes from the previous weekend lined up at BT Murrayfield to face a visiting side who had made a few changes of their own and from the whistle it looked to have paid off as the home side were quickly deep in the opposition half.


However, a couple of dropped passes put London Irish right back into the game and they swiftly drove up, deep into the home 22 where they scored the opener from prop, Gerard Ellis who was driven over the line by the pack. Shane Geraghty was unable to add the extras so, just over eight minutes in, the score was 5-0 the Irish.

✖ Edinburgh then came right back from the restart, driving the visitors back into their 22 again, but again, a mistake, this time by Phil Burleigh, cost them possession.

But they weren't finished with the pressure and a couple of minutes later, the hosts were once again on the offensive. Winning a ruck penalty on the left of the pitch a few metres out, Sam Hidalgo-Clyne was denied using a quick tap by the referee as he was almost a metre from the spot, so a lineout it was.

The pack mauled the ball nearer the posts and a neat offload to Tom Brown saw the winger through for Edinburgh opening points. Hidalgo-Clyne slotted home the easy conversion and, with 16 minutes played, it was 7-5 to Edinburgh.

Less than two minutes from the kick off, Edinburgh were once again mauling toward the Irish line. This time, the maul was brought to ground illegally, giving Hidalgo-Clyne his second shot at goal. His successful kick stretched the host's lead to 10-5 as the match entered the second quarter.

It was now London Irish's turn to pile on the pressure and, for the next 10 minutes they held Edinburgh mostly in their own half, but Geraghty had another shot at goal for a penalty on the 30 minutes mark and, this time, made no mistake to  narrow the gap to 10-8.

With three minutes to go, the Edinburgh pack drew another penalty for Hidalgo-Clyne to have a go at, and, once again, the scrum half was on target to restore the five-point gap at 13-8.

With the half drawing to a close, the visitors put in a sustained attack on the Edinburgh line, only a fine, last-gasp tackle from Mike Allan stopping the score.

The match see-sawed back and forth for the first 20 minutes of the second half with Tom Brown and Damien Hoyland making good breaks for the hosts and the London Irish pack doing the majority of their work. And it was the Irish pack who were first to add second half points to the score board.

Winning their own lineout a few metres from the line, the ball was recycled several times through mauling and through the hands before the forwards took charge once again and fired sub, No. 17, Tom Smallbone over the line for the second visitors' try. Geraghty was, once again successful with his kick and it was 15-13 with 20 minutes left on the clock.

It proved to be a good 20 minutes for Edinburgh as several breaks forced the visiting side into desperate defence, only some last-ditch tackling stopping a score – as did a penalty miss by Hidalgo-Clyne!



With less than 10 minutes to go to the whistle, another fine run from Brown was brought to ground inside the 22. The ball was shifted out to Hoyland on the wing, but he was driven out just short of the five-metre line. From Irish's clearance,

Edinburgh were once again in possession and, from the line out, flanker, John Hardie – ably ‘assisted’ by Hoyland and Mike Coman – went over in the right corner for the lead. Hidalgo-Clyne then missed his attempt at goal, but it was 18-15 with just over six minutes left.

London Irish pressed hard in the final minutes, but good discipline – for a change – by the Edinburgh side saw the visitors pushed back toward their own half and a final error gave the host team a scrum to finish off a hard fought win.

Images from the match will appear [here](#) over the next few days

Do you know when your GP's surgery is open this Christmas?



Dr Owl, the face of NHS 24's 'Be Health-Wise this Winter' campaign is asking people if they know when their GP surgery and local pharmacy are open over the festive period and to make sure they know where to go if they need health advice over the holidays.

NHS 24's Medical Director Professor George Crooks said: "GP surgery opening times may vary across Scotland so it is vital you know when your local surgery will be available. Pharmacies can help with treatments for common complaints but again, do make sure that you know when your local pharmacy will be open.

"It's a good idea to have some over the counter medicines at home and if you are on any long term medication make sure you

have enough to last over the holidays, order only what you need but make sure you get it in plenty of time.”

Dr Alan McDevitt, chair of the BMA’s Scottish GP Committee, says it’s important people know what services are available, and when: “GPs and other healthcare staff will be working in out of hours units across Scotland, throughout the festive break, to ensure that people who become ill and can’t wait for an appointment when their GP practice re-opens can get help. Be prepared by finding out when your local surgery is going to be open, order repeat prescriptions early and stock up on remedies for seasonal illnesses from your local pharmacy.”

The 111 service run by NHS 24 will be available throughout Christmas and Hogmanay and online health advice and information can be found at www.nhsinform.co.uk.

Five things you need to know today Edinburgh



SNH looking for board members

Planning approval for Donaldson’s

Holyrood in recess

Street of Light

Hairdressing for the homeless

People interested in helping to look after Scotland’s spectacular nature are being invited to apply to be a member

of the Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) board.

SNH is particularly keen to have more women on the board to meet the Scottish Government's 50:50 by 2020 initiative and Scottish Ministers will appoint four new SNH Board members to start on 1 April 2016.

SNH's work is hugely varied, from researching and combating climate change to encouraging people to get out and enjoy nature, restoring Scotland's peatlands, battling wildlife crime, and being involved in a diverse range of partnership projects that seek to enhance our biodiversity – from the majestic sea eagles to the more obscure woolly willow. A key aspect of our role is to demonstrate the link between our natural heritage and a range of wider social and economic benefits to society.

Ian Ross, SNH's chair, said: "You think of Scotland and immediately picture beautiful mountains, lochs and coastlines. It's SNH's role to help protect and enhance all of this, which is not only crucial to our heritage and health, but also to our economy. The work we do is incredibly important, and I'd encourage anyone with a passion for nature, and experience of either scientific conservation or business, to apply for these rewarding board openings."

"In particular, I would like to encourage women and members of minority groups to apply. At the moment, we have only one woman out of seven people on our board, but we're committed to change this dramatically to meet the Scottish Government's 50:50 by 2020 initiative."

"The Scottish Government looks to SNH for both advice and hands-on management, often working with our partners, to conserve nature for future generations. That's a huge responsibility, and a challenge that the board members take to heart. The job isn't an easy one – as board members constantly have to balance protecting our environment with the resources

available and what can be very differing interests across public, private and voluntary sectors – but it is a highly rewarding one. Board members fulfil an important governance and accountability role and make an important contribution to SNH's engagement with a diverse range of groups and organisations."

Current expertise represented on the SNH board includes local authority, land use, natural resource management, renewable energy, environmental education, wildlife management, strategic planning, business, information technology, modernising government, and bird conservation.

