

Racing on Saturday at Musselburgh aiming high

The dream of building the William Hill Scottish Sprint Cup into a £100,000 race may seem fanciful but no one can accuse the team at Musselburgh Racecourse of lacking ambition.

Boss Bill Farnsworth takes the first step towards that goal today by giving the five furlong contest its own berth, moving from its traditional slot in the course's annual sell-out Stobo Castle Ladies Day fixture.

With a £75,000 prize in the feature race and total prize money of £155,000 there is no lack of interest in the meeting and having recovered from yesterday's fashion extravaganza, the East Lothian track welcomes some cracking entries from the leading stables.

Bill Farnsworth said: "The Scottish Sprint Cup has always had a good following and it seemed the natural thing to do to take it out of Ladies Day and give it its own berth. There is a bit of a buzz about the race and while it won't happen overnight, we aim to build on that popularity in the next few years, to firmly establish the race as the UK's richest five furlong sprint."

A maximum field of 20 go to post for William Hill Scottish Sprint (3.35) and popular Musselburgh course specialist Hamish McGonagall is sure to give his many supporters another exciting run but Tim Easterby's brave sprinter has it all to

do under his welter burden.

Ledbury trainer Ed de Giles sends Kingsgate Choice on the long journey north from Herefordshire and his recent victory over York Glory at York arguably brings the best form to the race. Kingsgate Choice makes plenty of appeal but the northern duo of David Barron's Bosun Breese and the Jim Goldie trained Rothesay Chancer should not be ignored.

The pair fought out a photo-finish to a competitive 5f dash at the last Musselburgh meeting with the Goldie hotpot snatching the verdict in the final stride. Rothesay Chancer will be bidding for a fifth course win and Graham Lee will again be in the saddle.

The William Hill sponsored programme gets underway at 1.55 with the William Hill Download the App 5f Handicap in which Paul Midgley's course winner Oldjoesaid is set to carry top-weight.

In what is sure to be a fast run race, his task is not impossible but the front running Lost In Paris, himself a previous course and distance winner, remains on a favourable mark. Tim Easterby's charge recently made all to score a shade cosily at Catterick and his positive style of racing could provide the answer to a competitive handicap.

The £20,000 Class 2 William Hill – New iPad Handicap over 7f (4.10) could see Graham Lee complete a quick double, this time on the Mark Johnston trained Es Que Love whose forcing tactics

will be well suited to the tight Musselburgh terrain.

The horse to follow here though could be Set The Trend and although David O' Meara's classy handicapper disappointed at York in May, this is a slight drop in grade and he is fancied to come with a strong late run to pinch the spoils.

Gates open at 11.30, first race is a 1.55pm and tickets are available on the gate. For more information visit www.musselburgh-racecourse.co.uk

Street Football Festival on this weekend in Princes Street Gardens



Fans who like their football fast and furious should check out the Street Football Festival which is currently underway at the Ross Bandstand. So far the lowest scoring game only had 12 goals and the weather is perfect for both spectators and players alike.

The Edinburgh Reporter caught up with one of the players, 22 year-old former student from Zambia, Kelvin Sinyemu who was taking a well-deserved break on the side-lines as his team, Street Football 2 prepared for the top of the table clash with rivals Street Football 1.

✖ Kelvin said:- “I am really enjoying the experience, plus it’s good exercise. To be honest, I’ve been average and could have done better although I have scored three goals so far. I joined the Street Football last year and so far have completed my coaching certificate with them. I would definitely encourage others to get involved.”

The festival is on until Sunday, with the competitions taking place as follows:

10am – 2pm EDINBURGH YOUTH CUP

5 Edinburgh Youth Projects compete in the group stages with the top 4 progressing to the semi-finals on Sunday.

3pm – 7pm EDINBURGH CORPORATE CUP

6 Edinburgh Businesses compete in the group stages with the top 4 progressing to the semi-finals on Sunday.

DAY 2 – SATURDAY 15TH JUNE

10am – 2pm EDINBURGH PRIMARY SCHOOLS CUP

8 Edinburgh Primary Schools compete in two groups of four with the top 2 from each group progressing to the semi-finals on Sunday.

3pm – 6pm EDINBURGH U13 GIRLS CUP

5 Edinburgh Girls’ U13 teams compete in the groups stages with the top 4 progressing to the semi-finals on Sunday.

DAY 3 – SUNDAY 16TH JUNE SEMI-FINALS AND FINALS DAY

10am – 11.30am EDINBURGH YOUTH CUP SEMI-FINALS AND FINALS

12pm – 1.30pm EDINBURGH CORPORATE CUP SEMI-FINALS AND FINALS

1.30pm – 2.30pm HIBS/HEARTS LEGENDS SELECT

2.30pm – 4.00 pm EDINBURGH PRIMARY SCHOOLS CUP SEMI-FINALS AND

Police appeal for help in tracing missing student



Police Scotland is appealing for information in tracing a Russian student who has been missing from her address in the capital for a week.

Twenty – two year old Yulia Solodyankina, who has been studying physics at Edinburgh University, was last seen at the Wee Red Bar in Lady Lawson Street on June 7.

Yulia, who speaks fluent English, albeit it with a strong Russian accent, is of medium build with long dark brown hair. She is about 5ft 6ins in height and has a small mole on her left cheek. Her ears are pierced and she wears a number of rings on her fingers, in particular a distinctive thumb ring which is shaped like a small spoon.

When last seen Yulia was wearing a dark jacket, dark trousers, white trainers and carrying a large dark coloured rucksack which appeared to be full.

Inspector Barry Darling, of Police Scotland Edinburgh Division, said:- “We know that Yulia enjoys music and dance and it may be the case that she is at one of the many festivals which take place across the country at this time of year. We appeal to Yulia or anyone who has seen her in the past week to make contact with the Police to let us know she

is safe and well.”

Anyone with any information should c contact Police Scotland on 101 or the charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111

Corstorphine Hill murder – police update



Detectives investigating the murder of a middle-aged woman whose remains were found in an Edinburgh nature reserve are still looking for help to identify her.

Detective Chief Inspector Keith Hardie, who is leading the enquiry, said:- “I am really pleased with the response from the public and we have received a lot of useful information.

“However I am still awaiting that one elusive phone call which will provide the vital clue which will assist us to put a name to this woman.

“We are receiving calls and information from across the UK and it is all being assessed and followed up, however, as yet, we have not been given the crucial piece of information which will tell us who she is.”

The woman was believed to have been aged between 32 and 60 and had had extensive cosmetic work, in the form of veneers, carried out on her teeth. She was white, slim and of medium build and about 5ft 2ins tall.

Forensic examination of four rings belonging to the woman continues. Two of the rings stand out – one in the shape of a daisy and one in the shape of a love heart. Both are made of gold and are set with precious stones.

DCI Hardie added:- “I hope that a combination of the description of the woman, her rings and an appeal for any woman who has not been seen any time in the past six months will strike a chord with people.”

The enquiry team has also received a lot of useful information about people seen on Corstorphine Hill with big rucksacks and carriers in which the dismembered remains may have been transported and implements which could be used for digging.

Chief Inspector Murray Dykes, of Police Scotland Edinburgh Division, said: “High visibility patrols continue on Corstorphine Hill and the surrounding area and members of the public are encouraged to approach these officers if they have any information they want to bring to our attention.”

Forth Road Bridge Unicycle Challenge



Help Brianna plant a tree for every metre of the bridge!

On 16 June 2013 beginning at 10:30am, 10-year old Brianna will attempt to unicycle across the entire length of the Forth Road Bridge. For every metre of the bridge, in total around 2,500m, she is trying to raise €1, which will be used to plant one tree by the children's initiative Plant-for-the-Planet.

Brianna became a member of the global network of children, Plant-for-the-Planet, during the 3rd Academy to take place in Edinburgh, in April 2013.

At Sciennes Primary School, children from five different schools had come together to learn about the climate crisis. But rather than just listening and learning, the children are trained to become Climate Justice Ambassadors, to stand up for their future and become active themselves.

Some ambassadors decide to plant trees, some visit other schools and spread the word. Brianna decided she would like to unicycle across the Forth Road Bridge as a fundraising activity.

Find out more about her plans and help her to reach her goal on the [Better Place](#) website.

The Plant-for-the-Planet Children's Initiative began in January 2007, originating from a school report on the climate crisis by Felix Finkbeiner, then 9 years old. At the end of his presentation, Felix put forward the vision that children could plant one million trees in every country in the world to balance carbon emissions. In the years since, Plant-for-the-Planet has evolved into a global movement with thousands of committed children across the world – world citizens committed to climate justice by achieving an overall reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and a unified distribution of these emissions among all of humankind.

Plant-for-the-Planet has had a democratic structure since March 2011. It has two elected Global Boards, one for children aged 8-14, and one for youth aged 15-21; each consists of 14 children with representatives from eight world regions.