Ian added: "You don't need a detailed understanding of science and nature to apply for the board positions. We're looking for people with the experience and enthusiasm to help lead a large and complex public service organisation."

SNH board members receive £291.37 per day with a normal commitment of 30 days a year. Application packs are available from the public appointments website (<http://bit.ly/1QwZ07B>) with a closing date of 17 January. The appointments are for a three-year period.

Planning permission has been approved by The City of Edinburgh Council for the redevelopment of the Category A Listed Donaldson's, Edinburgh.

Working in partnership, City & Country will restore and convert the majestic Playfair building, whilst CALA Evans will create a range of contemporary homes in the surrounding grounds.

The permission allows for 115 new properties sited within the Playfair building, ranging from one to three bedrooms and 84 newly built two and three bedroom homes, designed in a crescent shape to the rear of the Playfair building. The

sweeping South Lawn that faces Wester Coates will be retained as an open, landscaped area.

As part of the proposals there will be 402 cycle parking spaces for residents, whilst car parking for both the Playfair building and the new build crescent will be sited underground, totalling 364 allocated residents spaces and a further 26 for visitors.



The Scottish Parliament will be in recess between 19 December 2015 and 4 January 2016. Business will resume on 5 January 2016.

The Scottish Parliament building will be closed to visitors between 24 December 2015 and 3 January 2016. The building reopens to the public on 4 January 2016.

Only a few days left to enjoy the Virgin Money Street of Light which finishes on Christmas Eve. Have you been yet? What did you think?

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



Edinburgh College's young hairdressers are swapping salons for the streets this winter for a charity project to provide haircuts to homeless people.

Seven hair and beauty students took their scissors to the Salvation Army at The Pleasance and Cross Reach's Cunningham House hostel this week, cutting and styling the hair of around

30 clients who use the charities' services. They will be visiting the centres again over the winter to offer more haircuts.

Rosemary Martin, hair and beauty lecturer at the college, has run the Haircuts for the Homeless project for four years, and each year has a new set of students to take along.

Rosemary said: "It's not compulsory but my students are always up for it. The whole experience is really beneficial and a privilege, as they get the chance to practise the skills they've learnt in college on real people. The homeless centres are always pleased to see us."

Liam Fontaine determined to keep momentum going



Liam Fontaine is determined to ensure that Hibs keep the momentum going at the top of the table, with a 16 match unbeaten run at stake when they face Queen of the South at Easter Road on Saturday.

Hibs currently sit second on the table, three points behind leaders Rangers in the race for automatic promotion to the top flight and with the pair meeting on the 28th neither club can afford to drop points at this vital time of the season.

Hibs were unable to get the better of the 'Doonhamers' last season but have held the upper hand this time winning 3-0 at Palmerston Park earlier in the season thanks to goals from Jason Cummings, Liam Henderson and Martin Boyle.

Fontaine told Hibs TV: "We will go into the game looking to win it and looking to extend our run.

"We are confident as we have been in our previous games so there will be no difference thought process from us.

"They'll be hard work and organised as they always are, they'll play and it's just up to us again to be superior and put our mark on them. Out run them, out work them and out play them and win the game."

Family of Abdul Rehman issue statement



The family of Abdul Rehman who sadly died yesterday in a road traffic collision on Cliftonhall Road, near to Ratho, have issued the following statement through Police Scotland:

"Abdul Rehman was a loving son, brother and uncle who put everyone before himself.


"His family meant the world to him and he meant the same to us. We are absolutely heartbroken.

"We are so extremely grateful for all the kind messages and support we continue to receive from all who knew Abdul Rehman.

"We would like to take this opportunity to request privacy.

"We hope people will understand the need for us to have time alone to grieve at this very sensitive time "

Lynne has been to the palace to get her OBE!

 Lynne McNicoll OBE now has the insignia to prove she has the honour.

This morning the Edinburgh charity Chair arrived at Buckingham Palace wearing a royal blue coat with matching hat and received the significant honour from HRH The Prince of Wales.

Lynne said: "Prince Charles congratulated me and then chatted about why I set up the charity and how tough it was to fundraise."

The founder of charity ItsGood2Give which supports young people with cancer, Lynne herself has been receiving treatment for cancer over recent months. Her energy is a wee bit limited but she was determined to enjoy her special day today to the full so it was a limo to the palace for Lynne and husband Ian.

Lynne explained to The Edinburgh Reporter : "I heard about the honour in an amazing letter and it came when I was very ill so it was good timing to boost my morale."

Lynne has raised over £2m in ten years, and of that £1.5m has been for her own charity It's good 2 give.

Witness appeal following series of break-ins in Bonnyrigg.



Police in Midlothian are appealing for witnesses following a series of break-ins in Bonnyrigg.

Four garages and sheds in Broomieknowe, Lasswade, Bonnyrigg were broken into overnight between Wednesday 16th and Thursday 17th December.

A variety of property including tools and a blue-coloured pedal cycle, Whyte make, Aluminous model were stolen.

Sergeant Michele Lindsay said: "Theft by Housebreaking is a crime that significantly impacts on people's lives I would ask people to review their security in light of these break-ins and to make sure they have taken adequate steps to protect their possessions.

"I would also like to reassure the community that we have a dedicated team of officers investigating these crimes and would urge anyone who saw any suspicious activity or has any information in relation to these incidents to please contact police immediately on 101, or alternatively the charity Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

For further information about home or personal security, please speak to a local officer, visit your local station, call Police Scotland on 101 or visit the following pages on this website:

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For further information about home or personal security, please speak to a local officer, visit your local station, call Police Scotland on 101 or visit the following pages on the Police Scotland website:

Bogus caller warning after incidents in Newtongrange



Police are appealing for witnesses following a number of bogus caller incidents in Newtongrange.

A man attended several addresses in the Suttislea area on

Wednesday 16 and Thursday 17 December claiming to be taking part in a local sporting event to raise money for a cancer charity.

The suspect is described as white, 5ft 8inches tall, with a slim build. He had a Scottish accent, gaunt appearance, and mid-length brown hair that was swept to the side. He was wearing a dark mid-length jacket and dark skinny jeans.

Sergeant Stuart Aitchison said: "Our enquiries have established that these are bogus caller incidents, and we're appealing to any members of the local community with information that can assist with our investigation to get in touch.

"I'd like to remind all residents to be wary of unknown or unexpected callers. Don't ever feel embarrassed by asking for identification, as legitimate callers will be happy to provide you with this. If you unsure of a caller, or are made to feel threatened or intimidated, ask them to leave and contact a trusted friend, relative or police."

Anyone with information is asked to contact Police Scotland on 101 or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Alan Stubbs previews Queen of the South fixture



Hibs' Head coach Alan Stubbs is looking forward to facing Queen of the South on Saturday after last weeks draw with Falkirk. Despite dropping two points, Hibs did not lose any

ground to league leaders Rangers after coming from behind to equalise in the dying minutes with only nine men on the pitch.

John McGinn's red card in the game has since been downgraded to a yellow meaning that he will be available for selection while there will be late fitness tests for several players.

Stubbs told Hibs TV: "We are certainly looking forward to it. we go into it buoyed from last week's result and performance and the way it all turned out at the end.

"It was a well earned point. It felt more than that with the manner in which we achieved it in the end.

"It showed a different side to us which I knew we had We were full of energy, desire, and will not to be beat and from my point of view and from the teams point of view it was great.

"I think it will be tough as we know Queen of the South really well. We know they have good players in the team that can contribute towards causing an upset if we are not up to our best.

"We want to put a good performance on, we want to win the game ultimately, and then move onto our next game.

"We will have late calls on Marvin (Bartley), Dylan (McGeouch) and Farid (El Alagui). Izzy (Islam Feruz) come back into the squad after missing a few days with a cold. apart from that we are where we were last weekend.

Hibs' fans can get photo with League Cup on Saturday



Hibs' fans attending Saturday's game with Queen of the South will be able to get their hands on the Scottish League Cup thanks to tournament sponsors Utilita.

Hibs face St Johnstone in this season's semi final at Tynecastle and the trophy is no stranger to Easter Road having spent some time in the Boardroom in 1972, 1991 and 2007.

The trophy will be on display in the East Stand concourse from 2pm, with Utilita accepting donations for the charity Home-Start, a national family support charity that helps parents to build better lives for their children. They will also be handing out 150 teddy bears to supporters – so make sure you get down early with your wee Hibee for a special Christmas treat.

And Utilita are offering supporters the opportunity to win two tickets for the Scottish League Cup semi final with St Johnstone – simply get your photo with the trophy and tweet @UtilitaEnergy using the hashtag #UtilitaFootball.

A spokesperson for Utilita said: "Home-Start is an extraordinary charity bringing love, hope and invaluable, incredible support to some of Scotland – and indeed Britain's – most vulnerable families.

"The reality is any one of us could need Home-Start's help one day – so we are honoured to work alongside such inspiring people who amaze us daily with their work.

"We say to all Hibeers fans attending the Queen of the South game on Dec 19, with the semi-final against St Johnstone next

month, come and have your pic taken with the Scottish League Cup, presented by Utilita Energy – and any spare coins into Home-Start's collection buckets would be gratefully accepted!"

Scottish Government bans smoking in cars carrying children



MSPs have voted in favour of legislation to protect more children from the effects of second-hand smoke by prohibiting smoking in cars with children on board.

The Scottish Parliament today passed the Smoking Prohibition (Children in Motor Vehicles) (Scotland) Bill.

When the legislation commences next year, anyone caught smoking in a private vehicle carrying someone under the age of 18 will face a fixed penalty notice of £100 or a court fine of up to £1,000.

Speaking after the Stage 3 debate Minister for Public Health, Maureen Watt, said:

"This government is absolutely committed to protecting children from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke.

"Smoking remains the primary preventable cause of ill health and death in Scotland – ultimately killing one in two long-term users. This costs the NHS as much as £300 million to £500 million each year.

“The evidence on the harmful effects of second-hand smoke is also clear, which is why last year we announced a target to reduce the proportion of children in Scotland exposed in the home from 12 per cent to six per cent by 2020 – potentially saving 50,000 Scottish children from second-hand smoke.

“This Bill will contribute to those aims, and I am delighted that it has now been passed.

“The purpose of this legislation is ultimately to achieve culture and behaviour change. Scotland has led the way with the ban on smoking in public places, the display ban and our commitment to a tobacco free generation – these have had a positive effect on public health and we are confident that a ban on smoking in cars with children will do likewise.”

Letter from Scotland



Lighten our darkness on the
Old Dalkeith Road

’Tis the season of coloured lights and cheerful dispositions. The homes around me are decorated with flashing Santa Clauses, reindeer, Christmas trees, Yule wreaths and many other glittering distractions. It’s all in defiance of the winter darkness and whatever troubles the householders inside may have. Christmas is a time when we can pause and put things in context, to balance light against darkness.

Looking though my diary for the past year, I find myself saying “Thank goodness I live in Scotland and not in other parts of the world.” This week, for instance, we were treated

to a budget speech by our Finance Secretary, John Swinney, which outlined Scottish Government spending of some £30 billion. We are not a poor country. In fact, according to the International Monetary Fund, we are living in the 14th richest country in the world.

In this context the rows at Holyrood pale into insignificance. And there have been rows – over the cut of 2 per cent in local government funding, over Mr Swinney's decision not to use his new power to raise income tax by a penny or two in the pound, over his continuing freeze of the council tax, over the announcement of an extra tax on second homes. All of which we will hear plenty about in the run-up to the Scottish elections in six months' time.

But back to my diary. I see that 2015 began with the usual storms. A cargo ship went down in the Pentland Firth with the loss of its 8-man crew. And the storms kept coming. We have even started naming them, American style.

The latest, Storm Desmond, caused severe flooding in the Borders and Dumfriesshire. Last year was the wettest ever recorded in Britain and 2015 is on target to exceed that. It's expected to be the windiest. But at least we are not subject to the cyclones such as the one which devastated the low-lying islands of Vanuatu in March.

Climate change, of course, has been one of the big issues of the year. We saw Nicola Sturgeon strutting our stuff at the UN summit in Paris earlier this month, boasting about Scotland's world-leading target of cutting carbon emissions by 42 per cent by 2020. Unfortunately we have missed our interim targets for the last four years. But never mind, we saw the demolition of the chimney stacks at the old coal-fired power station at Cockenzie in September and next April we will be closing down the last such power station at Longannet, which may put us back on track, despite our addiction to car travel.



The end of the age of coal, Cockenzie power station

On the 7th of January, my diary records that the offices of the satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo were attacked by two Islamic extremists. Eleven people were killed. At the beginning of February, my diary records that a Jordanian pilot was burned to death by Islamic State militants in Iraq, one of several ritual killings. In June, 30 British tourists were killed at a beach resort in Tunisia, by terrorists inspired by IS. At the end of October, a Russian plane carrying tourists home from an Egyptian resort was brought down by a Jihadist's bomb. All 244 people on board died. Then a few days later, came the Paris shootings in which 131 people were killed.