Since taking over responsibility for the Billion Tree Campaign from UNEP in 2011, the children have set themselves a new goal of planting 1,000 billion trees worldwide by 2020. With such a giant CO₂ storage facility, 10 billion tons of CO₂ could be

offset, buying us valuable time to permanently reduce our CO2 emission. We will meet our goal if every global citizen plants 150 trees. So far, over 12 billion trees have been planted across 193 countries. In the United Kingdom Plant-for-the-Planet collaborates closely with the Woodland Trust.

Submitted by [Sebastian Hemmann](#)



Teddy Toddle at Meadowbank on Saturday



This year's Sick Kids Friends Foundation Teddy Toddle & Summer Fair takes place tomorrow at Meadowbank Stadium 12 to 4pm and promises to be even bigger, better and fancier than ever! This year the Teddy Toddle is fancy dress for toddlers & their favourite teddies so you must come along to show off your best dressed ted!

This is a fantastic day out for all the family with something for everyone including shopping, fundraising stalls, food, fairground rides, crafts, face painting, dancing, music, storytelling, drum workshops, science demonstrations and the incredible Sing in the City choir who will be there singing their hearts out and expecting you all to join in! Look out for Storm Troopers & other Star Wars characters, the official Panda mascots from Edinburgh Zoo and Mickey & Minnie Mouse who will be there to toddle with you.

This is one of the Sick Kids largest events of the year and

has steadily grown over the last 10 years. It is also one of Edinburgh's biggest children's charity events and provides the perfect way for little people to give something back and raise funds for the Sick Kids in a fun and easy way. Last year the Summer Fair & Teddy Toddle made an incredible £23,000 for the Sick Kids Friends Foundation and this year they want to do it again!

The Summer Fair opens at 12 noon with the Teddy Toddle taking place at 2.30pm. Entry fee for the Teddy Toddle is £5 per toddler (teddies go free!) and the suggested minimum sponsorship is £20, and every penny will help make the Sick Kids even better!

For continuous updates on what will be happening on the day please go to their [Facebook page](#) or check out the website

Registrations are still open so contact Vicki or Linda on 0131 668 4949 or email Victoria.E.Watson@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk for registering for the Teddy Toddle or any other enquiries!

Edinburgh musician will celebrate the 25th anniversary of Mendelssohn on Mull



The Mendelssohn on Mull Festival will be celebrating 25 years of musical performance this year. This free festival of chamber music takes place between 1-6 July 2013 on the island

of Mull and offers an opportunity for the young musicians taking part and music lovers alike.

The musicians are invited by artistic director Levon Chilingiran, a professor at the Royal College of Music, in London. They perform in various venues, such as the tiny Creich Church seating 50 or the grandeur of Duart Castle's Great Hall. For the young professionals, who this year will include some from Edinburgh, it is an important way to gain performance experience and hone skills with the mentorship of experienced chamber musicians, in a beautiful setting.

Participant and freelance musician, Jessica Hall, 23, from Edinburgh who plays violin, viola, clarinet and piano said: – "Living in Edinburgh was a fantastic place to enter the music profession. I was lucky enough to attend St Mary's Music School. The city was inspiring for me musically due to its festivals. Edinburgh also hosts an international festival of the arts every Easter where people will come from all over to compete. This was a very motivating thing to look forward to and work towards." She also cites the witnessing of music from all over the world, in all types of venues, including bars and street performances during the Edinburgh International Festival as important to her.

Jessica has won numerous awards and prizes in her home city, such as the Winifred Gavine Medal for solo violin playing, the Edinburgh Quartet Prize, in the Advanced Duet Class and was finalist in the Edinburgh Concerto Competition.

The idea of the Mull festival is to bring a new generation of musicians into contact with seasoned professional mentors in relaxed and stunning surroundings, away from the treadmill and stresses of the professional music circuit. In this regard, Jessica said :- "The festival is my number one commitment giving me the opportunity to play chamber music with wonderful mentors in such a peaceful place."

Of the relevance these days of such a festival, she said: – “Classical music is sadly something that a lot of young people aren’t interested in – it is viewed as dated and ‘un-cool’. I hope that the festival reaches people of a younger age and shows them how varied the world of classical music can be.”

She added:-“We did get a fair amount of younger audience last year and I think the fact that the musicians are made up of young people who are obviously passionate about music and having a fantastic time performing shows them a different side to classical music that they wouldn’t have previously experienced.”

As to who might enjoy attending the festival, Jessica said: – “I couldn’t recommend this festival enough. There is something for everyone. I strongly believe that even if you are not passionate about classical music witnessing such enjoyable concerts from such young players is an experience in itself. The location of the festival is incredible. The festival grows in size every year as people come and love it and recommend it to everyone they know.”

In conclusion she said: – “If you want a fantastic introduction to the world of classical music it’s perfect, and if you are somebody who already loves classical music then it’s the ideal venue to come and enjoy some performances of the highest quality.”

The festival is based on the island because the young composer Felix Mendelssohn made a life changing trip through Scotland to Mull, which inspired him to write ‘The Hebrides Overture, Fingal’s Cave’- one of his most famous pieces.

The young professionals are divided into three groups which workshop repertoire with experienced mentors. Jessica is in group 2.

This year’s mentors are Levon Chilingirian, Gaby Lester, Susie Mészáros, Marcia Crayford, and Stephen Orton.

Due to the popularity of some venues, start times have been staggered to allow travel to another venue if capacity is reached. Concert goers at Glengorm and Duart Castles should arrive at least 30 minutes before the start of the performances. All concerts are free of charge but an entrance fee is charged for access to Iona Abbey.

For further information about the festival, the venues and the participating musicians, visit: www.mendelssohnonthemull.com

Workshop and Concert Diary 2013

Monday 1st July 2013 19.30 TOBERMORY PARISH CHURCH – All Groups

Tuesday 2nd July 2013 14.00 DERVAIG HALL – Group 3

19.30 SALEN CHURCH – Group 1

20.00 CRAIGNURE HALL – Group 2

Wednesday 3rd July 2013 19.30 SALEN CHURCH – Group 2

19.30 GLENGORM CASTLE – Group 1

20.15 MULL THEATRE – Group 3

Thursday 4th July 2013 11.30 IONA ABBEY – All Groups (This concert will include a performance of the Barber Adagio for Strings. Please note visitors must purchase a ticket to the Abbey. Entrance to the concert is free.) 19.00 CREICH CHURCH – Group 1 19.00 BUNESSAN BAPTIST CHURCH – Group 3 20.00 DUART CASTLE – Group 2

Friday 5th July 2013 15.00 AROS HALL – Mendelssohn on Mull Music Makers 19.30 SALEN CHURCH – Classical Ceillidh – This concert will include a performance of the Mendelssohn Octet, to celebrate the Mendelssohn on Mull Festival's 25th anniversary.

Saturday 6th July 2013 19.30 ST JOHN'S CATHEDRAL, OBAN – This concert will include performances from

all groups.

2013 Repertoire

Group 1 – Mentor: Levon Chilingirian Haydn Op55 No2;
Shostakovich 8; Mendelssohn Op18

Group 2 – Mentors: Gaby Lester and Susie Mészáros Schubert
Quartettsatz in c minor (D7030); Mozart K593; Brahms Op111

Group 3 – Marcia Crayford and Stephen Orton Mozart K575;
Boccherini a cello quintet; Brahms Op18

Police Appeal for witnesses after Taxi Driver Injured



Police in Edinburgh are appealing for witnesses after a black cab taxi window was smashed as it was driven along Henderson Street on Thursday night.

The driver was injured when a stone was thrown at his vehicle just before 9pm on Thursday, causing a window to smash and showering the driver in shards of glass. It is believed that the stone was from within a group of young people in the Henderson Street park area and police are appealing for more information.

A Police Scotland spokesperson said:- “This was an incredibly reckless act which resulted in a man being injured and his taxi being forced off the road. It is only luck that prevented this incident having even more serious consequences.

“We are keen to trace a group of young people, around the ages

of 13-15, who were seen throwing stones at vehicles in the area. Anyone who remembers witnessing this behaviour or who saw the taxi being struck is asked to contact police immediately.

“Similarly, anyone with more information that can help officers with their enquiries is also asked to come forward. Although an isolated incident, it is vital that we find those responsible.”

Those with information can contact Police Scotland on 101 or alternatively the charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Heated Exchanges on Question Time from Edinburgh



BBC One's political flagship debate show Question Time was broadcast from Edinburgh's Corn Exchange last night, in front of an audience of 16-17 year olds who will be able to vote for the first time on 18 September 2014.

The panellists included SNPs Angus Robertson, Labour's Anas Sarwar, Conservative leader Ruth Davidson and journalist Lesley Riddoch.

Controversially, UKIP leader Nigel Farage and Respect MP George Galloway who represents Bradford West, were also invited to appear despite having no apparent political mandate in Scotland. Thier appearance led to pro-independence campaigners protesting outside the Corn Exchange prior to the show.

First question fell to Kieren Fitzgerald who asked whether surveillance is an acceptable price for national security.

George Galloway argued strongly against it and called for a Nobel Prize for the whistle-blower whilst Anas Sarwar praised the work of the intelligence agencies but questioned William Hague's response to Parliament.

Ruth Davidson backed the work of GCHQ and insisted that the framework does not allow them to get round existing law then Lesley Riddoch questioned the role of Google in the USA. Angus Robertson was concerned about the storage of intelligence data and Nigel Farage urged people to be cautious on social media sites.

The subject then changed to independence and Fiona Murray asked what benefits would independence bring to young people in Scotland.

This sparked an angry exchange between Angus Robertson who protested about the make-up of the panel, with four anti-independence and only one pro-independence, while host David Dimbleby insisted that there was no BBC bias.

Angus Robertson then explained that in an independent Scotland, we would always have the government that we elect, there would be job creation and we could get rid of nuclear weapons.

Anas Sarwar countered that we need social and economic change and all should have equality of education throughout the UK, while Lesley Riddoch said that she wanted to live in a country with no Trident, has equality of education and embraces renewables, so she will vote yes.

George Galloway then turned on Angus Robertson for his narrow-minded attitude regarding who should have been allowed on the panel and also criticised Alex Salmond's behaviour as unstatesmanlike after the recent incident involving the UKIP

leader who was 'run out of town.' He demanded that everyone should have the right to speak.

Angus Robertson supported Alex Salmond and said that he defended the people's right to protest, but Nigel Farage also criticised the First Minister who supported the protestors who acted like 'yobs' when he came to have a debate in Edinburgh.

Ruth Davidson said that the people deserved answers, and pointed out that one in five jobs in the private sector were in companies with headquarters in England, Wales or Northern Ireland.

When David Dimbleby asked for the opinion of the audience, one teenager stated that he thought that Scottish independence would bring people one step closer to discovering aliens!!!

Nigel Farage said that independence would be like swapping masters from Westminster to Brussels. Lesley Riddoch stated that the UK was the most regionally imbalanced country in Europe and quoted figures which suggested that one in 29 people from London were dollar millionaires, a fact which George Galloway disputed as false as there is 'mass poverty and unemployment throughout the UK'.

Anas Sarwar demanded a debate based on fact and accused the SNP of not being straight with the people of Scotland.

Scott Mann then said that he felt that 16/17 year olds did not have enough experience to vote, but George Galloway, Angus Robertson, Lesley Riddoch and Anas Sarwar disagreed.

Ruth Davidson suggested that the current voting age of 18 should remain in place, and Nigel Farage said that lowering the age for one election was 'silly and cheap.'

Cameron Gilchrist then asked the panel whether the UK should intervene in Syria, which started an argument between Angus Robertson and George Galloway,

Angus Robertson blamed the President of Syria, but George Galloway pointed out that President Assad was prepared to negotiate and had been since the beginning then warned of the dangers of arming the opposition. He stated that the opposition should be forced to sit round the table.

Nigel Farage stated that since Blair's time, there appears to have been 'glee' about going to war and our history of interventions in the Middle East have not been successful so we should not get involved.

Lesley Riddoch pointed out that the population the size of Wales had been displaced and that the priority was dialogue. Meanwhile, Angus Robertson pointed out that the UK had armed the Taliban to fight the Soviet Union and said that we should not arm one side, although Russia was arming President Assad.

Last word went to Lesley Riddoch who stated that of the 93,000 killed so far, a high proportion were children.

Coming into Fashion: A Century of Photography at Condé Nast



Sebastian Kim, Teen Vogue, January 2011 Copyright:
Sebastian Kim

Condé Nast, the publishers of Vogue, Vanity Fair and many other magazines, are celebrating 100 years of fashion

photography. Original prints have been gathered by curator Nathalie Herschdofer to give an unique opportunity to see the work of famous names such as Erwin Blumenfeld, David Bailey and many others.

Opening on 15 June 2013, at the City Art Centre [Coming into Fashion](#) is a treat for photography lovers and fashionistas. On display is one of the very first professional photographs of supermodel Kate Moss by Corinne Day.

The exhibition is complemented by 'Dressed to Kill: Fashion, Costume and Dress in Scottish Art', showing how Scottish artists have captured fashion and clothing throughout time.

Trystan Davies of The Edinburgh Reporter spoke to curator Nathalie Herschdofer.

[listen to 'Coming into Fashion: A Century of Photography at Condé Nast' on Audioboo](#)

Minister for Youth Employment meets RoS Modern Apprentices



Contributed article

Minister for Youth Employment meets RoS Modern Apprentices

A group of Modern Apprentices (MAs) working at Registers of Scotland (RoS) were given the opportunity to meet the Minister for Youth Employment, Angela Constance MSP recently. Ms Constance visited the RoS offices at Meadowbank House, Edinburgh to hear more about the work carried out by the organisation and the role of the MAs.

The Minister was given a short tour of the building and an overview of the work of RoS by the Keeper of the Registers of Scotland, Sheenagh Adams. Ms Constance addressed the MAs and spent time discussing their experience of working at RoS and participating in the organisation's first Modern Apprenticeship Programme.

Angela Constance, Minister for Youth Employment, said: "My message to employers has consistently been to make young people their business. Registers of Scotland deserve great credit for creating Modern Apprenticeship opportunities to give young people the chance to make their mark within a large and respected organisation. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting young people who have an exciting career path with Registers of Scotland and learning about the breadth of work they are doing.

"The Scottish Government is committed to offering 25,000 new Modern Apprenticeship starts in each year of the current Parliament as part of a full range of activity to support more young people into work. Supporting young people into jobs is a top priority for the Scottish Government and we will continue doing all we can to improve the employment options available to young people."

Keeper of the Registers of Scotland, Sheenagh Adams commented: "We are deeply committed to the Scottish Government's Youth Employment Strategy and the Modern Apprenticeship scheme. Our MAs are receiving on-the-job training in a number of business areas and getting the opportunity to gain a nationally-recognised qualification while in paid employment.

“Our involvement with the [Modern Apprenticeship scheme](#) has been extremely positive and I would thoroughly recommend other organisations to sign up. The 14 MAs, who began in February, represent a fresh wave of talent and skills, and are a highly welcome addition to the team here at RoS.”

Aaron Goodall (18) was one of the MAs who met with Ms Constance. Following the visit he remarked: “It was great to get the opportunity to talk to the Minister about being part of the MA programme here at RoS. For me, one of the best things about the scheme is getting a qualification while working and earning a salary. I’ve been here a couple of months now and have already completed the first part of the SVQ. I’d definitely recommend a Modern Apprenticeship to other people my age.”

Image 1: RoS Modern Apprentices with Minister for Youth Employment Angela Constance

(L-R) Aaron Goodall (18), Mark Cassidy (19), Minister for Youth Employment Angela Constance, Louise Walker (16), Mhairi McGlashan (18) Rebecca Howden (17), Mhairi McGlashan (18)

Image 2: (L-R) Keeper of the Registers of Scotland Sheenagh Adams, Head of Training Sharon Wilson, Mark Cassidy (19), Aaron Goodall (18), Director of HR & Estates Billy Harkness, Rebecca Howden (17), Minister for Youth Employment Angela Constance, Louise Walker (16), Mhairi McGlashan (18), Head of HR Gayle Devlin.

Submitted by [Kat MacMillan](#)



Five things you need to know today



Edinburgh Parking Survey – Donations welcome at Edinburgh International Festival – Today at Leith Festival – View From the Train app – QMU greenest university

The council are running a survey about parking until the end of the month. You can have your say on Controlled Parking Zones and parking permits [over here on the council website](#).

This year the King's Theatre is to be turned into a beach as the backdrop for the Pan Pan Theatre production of Embers during the Festival. The cost of providing the pebbles will be around £1500 and you are invited to make a donation to help pay for this.

This is just one of the Technical team's requirements and associated costs that are an essential part of making the Edinburgh International Festival a success. You are invited to [donate today](#), to help light up Festival 2013.



The Meridian Ensemble

The Meridian Ensemble presents a selection of French, Russian and

British classical music for piano, violin and clarinet

Venue: 37

Friday 14th June

7.30pm – 8.30pm

Ticket: Free (donations welcome)
Enquiries: info@meridiantrio.com
www.meridiantrio.com

Now you can download an app to enhance your enjoyment of some rail journeys across Scotland. View from the Train audio guides will take you on a journey of discovery around Scotland. From the busy central lowlands to the wild and beautiful highlands, the railway network links together cities, towns and villages. You'll pass castles, forests and battlefields and travel through open glens and high mountains. But in addition you can download the View from the Train app which has been produced by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) to help celebrate the natural and historic environment on view from three of Scotland's most scenic train routes: Edinburgh/Glasgow Inverness; Edinburgh/Glasgow Aberdeen and Glasgow to Oban.

Travellers are encouraged to study the landscape as they travel through it, dipping into the guide as they go. The mix of intriguing facts relating to the natural landscape and wildlife, along with social and historical asides, is designed to help people to understand and enjoy Scotland's nature and landscape.

This is all part of the year long promotion of Scotland which is promoted by SNH.