All this slaughter of the innocents has finally awakened governments in the West to the turmoil in the Middle East. There's been yet another declaration of a "war on terror" and on 2 December, MPs voted to send British planes to bomb IS targets in Syria. The SNP voted against, saying there was no overall strategy for winning the war against IS or for what should happen if IS is defeated. Since then of course Russia has entered the war and Saudi Arabia has convened a meeting of neighbouring states to edge towards a peace settlement.

European governments also had a rude awakening to the four-year long civil war in Syria when over 800,000 refugees arrived on their borders. Over 3,000 drowned in their attempt to cross the Mediterranean Sea. Around 6,000 are camped at Calais trying to cross the North Sea to Britain.

So far, Britain has only promised to take in 20,000 refugees over the next four years. The first thousand are already here, a hundred of them in Scotland. On the 2nd September my diary records the picture of 3 year old Aylan Kurdi a Syrian boy, whose body was found washed up on a beach in Turkey as

his family tried to flee to Europe. It has become one of the most haunting memories of 2015.

On the economic front, this has been the year of zero, or near zero, inflation. My diary records the date as 24th March when the figure slipped to zero itself. By May, we were into deflationary territory for the first time since 1960. Meanwhile, unemployment has been falling, but only slightly in Scotland, from 5.7 per cent in January to 5.6 per cent in this month's figures. In short, the Scottish economy has not been recovering well and has slipped behind the UK as whole. In particular our oil industry has been evaporating as world oil prices have fallen to less than \$50 a barrel.

My diary entries chart the political year from the UK general election of May 7th when the Conservatives won a surprising victory. But not in Scotland...in fact they only won one seat. So too did the Liberal Democrats. But the sensation was the collapse of Labour to just one MP – my own Ian Murray here in the Socialist Republic of leafy Edinburgh South. The SNP won 56 seats and still dominate the opinion polls to this day. Nicola Sturgeon was the star of the show even though she herself was not standing in the Westminster elections.

✖ Since then of course, we have had the young Kezia Dugdale elected to lead Scottish Labour and on September 12th, Jeremy Corbyn led his revolutionary forces to an astonishing victory in the UK Labour leadership race. Everyone, including Labour MPs, is still trying to work out what all this will mean for the Labour Party. Will it turn sharply to the left ? Will it be electable ?

And finally, to that other armchair sport...sport itself. Both football and athletics have disgraced themselves this year. Sepp Blatter and his cronies at FIFA headquarter have been hunted out of office by fraud investigators from America. And the world athletics body IAAF has been found napping over the

issue of doping in sport. Its new president Lord Coe is struggling to win back public trust.

On the field, Scotland has not had a great year either. In football we failed to qualify for the European championships and in the rugby World Cup we were unlucky and knocked out by Australia in the quarterfinals. However in the unlikely sport of tennis, we won the Davis Cup, thanks to the Murray brothers from Dunblane. Who can forget that cheeky last lob by Andy Murray right over the head of Belgium's David Goffin ?

And so I close my diary for 2015. A rather frightening and disappointing year is over when we faced climate change, terrorism, political excitement and economic uncertainty. Still, it is Christmas and all is well.

Just keep the coloured lights turned on.

Good Service Awards 2015 – A Personal Top 6



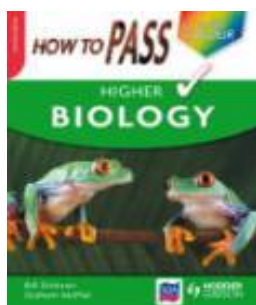
Online shopping is here to stay – why drag yourself out in the winter weather when you can sort your Christmas list with the click of a button?

Good service, that's why! If the person who takes your credit card does so with a smile, if they're polite and friendly – and prepared to spend a bit of time helping you to find what you want (and in the case of me and electronics, explaining how on earth it works...) I bet you come away with a much warmer glow than a website can give you. We're human, we like

interaction, and no, those 'ask me' options that some online sellers try to fool us with are *not* real people – try asking them something that's not in their pre-programmed script and see what happens...

So here are my very personal awards for top service in Edinburgh this year:

6 Blackwell's



Bookshops are really up against it these days; you can buy any book without having to move from your sofa, and there are no worries about whether it will fit you or you'll like the

colour. Why do I still shop at Blackwell's then? Because the staff really know their stuff and the shop makes a huge effort to arrange author events, book launches and reading groups. I reserve my greatest praise for the people in the **academic books department** on the first floor – they are fantastic!

If you're the parent of a school-age child, you'll probably know the misery of finding the right textbooks, how-to-pass guides and revision aides; old exam papers in particular are a minefield, especially when the format seems to change every year. Blackwell's staff will spend ages making sure you've got the right edition of the right material – and they do it all with a smile. Blackwell's won **The Bookseller 2014 Book Retailer of the Year Award**.

Blackwell's, 53-62 South Bridge; open 9am-8pm Monday to Friday, 9am-6pm Saturdays, 12 noon-6pm Sundays.

5 John Lewis





Well, I can hardly leave them out... I *know* I'm their classic customer, I *know* they probably wish we were all a bit younger and hipper – but the joy of John Lewis staff is that they never make you feel that way.

I would never buy white goods or computers of any kind from anywhere else; only their staff will take time to explain it all, only their staff don't try to blind you with techno-speak, and only they give you a two year guarantee as standard. There are a few things I'd like to change in the Edinburgh shop – the chaotic restaurant for one (bring back the lovely Espresso Bar!) – but John Lewis staff are wonderful and deserve every profit share they get in my opinion. So there.

John Lewis, St James's Centre; opening hours are extended over the Christmas and New Year period – click [here](#) for details.

So which are your favourites? Which shops make you feel special – even if all you're buying is a bar of chocolate? We're always looking for great places to shop, so do let us know where you've found great service in the city.