Queen Margaret University (QMU) has been named as one of the greenest universities in Scotland this week by the People & Planet Green League 2013, the U.K.'s only comprehensive and independent ranking of universities by ethical and environmental criteria. QMU shares the number one spot in Scotland with Edinburgh Napier University, and is ranked

34th in the UK with a score of 43 out of 70.

An accredited Fairtrade University with the Fairtrade Foundation, QMU achieved full marks for its environmental policy which is publicly available and reported on annually at a senior level. It has set SMART targets to reduce environmental impacts in areas such as transport, community involvement, construction and procurement. All menus on campus change with the availability of seasonal produce and it was noted that QMU serves less and better meat and dairy produce.

Staff and students were also recognised for doing their bit for the environment, the students union having achieved recognition in this year's Green Impact Student Awards. Space has been provided for students and staff to grow food, and there are many initiatives to increase energy saving behaviour among all campus users.

Commenting on the Green League ranking, QMU principal Prof Petra Wend said:-“I'm sure I speak for all staff and students when I say how delighted I am that the University has been recognised by People & Planet as one of the leaders in Scottish higher education for sustainability. We have moved up in the UK rankings since last year, when we were also number one in Scotland, and sustainability is at the centre of everything we do, cutting across our curriculum, our learning and teaching, our community involvement as well as environmental performance of the campus. There is evidence that our approach has made the University a more attractive prospect for students, and we hope that when they leave us they take forward the same approach to sustainability in their future lives.”

And they're off to Ladies Day at Musselburgh!



There will be a lot of activity across the city's hairdressers this morning with all the ladies getting ready for the off at the racing today.

With more suntans and stilettos on parade than on a TOWIE film set, Musselburgh plays host today to the Stobo Castle Ladies Day.

The East Lothian track has recorded its ninth consecutive Ladies Day sell out and has even caught the eye of Grand National winning jockey Ryan Mania, who will help judge the day's Best Dressed Lady in the £3000 Queen of Style event.

Racing highlight at Musselburgh's most glamorous meeting of the summer is the £20,000 Stobo Castle Ladies Day Cup (4.00) and the weights are headed by the classy Mutual Regard, a welcome raider from the Newmarket stable of Sir Mark Prescott and a promising second to Johnnie Delta on his recent reappearance at Ayr.

Long distance traveller Street Entertainer is the likely favourite and David Pipe's versatile dual purpose stayer was an effortless winner back on the turf at Nottingham last Sunday and will make a bold bid to defy his 6lb penalty .

Street Entertainer though could be hard pressed by northern

rivals Platinum from the in-form yard of Philip Kirby and the Jim Goldie trained Merchant Of Dubai. When the pair met at Musselburgh recently Platinum prevailed by one and three quarter lengths but he has to give away an extra 7lbs to Merchant Of Dubai this time round and Graham Lee's mount can reverse the placings.

Ladies Day sponsors Stobo Castle also support the Madeleine Cup Handicap (2.20) in which Mark Johnston's Mushaakis will be well fancied to boost the Middleham trainer's already healthy strike rate at the East Lothian venue.

A successful performer on the polytrack, Mushaakis returned to the turf to run an encouraging second behind Clock On Tower at Beverley. The going was on the soft side of good on that occasion and Joe Fanning's mount will be better suited to the faster conditions underfoot at Musselburgh.

M and F Funeral Services return to Musselburgh to sponsor the £8,000 5f sprint handicap at 3.25. Eric Alston's ultra-consistent Red Baron, runner up on his last four outings, will be fancied to finally go one better but course winner Mercers Row is narrowly preferred.

Trained in North Yorkshire by Karen Tutty and partnered by her daughter Gemma, only recently back riding after injury, Mercers Row regained form at Catterick last time with a creditable second behind the well handicapped Lost In Paris. Karen Tutty has saddled three winners over the past month and Mercers Row has the best draw in the number 11 slot.

As soon as the designer hats and frocks are packed away for another year, Musselburgh gets ready to do it all again tomorrow (Saturday June 15) when it stages its richest meeting of the season, the £155,000 William Hill Scottish Sprint Cup.

The feature race, with an increased £70,000 prize, was

traditionally part of Ladies Day but Musselburgh boss Bill Farnsworth is banking that a switch to a Saturday slot will create a crowd pleasing fixture which can evolve to be the UK's richest five furlong sprint.

He said: "Ladies Day is fun, fashion and furlongs and it's a formula which has worked very well for us and created a fixture which has a huge following. With the Scottish Sprint Cup our long term ambition is to develop it in to a £100,000 race which would make it the UK's premier five furlong event. It will take time but we are used to playing the long game at Musselburgh and I am confident we will succeed."

Stobo Castle Ladies Day is a sell-out but tickets for the William Hill Scottish Sprint Cup are available online at www.musselburgh-racecourse.co.uk and can be purchased at the gate.

Police Investigate Bogus Caller in Belgrave Gardens



Police in Edinburgh are appealing for information following a bogus caller incident that happened in the Belgrave area of the city on Monday 10 June 2013.

A man called at an address in Belgrave Gardens at around 12.30

and offered to clean the steps outside of the house. The male obtained money but, despite remaining in the area, failed to carry out any work.

The man is described as white, around 5ft 7ins – 5ft 8ins tall, medium build, Scottish accent, wearing yellow gloves with black dimples and possibly a yellow jacket.

Detective Constable Ben Leathes from Police Scotland said: “This was a callous deception of an elderly woman who reluctantly paid for work which wasn’t actually done. We are appealing for any information that can help us trace the man concerned.

“Anyone who recognises his description or who has received a similar approach at their own home in the last few days should contact police. It is likely that the man is using a vehicle between calls so anyone who has had suspicions around a vehicle in this area should also contact us.

“At this time we would advise anyone who receives an unsolicited call at their property by anyone offering to carry out maintenance work to refuse, unless they are absolutely certain of their credentials.

“Anyone with suspicions over the intentions of any cold caller should notify police immediately, by contacting Police Scotland on 101.”

Police happy with response from public



Detectives trying to identify the remains of a woman which were found on an Edinburgh nature reserve have thanked the public for their response to an appeal for information.

Part of the dismembered body of the middle-aged woman was uncovered on Corstorphine Hill in the capital a week ago and since then extensive forensic investigation has been undertaken.

The current main priority of the murder inquiry team, which is being led by Detective Chief Inspector Hardie, is to identify the woman who was white, middle aged, slim and of medium build and short in height.

The woman had also had a lot of cosmetic work carried out on her teeth.

DCI Hardie said: "Following an appeal for the assistance of the public in helping us identify this lady, we have received a lot of information. I am very pleased with the response we had had with a number of lines of inquiry now being looked into.

"People from across the UK have made contact with us and I appreciate the support we are getting from the public."

Detectives also recovered a number of rings belonging to the woman, two of which are distinctive. They are both gold in appearance and set with precious stones – one in the design of a daisy, the other heart shaped.

DCI Hardie added: "Until we identify her, I repeat my appeal for people to consider if there is a woman who fits this description whom they have not seen for a number of months – perhaps not this year. If you have concerns about such a woman, please come forward and let us know."

In addition he is keen to hear from anyone who used Corstorphine Hill in the past six months to contact the Police

if they may have seen anyone who could have been involved in depositing the body in popular recreational area – an individual or individuals carrying large rucksacks/backpacks and tools which could be used to dig a grave.

DCI Hardie also thanked the many people who use Corstorphine Hill for walking, cycling and leisure pursuits for their understanding and patience while the detailed forensic inquiries have been undertaken at the site.

“Our work on Corstorphine Hill is likely to be finished later today and the cordon will be removed at that time.”

Chief Inspector Murray Dykes, of Police Scotland Edinburgh Division, said:- “Although inquiries on the hill will soon be finished, my officers will still be carrying out high visibility patrols to reassure local residents and other members of the public. This is a highly unusual incident and Corstorphine, and Edinburgh, are safe places to live and work.

Morningside shop celebrates first anniversary

Save the Children's shop on Morningside Road will be celebrating its first birthday this weekend.

Since opening last June, the shop has generated over £72,000 of income for the charity and shop volunteers will be celebrating the occasion with customers this weekend by holding a number of events.

There will be a tombola with prizes donated from over 15 local businesses and a special sale on stock with some items being sold for just £1. Customers are also invited to write messages of support for the shop and volunteers on bunting to decorate the shop.

Susie Dunstan, Save the Children Regional Retail Manager, said:

“The Morningside shop has been a fantastic addition to our other three shops in Edinburgh and it’s become a favourite with locals.

“The people of Morningside have been really generous with their donations and an incredible amount of money has been raised in the 12 months it’s been open.

“The money raised from our shops goes towards helping vulnerable children around the world as well as here in Scotland.

“All of our shops are run entirely by volunteers and while we have a great team working in Morningside, we’re always looking for more people who can give a few hours of their time to help run the shop.”

Kim Radtke, Volunteer Shop Leader, said:

“We’ve had a great first year in Morningside and we’d love to

see our customers come along this weekend and join our celebrations.”

Events will be running Thursday 13 – Saturday 15 June. Anyone interested in volunteering at the shop can get more information by dropping in at 390 Morningside Road.

Edinburgh winner in poetry competition

the soft-shoe-shuffle of the cocoa bean sacks,
the chattering hands, the industrious backs,
each bean a diamond, worked from the land
where a sunshine glitters like scattering sand...

(Extract from Ann Seed's poem 'Bean Dancing')

Divine Chocolate and Christian Aid have announced the winners of this year's national Divine Poetry Competition. Multiple award-winning author Geraldine McCaughrean joined us to select the poems from amongst 2000 entries which best captured the theme **“Chocolate is something to cherish”**. There are three age groups and this year the winner in the 17 – adult category was Ann Seed, a Houseparent at St George's School for Girls in Edinburgh.

As always the topic of chocolate stimulated thousands of budding poets to wax lyrical about chocolate, something they clearly love, and the Fairtrade focus produced more reflective thoughts and ideas. The winners were chosen from 2000 entries, mostly from schools all over UK. The winners of both the 7-11 and 12-16 age groups were from schools in Kent.

Geraldine McCaughrean said:- "I believe the most sumptuous thing you can have in your mouth (other than chocolate) is words. So poetry and chocolate is a marriage made in heaven, and so is chocolate and Fairtrade. Bean Dancing, the wonderfully lilting poem by Ann Seed, came into its own when it was read aloud, capturing the pleasure of chocolate, and literally dancing on the page."

Charlotte Borger, Communications Director at Divine Chocolate added:- "Our theme this year had the desired effect of making people think about what a huge part chocolate plays in our lives – whether as treats, rewards, celebrations and commiserations. Unless cocoa farmers are paid a sustainable price in the future there won't be any more cocoa and chocolate could run out! This focused minds and produced some lovely odes to chocolate. We were delighted to have Geraldine McCaughrean with us as our special guest judge."

All the winning and runners up poems can be found on the Divine website at www.divinechocolate.com/poetry . You can also see Geraldine McCaughrean reading the winning poems aloud.

✘ Winners will be receiving special Divine hampers, Divine t-shirts book tokens and Christian Aid pads, mugs and pens, as well as their individual certificates.

The Hanging of Margaret Dickson – an Edinburgh tale

Contributed article

Here is some news about my new novel – The Hanging of Margaret Dickson – published by Thames River Press on 1 June 2013. I first came across this amazing story over ten years ago and made it a personal quest of mine to write a novel about her incredible life – and death!

I researched for this novel many, many years (travelling to Musselburgh, Edinburgh, Duddingston, National Archives etc.)

The novel tells the true tale of the Musselburgh fishwife, Maggie Dickson, who was hanged at the Grassmarket, Edinburgh, 1724.

In an age when women are expected to know their place, be submissive, dutiful and chaste, Maggie Dickson, a Musselburgh fishwife, is often in trouble. She's outspoken, promiscuous and vituperative. While her husband's at sea, she sells her fish, sleeps with men for pleasure or money and looks after her two children. In time, her husband abandons her. Maggie quits Musselburgh and heads for Newcastle to stay with relatives.

During the winter of 1723, a fisherman finds the dead, naked

body of a baby boy. Fingers are soon pointing in the direction of a stranger working in a local tavern, a woman recently estranged from her mariner husband. It is rumoured that she's been having a passionate affair with the innkeeper's young son, William Bell, and that he is the father of the dead child.

Maggie is arrested and taken to Edinburgh tollbooth to await trial, is found guilty and is sentenced to death. The news spreads like wildfire and, as Maggie languishes in jail, the whole city speculates whether or not she killed her child. Will she take her secret to her grave?

'The Hanging of Maggie Dickson' is a heartrending tale of obsession and unrequited love.

[The book is available now on Amazon.](#)

Submitted by [Alison Butler](#)



Street Football Festival in Princes Street Gardens this weekend



The capital's football fans, looking for a quick 'fix' during the close season, have a feast of football to look forward to from Friday to Sunday.

The Edinburgh Street Football Festival will take place in the shadow of the castle, within the Ross Bandstand in Princes Street Gardens from 14-16 June 2013.

Eight Edinburgh primary schools, five U13 girls teams, six Edinburgh businesses and five Edinburgh youth projects will compete in four different tournaments coming together on finals day to play and celebrate together in their city.

Teams can be all male, all female or mixed consisting of a maximum of eight players in total. Maximum of four players per team on the court: Two halves of six minutes each plus one minute interval in between each half.

At least one player must remain in the opposition half of play. A foul will be awarded against a team where the whole team is in its own half and the referee can award a penalty against a team which is persistently time-wasting.

The winning team receives three points. The losing team zero. If a match ends in a draw, it is decided by a sudden-death penalty shoot-out until one team has a one goal advantage after both teams have taken the same number of penalty kicks.

In matches decided by a penalty shoot-out the winning team gets two points and the losing team gets one point.



Organiser Scott Moncrieff told The Edinburgh Reporter:- “This is the first of hopefully many such events throughout the country. Fans are advised to go to the grandstand which holds 230, plus there are blue seats to the side, taking the attendance up to around four hundred.

“We received funding from the Scottish Football Partnership and the National Lottery ‘Young Start’ Programme and our objective is to get youngsters involved in sport and healthier.

“We have received sponsorship from Sykes Global for this event, and receive money from the businesses taking part, with all funds raised going to the Homeless World Cup.

“On Sunday, a Hibs / Hearts select team, featuring Keith Wright, Michael Weir and Gordon Hunter from Hibs, and Henry Smith, Scott Crabbe and Jimmy Sandison from Hearts will play against local teams and hopefully boost the crowds.

DAY 1 FRIDAY 14TH JUNE

10am – 2pm EDINBURGH YOUTH CUP

5 Edinburgh Youth Projects compete in the group stages with the top 4 progressing to the semi-finals on Sunday.

3pm – 7pm EDINBURGH CORPORATE CUP

6 Edinburgh Businesses compete in the group stages with the top 4 progressing to the semi-finals on Sunday.

DAY 2 – SATURDAY 15TH JUNE

10am – 2pm EDINBURGH PRIMARY SCHOOLS CUP

8 Edinburgh Primary Schools compete in two groups of four with the top 2 from each group progressing to the semi-finals on Sunday.

3pm – 6pm EDINBURGH U13 GIRLS CUP

5 Edinburgh Girls' U13 teams compete in the groups stages with the top 4 progressing to the semi-finals on Sunday.

DAY 3 – SUNDAY 16TH JUNE SEMI-FINALS AND FINALS DAY

10am – 11.30am EDINBURGH YOUTH CUP SEMI-FINALS AND FINALS

12pm – 1.30pm EDINBURGH CORPORATE CUP SEMI-FINALS AND FINALS

1.30pm – 2.30pm HIBS/HEARTS LEGENDS SELECT

2.30pm – 4.00 pm EDINBURGH PRIMARY SCHOOLS CUP SEMI-FINALS AND FINALS 4.00pm to 5.30pm EDINBURGH U13 GIRLS CUP SEMI FINALS AND FINALS.

Leith Festival – Fundraising Day on Saturday



As part of Leith Festival 2013 the Leith Community Fundraising Organisation (LCFO) headed by Gerry Freedman are delighted to announce that CCLASP have been chosen as the main charity for the funds raised.

CCLASP (Children with Cancer and Leukaemia, Advice and Support for Parents) is an Edinburgh based children's charity, set up in 1994 to help support children and groups of families, to express and share the feelings, anxieties and the horror of having a child with a life threatening illness.

The big project at CCLASP is to raise £55,000 for a bus to transport families for hospital visits etc. and they still require another £25,000 to reach their target.

A fundraising day will take place on Saturday, with the first event being a charity walk, and former Hibs star Paul Kane, a well-known figure in Leith and a patron of CCLASP has through his football connections attracted legends such as Lawrie Reilly, Pat Stanton, Mickey Weir, Jackie MacNamara, Ralph Callaghan and many more to support and possibly participate, in the walk.

The walk starts at the walk-way at Leith Academy Car Park at

10:30am and follows the route along the walk-way and will finish at Leith Links (approx. 1 mile), which means that no roads will need to be crossed.

Anyone wishing to participate should contact CCLASP office at 0131 467 7421 for sponsor form. If you would like to donate please log on to www.cclasp.co.uk and donate.

Later there will also be two football matches at Leith Links, with the first one being a Leith Athletic game between ex and current players at 12.30pm when all players will pay to play for charity.

The second game will be between LCF0 charity team against the Hibs legends (2.30pm) and if you would like to bid to play against the Legends' email freedman@blueyonder.co.uk. You can also bid to manage the Legends for this game, with bids going to the same e-mail address.

Five things you need to know today



Tram works – TEDGlobal in Edinburgh – RBS chief executive to step down – Today at Leith Festival – Edinburgh Festival of Cycling

Our photos today show the progress being made in York Place with the overhead cabling for the trams.