4 Maplin



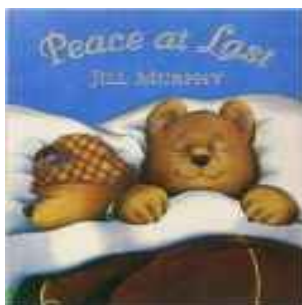
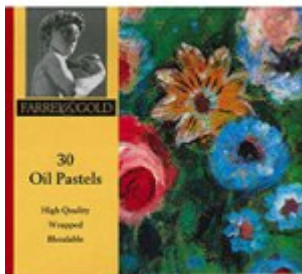
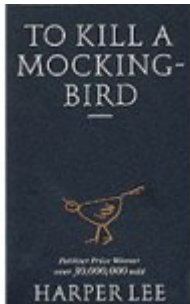
I am no lover of DIY or computer shops and I haven't the first idea what half the gadgets in Maplins are for – but every single time I go there, whether it's for a mouse or a roll of masking tape, the staff are unfailingly jolly and helpful.

I'm sure they know as well as I do that they could sell me any old thing – but they don't, they go out of their way to find what I need, and to find the best bargain. I've even been told at the till that the batteries I've chosen are on a 2 for 1 deal – and the cashier has gone back and collected the second packet for me. Excellent for anything from hard drives to drones, cables to CCTV – and, for the child who has everything, they've even got ride-on sports cars. Free

delivery on orders over £10 and a one year guarantee.

Maplin, 118-126 Dalry Road; open 8.30am-8pm Monday to Friday,
9am-6pm Saturdays, 10am-6pm Sundays.

3 The Works





The staff in The Works are models of patience and self-control. Located as it is in the middle of Princes Street, this shop attracts not only people in search of good book bargains – it's also a magnet for tourists asking directions, folk wanting change for the bus and confused shoppers looking for things no bookshop would ever have, yet the staff remain friendly and helpful at all times.

Although the stock changes with alarming frequency, they go out of their way to look for anything you want, or even think you *might* have seen three weeks ago... Excellent for discounted books, very well priced art and crafts supplies, jigsaws, souvenirs *and* that essential item of festival wear, the waterproof poncho.

The Works, 63 Princes Street; open 8.30am-9pm Monday to Sunday.

2 Fopp





I love Fopp because it's a bit like a library; you can browse through all the DVDs and CDs and come across all sorts of things you've never heard of – the documentary and foreign films sections are especially fascinating.

The prices are usually comparable to – and sometimes lower than – online sites. I also like Fopp because the staff are genuinely interested in what they're selling and know where even the most esoteric film can be found; they're friendly too, regardless of whether you're a highly informed film buff or someone who remembers something they saw on TV 40+ years ago and fancies wallowing in nostalgia... I'm in the former category of course – that copy of *Children's Favourites of the 1960s* was 'For a Friend'.

Fopp, 3-15 Rose Street; open 9am-6pm daily but with extended hours in December – click [here](#) for details.

And finally....

1 Hex Mobiles *WINNER!*



I will normally do almost anything to avoid entering a phone shop. The big names fill me with fury as soon as I walk through their doors (and it's clear I fill their staff with disappointment as soon as they realise I'm not up for a fzillion per month contract deal on the latest 'must-have' gadget).

Hex Mobiles are different; they repair phones and computers and they do it without treating you like a second class citizen – amazing! The staff always tell you what's what in plain English – innovatory!

Everyone who has ever served me in this place has been helpful; they tell you when it's not worth repairing something, they give you a written quote for any repair they can undertake, and they carry lots of spare parts (including chargers), phone cases, etc, so they can often complete the work in one day. I even forgot my purse once and although they had already put my purchases through the till, they happily

held on to them while I went home and retrieved my credit card. You don't need to take my word for it – Hex has just been named **2015 Technology Retailer of the Year** at the **Scottish Independent Retail Awards**. Take yourself to Tollcross and take the phobia out of phone repairs.

Hex Mobiles, 14 Home Street; open 9am-6pm Monday to Saturday, 11am-4pm Sundays.



Five things you need to know today Edinburgh



Council reject hotel plans

Jack and Emily are most popular

Dine at Dine

Check your eyesight!

Race off to Musselburgh at New Year



After a long day at the city chambers the council's Development Management Committee voted 8-7 against the plans for a luxury hotel on Regent Road. Catch up with all the news about the decision here in our [liveblog](#) and [here](#) in our catch up article.

We interviewed the Planning Convener straight after the meeting



Jack and Emily were the most popular names for babies born in 2015, National Records of Scotland (NRS) announced. Jack was the top boys' name for a eighth consecutive year, and Emily was the top girls' name for the second year running.

Oliver rose from fourth to become the second most popular boys' name, with James falling one place to third and Lewis down one place in fourth. Alexander climbed five places to fifth. The rest of the boys' Top Ten was Charlie (up two places to sixth), Logan (down two places to seventh), Lucas (up one place to eighth), Harris (up three places to ninth) and three names which together were joint tenth: Jacob (up nine places); Finlay (up five places) and Daniel (down four places). Harris, Jacob and Finlay were all entrants to the boys' Top Ten; Noah (down seven places to fourteenth) dropped out of it.

The fastest climbers within the boys' Top Twenty were Jacob, Alexander and Finlay. There were three entrants to the boys' Top Twenty: Leo (up 11 places to 13th), Alfie (up 6 places to 17th) and Callum (up 1 place to 20th),

The top four girls' names were in exactly the same order as in 2014. Sophie was again the second most popular (having been top from 2005 to 2013), Olivia was third and Isla was fourth. Ava rose one place to fifth, and Jessica fell one place to sixth. Amelia remained in seventh place. Ella rose three places to eighth. Lucy (down one place to ninth) and Lily (down one place to tenth) made up the rest of the girls' Top Ten. Ella was the only entrant to the girls' Top Ten; Elllie (down four places to fourteenth) was the only name to drop out of it.



Dine is the newest kid on the block.

Dine with Stuart Muir, opened in the heart of the city in late November and the talented team are celebrating their first Christmas with the launch of a fresh Festive Menu. The menu offers 2-courses for £27.50 and 3-courses for £34.50 along with tea or coffee and mince pies, perfect for dinner or a chance to refuel at lunch during a day of Christmas shopping. Executive chef Stuart Muir and head chef James O'Brien have created a menu that presents fresh, modern festive flavours with a unique twist, showcasing the best produce Scotland has to offer without any turkey in sight!



Dine's festive menu includes starters such as Chargrilled pear, Lanark blue, caramelised walnuts, chicory and black truffle and Borders pork and ham rillette, whisky prunes, piccalilli, home made cream cheese; mains including Braised Borders shin of beef, pearl barley ragout and parsnip – puree, roasted and crisped, finished with desserts such as Chocolate pot, bourbon syrup and orange shortbread.