Broughton Street

- Works to install overhead cables at the junction of Broughton Street and Picardy Place were carried out on the night of Monday 10 June, between the hours of 22:00 and 05:00.
- In order to carry out these works, the road junction will be closed during the hours of 22:00 and 05:00.
- Local traffic management arrangements will be installed, including a local traffic diversion route.

Princes Street

- Princes Street will be closed between the hours of 20:00 and 06:00 between South Charlotte Street and South St David Street during these cabling works:
- Tuesday 11 June to Friday 14 June: four nights, to install overhead cables
- Monday 17 June to Saturday 13 July: This is a four-week programme, with the contractors working four nights each week to install underground cables
- During the road closure times, services buses will be diverted along George Street.
- Every effort will be made to minimise any disruption to the local area.

In addition to the information about the above cabling works, a letter has also been sent to residents and businesses in **Morrison Street**, concerning essential works there to build a new signalised junction.

These works will be carried out in three phases over a period of seven nightshifts. The schedule of works has been planned as follows:

- Monday 10 June – Wednesday 12 June from 19:00 to 06:00
- Thursday 13 June and Monday 17 June – Tuesday 18 June from 19:00 to 06:00
- Wednesday 19 June -Thursday 20 June from 19:00 to 06:00

The council has said that every effort will be made to complete any noisy operations by 22:00.



Yesterday there were protests outside the EICC where George Papandreou was speaking at the TEDGlobal event. If you cannot afford to go to the TED event you can watch the former Greek Prime Minister's talk here:-

Singer Jamie Cullum will be addressing the conference today.

The Board of Directors of the Royal Bank of Scotland Group plc (RBS) has announced that Stephen Hester will be stepping down as the Group's Chief Executive later this year. The Board believes that an orderly succession process will give a new CEO time to prepare the privatisation process and to lead the bank in the years that follow. Stephen was unable to make that open-ended commitment following five years in the job already.

The search for a successor will commence immediately, led by

Philip Hampton on behalf of the Board, and will consider both internal and external candidates. Stephen will continue to lead the business until December 2013 to ensure a smooth handover, unless a successor is in post before then.

Stephen was appointed to the Board in October 2008 and to the position of Group Chief Executive in November 2008. Since then he has led the rescue of RBS, its recovery plan and one of the largest and most complex company restructurings ever seen. Nearly five years into the strategic plan, RBS claims it has made huge progress in becoming a strong bank, with balance sheet and funding transformed and the business fundamentally re-shaped. It is now beginning to prepare for possible share sales by the UK Government. Accordingly, both the Board and Stephen agreed this provided a window to begin a transition of leadership.

Stephen Hester, CEO of RBS said: "It has been nearly five years since I joined RBS after the bank was rescued by the Government. In that time we have reduced the bank's balance sheet by nearly a trillion pounds, repaid hundreds of billions of taxpayer support, and removed the imminent threat that this bank's size and complexity posed to the UK economy. All the while we supported 30 million customers every day to help them manage their finances.

"We are now in a position where the Government can begin to prepare for privatising RBS. While leading that process would be the end of an incredible chapter for me, ideally for the company it should be led by someone at the beginning of their journey. I will therefore step down at the end of this year to allow a new CEO to lead the Group in this next stage. Over the coming months I will put all my effort into completing the final recovery and continuing to build a strong customer focused culture. I thank all of the people of RBS for their support and wish them all the best for the future."

Stephen Hester will receive remuneration on departure in

accordance with his contract of £1.6m as payment in lieu of notice.

Today at Leith Festival

Screening of a very good independent Scottish short film with Hippie disco

Venue: 42

Thursday 13th June 2013

8.30pm – 00.30am


Ticket: Free (donations welcome)

Enquiries: Frances C Hoole

Email: franceschoole@hotmail.co.uk

www.purplecow.com



 And a reminder that the very first Edinburgh Festival of Cycling begins tomorrow with a VIP reception and 24 hour Spinning Marathon.

Then on Saturday the Festival gets underway properly with a dizzying programme of events including more spinning in the marathon, a cycle ride from Edinburgh to St Andrews, bike polo at the Jack Kane Centre, unicycling, cycling speedway, short cycling films on the Big Screen in Festival Square, the launch of the new SKELF bike park, a two hour cycle ride along the city's cycle path network, a tour of the city on Storybikes, mountain biking, a photography exhibition and finally....

A talk by [Mikael Colville-Andersen](#) CEO of [Copenhagenize Design Co.](#), on **Bicycle Culture by Design** – Considering Design as a Placemaking Solution for Liveable Cities. Copenhagenize.com

started in 2007, highlighting the cycling life in Copenhagen. Forty years ago Copenhagen was just as car-clogged as anywhere else, but now 36% of the population arriving at work or education do so on bicycles, from all over the Metro area. 50% of Copenhageners use bicycles each day. They all use over 1000 km of bicycle lanes in Greater Copenhagen for their journeys. Copenhagenizing is possible anywhere. Entry £15 (concessions £13) [Tickets now available on-line](#) or at [The Hub box office](#). Talk starts at 19:30 at the Assembly Hall, Mound Place, Edinburgh, EH1 2LX. This talk is kindly sponsored by [Edinburgh Bicycle Co-op](#).

Councillor Jim Orr – Last day in Amsterdam



Councillor Jim Orr is the SNP councillor for Southside and Newington and is the Vice-Convenor of Transport and Environment. He has been blogging for us from Amsterdam this week where he has been on a fact-finding trip. As a keen cyclist, he has been most interested in the way that the Dutch government has accommodated pedestrians and cyclists often to the exclusion of cars and vehicles. This is his final blog in the series.

Wednesday was the last day of our trip and I want to report up front that not only has our study tour been fascinating for all those of us interested in increasing cycling rates, but the quality of the organisation and hospitality by the “NL Agency” of the Ministry of Economic Affairs has been superb.

On behalf of the whole UK delegation I would like to thank our

hosts Bregje and Marianna, not forgetting Tessel from the Dutch Embassy in London who turned my suggestion of a study trip into reality. Since arriving here all of our expenses have been met by the NL Agency which is also incredibly generous of them.



4 euros per hour to park your car near the inner ring road. The city centre is even more expensive.

Over the last few days I have tried to communicate through this blog the wonderful world of Dutch cycling culture and the benefits that it brings. But for UK politicians and decision-makers there really is no substitute for seeing this in person, and I would urge everyone:-Alex Salmond, David Cameron and Barack Obama, to contact the NL Agency and arrange a visit. The Dutch people we have met believe that “cycling has a higher return on investment than any other transport form” and that the “marginal commuter cost” is lowest for the cyclist. This theory is at least worth checking out since we as a society continue to encounter massive challenges around obesity and many forms of sustainability to name only two.

Today was based in and focused on Amsterdam. We had a “Google hangout” (i.e. a video conference) with the 2013 Parliamentary Bike Ride participants at Westminster and spoke to them about what we have learned. St Luke’s School in London were represented during this conference and asked questions.



We also learned about the (fairly punitive) car parking regulations in Amsterdam, a policy which is driven as much by lack of space in a small city as the policy of increasing cycling. The biggest current challenge is cycle parking and one solution is that barges are now used. Contrary to the

impression I gave in my first blog post, I now know that theft remains a problem and estimates were provided that around 10% of all bikes are stolen each year.

Another excellent addition to active travel infrastructure is a 900m bridge which has been constructed for pedestrians and cyclists to an island in east Amsterdam. It is the largest such bridge in the country, and yet, even with all of this investment the figures still show that cycling and walking are the cheapest transport modes to support.

We had a further lecture on safety (including some great school safety videos such as “Between school and home”). This focuses on areas familiar to the children where accidents are most likely. HGVs are generally only permitted at certain times and cannot (as I understand) enter the “Environment zone” in the centre.

We had an excellent talk from the very wise and entertaining Mr Eric Wiebes the Alderman for Traffic, Transport and Infrastructure in Amsterdam. He told us that public transport subsidy is still 2.5 times the cycling investment. He also explained the “marginal commuter cost” as mentioned above. I understand this is the calculated estimate of extra cost for each additional cyclist as opposed to someone taking another transport option. He said that a car is “always the first choice for the public” but that the city is “full up.” Wiebes also commented that there is an “endless struggle of parking spaces versus cycle lanes” in Amsterdam, a situation which for once felt familiar to the UK delegates.

For interest, modal shares of transport in Amsterdam are as follows (with city centre figures in brackets): Public transport 16% (10%), car 22% (14%), bicycle 32% (a staggering 48%!!), walking 27% (25%) and other 3% (3%).



Busy junction

We then had a long and interesting bike tour of cycling infrastructure and cycle parking facilities around Amsterdam. This illustrated the ease of bike riding here and the tranquility and safety of many streets and public spaces. The photo above shows one busy junction which was remodelled to enable cyclists and pedestrians to cross in stages.

On our return we returned the bikes and thanked our hosts before going our separate ways. A few of us took off to the Rijksmuseum.

Recently renovated, this is a wonderful museum focussing on Dutch artefacts from paintings (including Van Gogh, Rembrandt and Vermeer) to arms and model ships and is unmissable for anyone visiting Amsterdam.

Through and under the museum is, of all things, a two way segregated cycleway(!), defended by cycling groups for decades and a powerful statement of the unique transport priorities of Dutch society.

Police Appeal for Witnesses following Collision in Redford Road



Police have appealed for witnesses to a collision between two vehicles on Redford Road earlier today (Wednesday, June 12).

The incident occurred around 8.30am and involved a minibus colliding with an unoccupied stationary van. Redford Road was closed in both directions at Dreghorn Link for around an hour

following the collision.

The minibus was carrying five children between 9-13 years of age and two adults. The children, from Kaimes School, were taken to the Royal Hospital for Sick Kids as a precaution and the adults were taken to the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh as a precaution.

A Police Scotland spokesperson said: "This collision, although not serious, would have caused distress to the young people involved. We would appeal to anyone who might have witnessed the collision to contact Police Scotland on 101."

Police Confirm Corstorphine Hill Victim was Murdered



Police Scotland detectives investigating the discovery of human remains on Corstorphine Hill in Edinburgh are appealing for help from the public in identifying the female victim.

A member of the public reported finding part of the body last Thursday when cycling on Corstorphine Hill in the capital.

Since then a detailed and careful excavation of the site has been undertaken by forensic experts and a post mortem was carried out yesterday (Tuesday, June 11, 2013).

Detective Chief Inspector Keith Hardie of the Specialist Crime Division's Major Investigation Team said: "The victim's body had been dismembered before it was buried on Corstorphine Hill. We believed this may have been within a time frame of a matter of a few weeks but possibly as much as six months. This

is a murder investigation and our immediate focus is on identifying this woman, and establishing the circumstances around her death. We need the public's support to achieve this.

"This is someone's daughter, it may be someone's mother and I am appealing today to the public to consider if there is a mother, a daughter or a friend you have not seen or heard from for the past few weeks or months, and the person fits the following description I would urge you to contact us now.

"We know the lady was white, middle aged, slim and of medium build and short in height. She has had significant cosmetic work on her teeth. We have also recovered a number of rings and two of these are distinctive, both are gold in appearance with one in the design of a daisy and the other is heart shaped.

"I feel confident that someone will recognise the description of the lady's teeth and the rings, together with the general description of a slim middle aged lady who has disappeared."

Mr Hardie is also convinced that the body was dismembered elsewhere and later taken to Corstorphine Hill. He is asking people who use this popular nature reserve to consider if they may have seen anyone who, on reflection, could have been involved in depositing the body in this area.

"Can you recall, anytime since the end of last year, seeing a person or individuals on the hill with particularly large rucksacks/backpacks or carrying tools, if so, please get in touch with us."

Chief Inspector Murray Dykes, of Police Scotland Edinburgh Division, said: "This is a distressing case but I want to reassure people that it is also a very unusual one. Corstorphine Hill is very popular, well used and a safe place to walk, cycle and enjoy some leisure time. While there are very few reports of crime relating to that area, I have had

high visibility patrols in place since Thursday to provide reassurance and these will continue for the time being.

“These officers will be engaging with members of the public and people can pass on information through them if they wish or at the Police Command vehicle which is currently situated on Balgreen Road.”

Five things you need to know today



**Planning meeting – Edinburgh Airport passenger numbers up –
Fostering event – Today at Leith Festival – Royal Highland
Show 2013**

The council is likely to grant planning permission this morning for a 24 flat development at West Bowling Green Street in Edinburgh. The proposal attracted 27 representations some of which were about wildlife, cycle parking and the loss of scarce green space.

This development will have cycle parking integrated into the design, and it will also mean that the Water of Leith Walkway will be realigned. 10 affordable housing units will be incorporated into the project.

[All papers are online here.](#)

Edinburgh Airport experienced its busiest May ever as it welcomed over 906,000 passengers through its doors last month. This was a rise of 7.4% compared to the same time last year.

International traffic was up 11.8%, driven by new services from easyJet and Ryanair with domestic traffic also up by 2.7% with strong performances from British Airways and Virgin Atlantic Little Red to Heathrow.

Gordon Dewar, Chief Executive of Edinburgh Airport, said: "When we bought Edinburgh Airport in June last year, we were very clear about the issues we faced and how we were going to tackle them. The team here has put in a tremendous amount of work and in May we saw all of that work bear fruit.

"The increase in domestic traffic is particularly pleasing in what is an incredibly competitive marketplace.

"We understand that this is a team game and through this team work we can all contribute to making Edinburgh Airport a success. So we'll continue to work in partnership with our airlines and our City and Scottish Government colleagues to help the airlines make a success of their routes to and from Edinburgh. That drives the passenger numbers we see here and gives me confidence that we can maintain this performance through what promises to be a very busy summer indeed."

Edinburgh Airport has added 18 new destinations since its change of ownership and taking the total to over 130. A new service to Toronto with Air Canada Rouge commences in early July.



The latest drive by the City of Edinburgh Council to find new recruits to become foster carers is taking place tomorrow

Thursday 13 June 2013 in the Capital.

A special drop in session is taking place between 5pm and 7pm at Waverley Court where anyone interested can meet foster carers and social workers for an informal chat about fostering.

Councillor Paul Godzik, Children, Education and Families Convener, said: "There's a real shortage of foster carers across Edinburgh and we're hoping to encourage more people to consider becoming carers for children and young people.

"Fostering is a hugely rewarding and really important job as it benefits some of the most vulnerable children in our society, helping them build a bright and confident future.

"All sorts of different people have the skills and qualities to foster and we hope this drop in session will provide anyone interested with the information they need."

Thursday's drop in session is the second of three events taking place over the coming months to highlight the need for more foster carers. The 'Foster Me Foster Us' campaign is across the city and includes bus, taxi, billboard and bus shelter advertising as well as local media promotion.

Anyone interested in finding out more about fostering can call the City of Edinburgh Council free on 0800 174 833 or visit the [website](#).

Today at Leith Festival

Trainspotting Tour

**The evergreen story behind Leith's own worldwide story
– on location!!!**

Venue: 15

8th, 13th, 14th, 15th June

7pm – 8pm

Ticket: £5/£4 (not suitable for children)

(Tour ends at bottom of Leith Walk)

Enquiries: Tim Bell

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Just over a week to go before this year's Royal Highland Show takes place at Ingliston.

A top summer attraction, the show has enjoyed record-breaking attendances in recent years with the three-year average now standing at over 177,000.

In 2012, visitor numbers were 161,242. In 2010, a new high of 187,644 was recorded, which in turn beat a figure that had stood for over 50 years, the Dundee show attendance of 163,917 in 1949.

A visit to the "Highland" – marketed as "The Greatest Show On Earth" – offers a multitude of features to enjoy with prize-winning livestock, the latest farm machinery, fine food and drink, outdoor living and countryside, traditional rural skills, renewable energy, music, cookery demonstrations, forestry events, handcrafts, children's discovery centre, heavy horses, show-jumping, motor zone and shopping arcades just a few of the attractions.

All of these are contained within well-signposted designated areas making it easy for visitors to find their way around the showground.

Dates: The 2013 Royal Highland Show will take place from 20-23 June 2013. The organisers, the Royal Highland and Agricultural

Society of Scotland (RHASS) held their first show in 1822 in Edinburgh's Canongate on a site now occupied by the Scottish Parliament. The 2013 show is the 173rd and the 53rd to be held at the permanent showground at Ingliston.

Venue: The Royal Highland Centre (RHC), Ingliston, is situated adjacent to Edinburgh International Airport on the A8, a short journey from the city centre and a few hundred metres from the main UK motorway network.

The area within the showground extends to 40 hectares and there is 60 hectares for parking more than 20,000 vehicles – the largest car park in Scotland!

The Royal Highland Show has been held annually at Ingliston since 1960 but was cancelled in 2001 due to foot and mouth disease. Prior to 1960, the show moved around the country to locations in the RHASS's eight electoral areas – Perth, Stirling, Strathclyde, Aberdeen, Lothian, Borders, Dumfries & Galloway and Highland. This year, Highlands and Islands is the “host” area.

Show Opening Times and Ticket Prices: Thursday: 07.00 – 20.00. Friday and Saturday: 08.00 – 20.00. Sunday: 08.00 – 18.30. Admission price on all four days is £25 with concessions at £20 available for senior citizens and students. All children under 15 accompanied by an adult go free. There are “early bird” discounts available at £22 and £18. Car parking is £8 per day. For “early bird” tickets, visit the website www.royalhighlandshow.org

Football – Spartans girls put one foot forward to raise money

On Sunday 43 girls and a big support of parents and Girls coaches took part in a walk over the Forth Road Bridge to raise funds for the Spartans girls section.

Spartans plan to kit players and coaches with training kit for all age groups. Girls Coordinator Rab Aitchison and Spartans under 13's coach Grant Cunningham organised and planned the event and wanted to use the funds to supply all the girls with the same training kit so the girls section will all be identifiable.