The Champagne Lounge – which features unique, tactile eel-skin wallpaper, invitingly comfortable Chesterfield chairs and sofas and warm lighting – makes the ideal place to enjoy pre- or post-dinner drinks. Bar manager, Mateo Ortiz has created a cocktail list perfect for drinks after a hectic day at work to help get you in the festive spirit. Signature festive cocktails include Dine & Brew (£8.50) made using Bruichladdich the classic laddie, apricot brandy, honey, lemon, orange bitters and krusovice lager top; Bulletproof (£8.50) – Bulliet bourbon infused with figs, Johnnie Walker black label, lemon, cinnamon, pepper, maple syrup and the Winter Warmer (£7.50) a deliciously silky, warm cocktail made using Makers Mark bourbon, vanilla liqueur, red wine, chocolate dust, walnut and orange bitters.

Just in time for Christmas, Dine has also launched a range of gift cards which can be used both in the restaurant and bar. The ultimate gift for those who love to experience locally sourced food with sumptuous cocktails and a unique city centre setting to match.

As well as the Festive Menu, Dine will also still be offering its all-day menus – a breakfast menu, an à la carte, an express lunch menu and a bar menu, all designed using the best produce from Muir's wealth of local suppliers.

Advance bookings can be made on 0131 218 1818, restaurant@dine.scot or online at www.dine.scot/book-now.



One of the country's top ophthalmologists has urged Scottish motorists to ensure they have a safe view of the road as the shortest day of the year approaches.

The winter solstice falls on 22 December. There will be just seven hours and 49 minutes of daylight.

According to David Teenan, a senior ophthalmic surgeon based in Glasgow and UK Medical Director at [Optical Express](#), fewer daylight hours and poor winter weather can significantly impede the sight of drivers. It is estimated that 2,900 casualties annually are caused by drivers with poor vision.

Recent figures also show that deaths and serious injuries are rising on Scotland's roads. According to the Scottish Government, there was a 16% increase in road deaths last year, with 200 people losing their lives. There were also 1,699 serious injuries on Scotland's roads last year – a 2% increase compared with the previous year..

David, fellow of the Royal College of Ophthalmologists, said that taking simple precautions including wearing the

corrective lenses and undergoing regular eye tests could help motorists drive more safely.

“Good sight is essential for safe driving, especially in the winter months when the weather brings unique vision challenges,” said David.

“Visual acuity and contrast are compromised when there is too little light during dull, overcast days or too much light from low winter sun. If drivers can’t see clearly they risk not only their own lives but those of other road users and pedestrians.”

David added: “There are many simple things that drivers can do to improve their view of the road, such as keeping their windscreens clean and using their vehicle’s sun visors. Wearing corrective lenses can also help to reduce the effects of glare, including distractive glare produced by artificial light including headlights and street lamps on long, dark nights.

“However, it is essential that drivers also undergo regular eye tests to ensure they can see clearly. Changes in eyesight are gradual and it is possible to lose up to 40% of your vision without noticing.

“Most adults should have their eyes tested once every two years but older drivers need to take greater care. As eyesight problems become more prevalent when we get older the vision of older drivers is more likely to be impaired.”

Drivers are also being urged to have regular eye tests by national road safety organisation Road Safety GB.

Iain Temperton, Director of Communications said: “It’s essential that drivers have their eyesight checked on a regular basis and if required wear corrective lenses to ensure their safety and that of other road users. It’s also really important to make sure that the screen wash is topped up and

windscreens, windows and lights are clean and free from frost or snow.”

A full range of corrective lenses are available at Optical Express. To book an eye test or find out more about corrective lenses visit www.opticalexpress.co.uk



Dedicated fun lovers can continue the festive party atmosphere into 2016 – by joining the ideal New Year’s Day event at Musselburgh Racecourse.

The annual fixture is one of the highlights of the Scottish racing calendar and is constantly growing in popularity, thanks to the reputation of the 5 star attraction just a few miles from Edinburgh.

Now organisers have promised to kick start 2016 in style and the forecast is that the January 1 event will be the best to date – not least because it marks the start of the racecourse’s landmark 200th anniversary year.

Sarah Montgomery, Senior Operations and Commercial Manager at Musselburgh Racecourse, said: “For us there is even more than usual to celebrate because New Year’s Day also marks the start of our Bicentenary year.

“We’re immensely proud to have reached such an amazing milestone so we are hoping people from Musselburgh, Edinburgh and the surrounding area will turn out in numbers to help us celebrate.

“It is a fantastic day out for families, groups of friends, sports lovers and anyone looking for a great way to bring in 2016. It’s already one of the most popular dates in our busy racing calendar and on January 1 there will be plenty for our visitors to see and do.”

Visitors to the Totepool New Year's Day Race Meeting will enjoy the warmest of welcomes, with the first 200 guests getting a special First Foot surprise. All visitors will have the chance to purchase mulled cider and a traditional haggis roll to enjoy in the New Year's Day heated marquee.

The raceday is one of the Feature Fixtures at Musselburgh and guaranteed to provide thrills. Indeed, the feature races – the Totepool Hogmaneigh Handicap Hurdle and Totepool Scottish Premier Steeple Chase – are broadcast live on Channel 4 Racing.

A seasonal twist to the afternoon is the chance to soak in the atmosphere of one of the most historic amateur athletic events in the world, the 147th New Year Sprint, which attracts athletes from across the country to compete for the £4000 prize money. The 110m race is the most enduring open athletics event in the UK and has been staged in Scotland annually since 1870.

Added to the wealth of attractions on the day, a number of lucky racegoers won't even have to worry about transport on New Year's Day – as the racecourse has laid on special First Foot double decker buses from Edinburgh city centre and from Galashiels.



(c) Wullie Marr..... 07989359845

There is limited availability and bookings are strictly first come, first served. Places can be booked online for £5 return (Edinburgh) and £10 return (Galashiels) with the purchase of admission tickets. The shuttle services will deliver racegoers to the venue ahead of the first race at 12.25pm and will depart the racecourse for the return journey following the final race which takes place at 3.20pm.

Sarah Montgomery added: "The New Year's Day fixture is always a fantastic way to usher in the New Year and this promises to

be the best yet.

“For those wanting to continue the party, it is the place to be. Yet for anyone who is feeling a bit jaded by the festive excess, or for those who have made New Year resolutions, then it is also the ideal day out, offering a bracing event to blow away the cobwebs, with plenty of fresh air and inspiring sporting achievement.”


Musselburgh is firmly established as one of the UK’s most stylish racecourses, hosting 28 Flat and Jump meetings each year, including the hugely popular Stobo Castle Ladies Day.