Spartans girls on the Bridge

Rab and Grant told The Edinburgh Reporter:- "The event was magnificent and was a real indication of the unity within the Girls section as they all pulled together to complete this challenge. It's overwhelming the level of support and interest from the parents and families as the turnout from them on the walk was really incredible."

Anyone wishing to join the growing Spartans Girls section should contact Rab Aitchison on 07724 162840

Annual Taxi Outing 2013

The 67TH Edinburgh Taxi Trade Children's Outing took place yesterday. This is an outing organised and funded by taxi drivers and offers a day out to the beach for children with special needs, life-limiting conditions and terminal illnesses.

The taxis are all decorated with balloons or decked out as floats. They assembled at the ice rink car park at Murrayfield Stadium where judging and presentation of prizes took place for best float taxi, best balloon taxi, best fancy dressed driver and best fancy dressed child.



The taxis then left Murrayfield at 10 o'clock heading under police escort through the city and along the coast to Yellowcraigs beach for a fun-filled afternoon before heading home about 4pm.

Organisers representative, Keith Bell said:- "A few weeks ago, Tom Gilzean's electric wheelchair and stolen and vandalised and as Tom had fundraised for the cause over the years, they were going to donate funds to replace it."

"However PoppyScotland stepped in to organise this, so we decided to invite Tom along for the day. He was collected from his house by our Chairman, Alex Lyons, and then when we got to Murrayfield, we surprised him with his own Rolls-Royce for the journey down to Yellowcraigs and back."

War Horse coming to the capital in 2014



War Horse, the critically acclaimed play based on the beloved Michael Morpurgo novel about the First World War, and one young man's devotion to his horse, is coming to Edinburgh's Festival Theatre next year.

The production has been seen by over three million people worldwide since its premiere at the National Theatre in 2007. War Horse is the powerful story of a young boy called Albert and his beloved horse Joey, who has been requisitioned to

fight in the First World War. Caught in enemy crossfire, Joey ends up serving on both sides during the war, before ending up in no-man's land, while Albert, not old enough to enlist, embarks on a treacherous mission to find his horse and bring him home.

A remarkable tale of courage, loyalty, friendship War Horse features ground-breaking puppetry work by South Africa's Handspring Puppet Company, which brings breathing, galloping horses to life on the stage.

On Tuesday, Joey, the life sized horse equine puppet made an early appearance at Edinburgh Castle, before showing off his considerable talents to a specially invited audience at the Festival Theatre.

Young and old alike sat enthralled as the National Theatre's managing director Stephen Rebbeck introduced a short film showing Michael Morpurgo explain the background to the story, before handing over to Associate Puppetry Director Finn Caldwell who has worked on the play since its early development.

Finn described the work done by Handspring Puppets to bring Joey to life, then introduced him to the audience who greeted his appearance with gasps of amazement then thunderous applause, as he made his way slowly to the stage.



Joey then showed off his talents, walking, running and jumping to roars of approval, before eventually leaving the stage. The reason for Joey's sudden departure soon became apparent when the puppeteers who operate him, Shaun McKee (Head), Matt Tait (Heart) and Sam Clark (Hind) returned for a question and answer session with the school children in the audience.

The trio revealed that it took eight weeks rehearsing before they appeared in public but they are still perfecting their

art, and also that the costume weighs 11 stones, without a rider.

Joey then returned to conduct a photo shoot with the delighted children from four Edinburgh Primary Schools, Tollcross, Wester Hailes, St Thomas's and Preston Street.

Festival Theatre Chief Executive Duncan Hendry said:- "We are thrilled to be hosting the only Scottish performances of War Horse and delighted that audiences north of the border now have a chance to see this highly acclaimed production in Scotland. We look forward to welcoming more shows of this stature in the future."

The production will appear at the Festival Theatre between Wednesday 22 January and Saturday 15 February 2014 as part of a 43 week tour of the UK.

Tickets costing £20-£50 are still available and can be booked via the Box Office T 0131 529 6000 or online at www.edtheatres.com

Photographs by www.jonsavagephotography.com/

Councillor Jim Orr's Dutch Blog – Day 3

✖ Councillor Jim Orr is the Vice Convenor of Transport and Environment. He is currently on a trip to Holland to find out how they deal with road design, particularly in relation to cyclists.

The council [has promised](#) to spend 5% of its transport budget

on provision for cyclists, and since Councillor Orr is a cyclist himself this is an area close to his own heart. He has been using his council iPad to write these articles for us at the end of each busy day.

On Tuesday morning we went to Amersfoort to see the station cycle hub and meet Abellio reps.

Abellio run the OV Fiets cycle hire scheme across the Dutch rail network (almost all stations have bike hire schemes like the blue and yellow ones we had in Houten earlier in the week).

Here, 42% of rail users access the station by bike compared to 2% in the UK meaning that there is a lot of potential. They also run the OV chip card which works a lot like the London Oyster card. Due to the massive numbers of bikes in the Netherlands, taking them on the train is often a challenge and so it is more economical to encourage station storage which is itself a big challenge. The station bikes cost around 3.5 euros per day to rent. Guarded and unguarded storage is also available, the latter for a fee.



Keith Brown MSP Minister
for Transport

In the UK Abellio-run Merseyrail will soon have secure cycle storage and cycle hire across their network. The cycle hub was great as expected and Transport Minister Keith Brown showed off his silky skills on a standard Dutch brake pedal rail bike. It was great that he took the time to join us for most of the day and all the Dutch were very impressed by this.



The afternoon was spent in The Hague where we watched a school cycling exam take place. Everything was really well organised

(as usual) with local sport academy students and graduates running the tests. In the Netherlands "traffic" is a specific school subject. The programme is free to all schools and 125 of the 165 primary schools participate, which adds up to 4,500 kids per annum. Toby the Stork is the cycling exam mascot and he is also the mascot for the local football team. This type of initiative supports the Dutch cycle culture from the bottom up.



Lord Berkeley, Karen from Scottish Gov't, marianna our host and Cllr McAveety the Glasgow cycling Tsar. All in The Hague.

We then had lectures and a presentation on road safety which is of huge importance in the Netherlands. SWOV is the government agency. Statistically while fatality rates for cyclists are falling, serious injury rates are rising (as in Scotland apparently) although they are still low by our standards. Seniors are cycling more and more and this may be part of the reason, but other factors are possibly alcohol use, poor infrastructure and potholes. "Sustainable safety" is the approach to fixing this, for example by mixing vulnerable road users only at low speeds and otherwise keeping them separate. The Dutch have the same debates as us around the need for helmet wearing and the importance of lights, although they have enforcement issues around the latter. HGVs are increasingly having more mirrors fitted to address blind spots, and some cities make HGVs park at the outskirts for goods to be transported to shops in smaller, safer vehicles.

There are plenty of effective measures to improve safety but implementation is a challenge as is education. All of this was interesting and very relevant to the same challenges at home.

After this we met with Dutch parliamentarians. One contribution I noted was that one member stressed that while

80% of spend is done by local authorities, that central government still has a vital responsibilities around:

Spatial planning (like the town of Houten)

Railway facilities for cycle parking and car parking and space on trains

Safety legislation and specific extra funds for safety programmes

Taxi incentives such as VAT discounts and cycle to work scheme discounts

Education – for example of minority communities to pass on the cycling tradition

Legislation – such as presumed liability in the event of a cycling accident

The chair of the infrastructure and environment committee, Mr Jansen, also stressed the importance of developing recreational cycle routes from towns to the countryside. As city centres are more complex and expensive, this can be a popular and effective measure (like the Gilmerton – Roslin link or the A90 path to South Queensferry).

To close the evening we had a networking event with Dutch experts and companies and this was a great group of people – all united around a love of the bike.

✘ I tried out a bough bike (made of oak – 1500 euros to buy, see photo) and it was great. It is clear that there is still a Dutch bicycle industry such as www.postbike.nl.

Another fantastic day and a real privilege to be here.

Broughton pupils set to challenge political heavyweights

Two Broughton High School pupils will this week get the chance to challenge some of the countries political heavyweight when BBC Question Time is broadcast from Edinburgh at 22.35 on BBC 1 on Thursday evening. This week's question time is only open to young people aged sixteen to eighteen years old and Broughton pupils Daniel McIvor and Tom Bagshaw, son of Green councillor Nigel, were both keen to get on the show.



Tom Bagshaw

Seventeen year-old Tom said:- "When the opportunity came up I was keen to get on the show, I had to complete an application form and this was followed by a telephone interview and I was happy to get a place".

When asked about his political allegiances Tom was quick to set himself apart. He said "I usually try to distance myself from my dad's politics. But I am interested to ask the panel questions about the difference in direction between The Scottish Government and the Government at Westminster and how the Scottish vote is often insignificant as for the past thirty years the Scottish vote has made no odds at the Westminster elections and if that's the case how important is independence".

Tom is also looking forward to meeting the panel which includes Ruth Davidson, Angus Robertson and controversial MP George Galloway.

Tune in on Thursday night to see how Tom gets on.

Details of the programme can be found [on the BBC website.](#)