The 5 star VisitScotland venue is popular with racing enthusiasts and is also firmly established with both families and corporate clients.

Events like the Totepool New Year’s Day Race Meeting and the Scottish Cheltenham Trials in February are helping it attract a more diverse audience.

For further information and to book tickets visit www.musselburgh-racecourse.co.uk.



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Tesla opens first store in Scotland (and we got to test drive a car!)

by Oliver Stephen our motoring correspondent

“A technology company that makes cars” – that is certainly the image that strikes you when you step into Tesla’s new retail store on Multrees Walk, the high end fashion area just off St Andrew Square in Edinburgh.



No need for a garage forecourt crammed full of cars: the grey industrial shop floor frames the single example of Tesla’s range – a new Model S – as well as a bare chassis showing just the engines and battery pack used to drive it; the ultra-minimalist white walls support the interactive mounted screens which allow customers to customise their selection of optional extras before ordering their car for delivery from California; and the striking stairway in the centre of the store leads to an upper floor where hot desks are populated by Tesla team members.

Tesla sells all of its own cars: there is no need for a large retail chain to sell such a unique product.

To the product and where to begin? The new 7.0 operating system accessed by a 17” tablet screen which is the dashboard, supports a groundbreaking autopilot function: it will keep your car in lane on the motorway including round all the corners.



It will move lanes for you when you use the indicator; it will keep you at a constant speed unless someone pulls out in front

of you, then it will keep you a safe distance from the car in front. For all those folk that dread the parallel park in front of an audience of pedestrians, it will also park the car for you perfectly every time. You can't quite do this while sitting in the backseat but it's not far away. The Tesla team explain the operating system updates as a feature which will mean your car actually improves with time. The operating system offers seemingly unlimited customisation to your driving experience, whether you want the steering to feel sporty or comfortable, or you want the car to inch forward like an automatic in drive or stay stationary until you press the accelerator.

On the subject of acceleration, this is where the Tesla changes from a cool piece of technology, (housed in an understated family saloon body) into a fire-breathing dragon.



In the model that I drove for The Edinburgh Reporter (Tesla Model S P90D 'Ludicrous Speed' Upgrade), the two electric motors, driving all four wheels, propelled us from 0-60 mph in 2.8 seconds.

Just think about that for a moment.

To put that in context an F1 car will only do it in 2.2 seconds, and only a handful of road cars won't be in your rearview mirror should you challenge them to a face-off at the traffic lights.

This is incredible for a fully electric car. The instant response of the electric motors presses the driver and passengers against the backs of their sporty bucket seats and you only just manage to keep those nice pastries offered in the Tesla store in your stomach. The G-force is outrageous.




Other features include 7 seats, 2 boots, panoramic glass roof, 21" alloys and great lines. To purchase a fully loaded version will set you back well over £110k although Model S prices start from £56,200 before incentives. But if that sounds like a lot don't despair. There is a £5k incentive provided by the Government and if purchased by a business the car qualifies as a capital allowance fully tax deductible in the first year (so assuming you have the required profits takes another £20k off the cash cost). There is also only 5% Benefit in Kind (BIK) charges when the car is owned by a company. Running costs are much lower with zero road tax, an 8 year warranty and unlimited free charges at [Tesla Superchargers](#). In practice you will most likely have a government-subsidised charger fitted at home and a full 300 mile battery charge is likely to cost you about £10.

Perhaps us conservative Edinburgh folk will point to the limited range and network of rechargers, that it is a relatively new product and its components are therefore susceptible to failure, but if we set these non-specific, non-critical fears to one side and embrace the future possibilities already arriving in the form of the Model S, we will realise we have to have one.



Majority of young Edinburgh citizens support litter fines

 *Edinburgh young people are standing up against litter and fly-tipping.*

A recent survey shows 60% of young people support litter

fines.

Today Mairi Mitchell (15) and Rhona Payne (19) from Edinburgh, joined 14 other young people as part of Generation Change – a group selected by Young Scot and Zero Waste Scotland to help tackle the problem of littering and fly-tipping in Scotland.

Generation Change has today revealed interim research which shows 40 per cent of young people would pick up litter they saw someone else drop.

The research also identified that only 32 per cent of young people believe most littering and fly-tipping is due to laziness, as the group aim to find ways of keeping Scotland's communities clean and litter-free.

✘ Generation Change has been meeting regularly over the past year to conduct research and discuss ways of combating the problem of littering and fly-tipping, particularly among young people in Scotland. The group revealed their research at an enlightening event at Glasgow's Lighthouse Centre, where they also presented their recommendations and unveiled prototypes developed to tackle the problem.

As part of Generation Change's task to identify behaviour and attitudes towards littering, a survey of 263 young people was conducted which identified that nearly half of young people surveyed (45 per cent) people have never littered before.

The group of young people taking part in Generation Change will now consolidate their findings into a report of recommendations to combat the problem of littering and fly-tipping which will be presented to the Scottish Government in early 2016. Findings and insight will influence Scotland's future environmental policy.

Louise Macdonald, chief executive of Young Scot, said: "The Generation Change group has worked tirelessly the past 12 months to look at ways of tackling the problem of littering

and fly-tipping in Scotland. Today's event was a great opportunity to voice young people's concerns and share their initial thoughts on how to change behaviour when it comes to littering and fly-tipping.

"We're confident that they'll now be able to go into their communities and spread the word of how to keep Scotland clean. It's hugely important and valuable research.

Iain Gulland, chief executive of Zero Waste Scotland, said: "We're delighted to support this fantastic initiative to stop littering and fly-tipping in Scotland. Although it's a minority of young people who litter in Scotland, the group are doing a fine job to change this behaviour. We're looking forward to seeing their work develop and help us encourage every person across Scotland to think twice before littering."

Richard Lochhead, Cabinet Secretary for the Environment, said: "The Scottish Government is talking to a broad range of organisations and individuals as part of Scotland's first-ever national litter strategy, and I'm especially keen to hear what young people have to say about preventing this problem. I know how much young people care about our country and our environment and it's terrific to see them volunteering their views and ideas on how to tackle the scourge of litter. I look forward to seeing their suggestions."

Submitted by [Joe Boyle](#)



Teenager killed following one vehicle collision in Ratho



A 17-year-old man has died after his car crashed on Cliftonhall Road at Ratho close to the entrance to the

Edinburgh International Climbing Arena at 10.40am this morning.

The road was closed while police officers carried out enquiries

A Police Scotland spokeswoman said: "Police in Edinburgh can confirm they are investigating after a one-vehicle road traffic collision at Ratho this morning where a 17-year-old male sadly died."

Councillors reject luxury hotel plans for former Royal High School



It has been a long day at the City Chambers but remarkably the whole proceedings went very much according to the timetable set by the planning convener.

Everyone had their say and it is pretty clear that whichever camp you are in, the views are held very passionately.

The building in question is an important one. That point is not in doubt. The doubts arise about the proposals to turn it into a luxury hotel and whether these plans amount to over-development, with the large wings envisaged at either side. The President of Rosewood Hotels, Radha Arora, came from Hong Kong to attend the planning meeting today as an endorsement of his company's good intent to invest millions in our city.

He must have been rather put off by some members of the

committee who appeared disenchanted with the kind of people who frequent Rosewood or other luxury hotels, and who do not seem to want them in our city.

Gordon Dewar the CEO of Edinburgh Airport explained earlier that they are well used to high net worth passengers coming through their doors. He said they sell a £10,000 bottle of whisky each week in duty free.

Councillor Lewis Ritchie admitted that he had never set foot in a six star hotel. That, with some respect, was not really what he was recently elected to talk about today. The decision before all members of the committee was whether to allow a development promising inward investment and economic benefits that other cities might give their right arm for, or to accept the officers' recommendations that this building was too big and in breach of many other planning rules.

Whether or not anyone in the room, except perhaps Radha Arora the President of Rosewood Hotels, (who started off in the hotel trade as a waiter) has ever, or will ever walk through the doors of such a luxe establishment is irrelevant. What we need is a plan for the future of a building which has been empty for 47 years and which is on the Buildings at Risk register. That point was also agreed upon by many of those who spoke, both for and against.

Councillor Eric Milligan was at his most entertaining, very much playing to his role as grandfather of the City Chambers, producing a book about the school and explaining that in supporting the plans he did not want to live in a city of monuments. Read more of his and other contributions on our liveblog [here](#).

We would love to tell you who exactly voted for and against but at the end of the day our list is incomplete. Certainly Cllrs Milligan, Blacklock and Howat were in favour of the development. Councillors Ritchie, McVey, Child, Keil, Robson,

Perry, Mowat and Bagshaw were in favour of rejecting the proposal, but we are unsure about the remainder and how they voted.

Convener Councillor Ian Perry granted us the first interview following the marathon meeting which you can listen to here:

MSPs Alison Johnstone and Sarah Boyack were both very much against the plans for architectural and heritage reasons, but both were very much of the view that 'something has to be done' about the former Royal High School.

Reacting to news Alison Johnstone, Scottish Green MSP for Lothian, said:

"I'm so pleased that members of the planning committee were not seduced by arguments about economic benefit, instead recognising that much of our visitor economy is based on the carefully cherished landscape of our city: an inheritance which this development would have squandered.

"A perfectly feasible alternative is waiting in the wings in the shape of a new music school which much more respects the building and setting. and is more likely to widen public access. Let's get to that quickly."

After the meeting Sarah Boyack MSP told us: ""Today was an important landmark decision. The proposed hotel would have damaged one of Edinburgh's finest A listed buildings and the panoramic views of Calton Hill were at stake.

"The proposal represented massive over development and councillors were right to refuse it."

Commenting on the planning committee's decision to reject the Royal High School hotel development, John Donnelly, Chief Executive Marketing Edinburgh said: "With all planning applications, there is an enormous responsibility. I know the City of Edinburgh Council, working alongside Historic Scotland

and Edinburgh World Heritage, is acutely aware of its significance, and today's considered decision was not taken lightly.

"As head of the organisation tasked with promoting Edinburgh as a world leading city to visit, invest, live, work and study, I passionately believe a peaceful and symbiotic relationship between Edinburgh's World Heritage status and future developments can be found in order for our city to grow and succeed. As a global destination, Edinburgh will continue to build on our existing assets and there's no escaping that the city is in critical need of new largescale luxury five star hotels to meet demand from leisure and business visitors, especially from China and North America.

"We as a city will move forward and agree a future solution that lets Edinburgh embrace change and innovation, while celebrating our rich, vibrant heritage. We can have the best of both worlds."

So where does this leave us? Surely having invested some considerable time and money the developers will appeal the decision?

Do we allow the economic benefits of some 260 jobs when the hotel is built, countless jobs during construction and economic value of tens of millions per annum to be outweighed by retaining the status quo? Is the status quo good enough and will we just allow the building to fall down? Many of these arguments were rehearsed today during the seven hour meeting but the eventual decision was firmly to reject the application. You can watch the recording of the meeting online [here](#).

The company Duddingston House Properties under the leadership of Bruce Hare are still in the preferred developer chair as a result of the competition which they won, so will they take the plans and rehash them with a view to an appeal? Most

probably we think, although David Orr of Urbanist Group was simply too exhausted at the end of the day to offer any real plan of action to us. Watch this space.

During the day we ran a Twitter poll asking what you thought of the hotel plans and whether the council should approve them or not. There was an overwhelming majority in favour of rejecting the proposals for most of the day.

We appreciate this is not a scientific poll but it does give us an idea of what you think!

You can still contribute on Twitter until tomorrow!

Handbags worth £80k stolen during city centre break in



Police are appealing for witnesses following a high-value break-in at the Louis Vuitton shop in the Multrees Walk precinct.

The incident happened around 3.45am hours this morning when two men forced entry to the premises and stole a quantity of designer Louis Vuitton handbags before running towards North St Andrew Street, crossing Queen Street and into Dublin Street.

They were then seen entering a silver saloon car, which travelled off northwards.

Officers are now urging anyone who can assist with their inquiries to come forward.

The stolen handbags are valued at £80,000.

The first suspect is described as white, around 30-years-old, about 6ft tall with a slim build and a prominent nose. He was wearing a grey hooded top with the hood up and black beanie hat, dark trousers and black trainers. He also walked with a slight stoop.

The second suspect is described as being white, between 5ft 8ins and 5ft 10ins tall with a medium build and wearing a grey hooded top and dark bottoms.

DI Graham Grant from the Community Investigation Unit at Corstorphine Police Station said "Despite the early time of this break-in, this was an incredibly brazen incident in an area that sees regular footfall throughout the day.

"We are carrying out various lines of inquiry in the area in an effort to trace the suspects and are now appealing to the public for their assistance.

"It is believed these males have travelled there on foot and so I would appeal to anyone who has seen these men, their vehicle, before during or after this incident, or who has information on the whereabouts of the handbags is asked to contact police on 101 or alternatively the charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111."