

Ice-breaker canal boat!



I just happened to pass the Union Canal on Monday just as the Re-union boat approached the Leamington Lift Bridge, and thought the video might be of interest to your readers. Watch my video to enjoy the sight and sound of the canal boat breaking the ice.

Submitted by [Rob Wilkinson](#)

(Editor:- Brrrrr!! If you have any winter videos then feel free to share them with us!)

FACE Christmas Fair raises over £11,000



Hundreds of people turned out to support FACE (Fighting Against Cancer Edinburgh) at the charity's Christmas Fair held at the Western General's Cancer Centre on Saturday. The event was a great success, raising over £11,000 which will go to improving the facilities for the benefit of patients and in particular, help to fund the annual trip to Lapland to see Santa Claus in his Arctic home. This year's party includes children who have been receiving treatment at the 'Sick Kids' and others who sadly have lost very close members of their family.

Visitors were treated to stalls of delicious home baking as

well as Christmas crafts including knitted clothes, toys and cards. A wheel of Fortune also proved popular with the chances to win donated bottles of spirits.

A silent auction included a signed James McPake Hibs jersey, the chance to be a mascot at Easter Road for the game against Celtic, a signed Rangers top, tickets for the sell-out 'Mrs Brown' show in Glasgow, a signed copy of Neil Oliver's book 'Vikings,' Hogmanay street party tickets, and signed photographs from top golfers Rory McIlroy, Darren Clarke and Louis Ouisthuizen.

Lothian and Borders Police motor cycle unit attended and allowed young and old alike to have their photographs taken on the high powered motorbikes. Visitors also had the chance to be pictured with a genuine Olympic Torch.

Crime writer Ian Rankin, who is a great supporter of the charity, had kindly agreed to sign personal Christmas messages on his brand new Inspector Rebus book, 'Standing in Another Man's Grave' which were available at a generously discounted rate and could be collected at a later date.



Afterwards, volunteer John Macaulay told the Edinburgh Reporter: "A big thank you to everyone who came along to our FACE Christmas Fair at the Edinburgh Cancer Centre at the Western General Hospital special welcome to the children who will be travelling with us to Lapland on the 16th December.

"The magnificent sum of just over £11 thousand pounds was raised on the day which will help our aims in helping patients and families affected by cancer."

Those wanting to read more about the Lapland trip can do so here as The Edinburgh Reporter will be travelling with the children, parents and volunteers to Lapland this year.

Andrew Dixon steps down from Creative Scotland



Andrew Dixon

Creative Scotland today announced that Andrew Dixon has taken the decision to stand down from the post of Chief Executive at Creative Scotland and make way for a new Chief Executive to lead the organisation through an important period of change.

Sir Sandy Crombie, Chair of Creative Scotland said:-“On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank Andrew for his stewardship of Creative Scotland since its inception. As a new organisation with an extensive remit, there have been inevitable challenges during this period and Andrew has consistently led the organisation with energy, passion and enthusiasm. He has also taken every opportunity to be a vociferous champion and advocate for Scottish arts and culture.”

Andrew Dixon, in a statement about his departure said:- “It has been a privilege to have been involved in the early years of Creative Scotland and to have worked with such talented and dedicated staff, but I now feel the time is right for a change of direction for both myself and the organisation.

I am proud of what has been achieved since the merger. We have delivered new resources for the arts and established

strong partnerships with local authorities, broadcasters and many other agencies. The Year of Creative Scotland, The Guide to Scotland's Festivals, a new capital programme, the Creative Place Awards and the recent Luminate festival have shown the potential for all parts of Scotland to play a part in the creativity of the nation. I have been disappointed, given my track record, not to gain the respect and support of some of the more established voices in Scottish culture and I hope that my resignation will clear the way for a new phase of collaboration between artists and Creative Scotland."

I have, however, also received much support and generosity of spirit from people in the arts and culture community across Scotland. I have been grateful for the tireless support of Fiona Hyslop and many others in Government. I would also like to thank Sir Sandy Crombie and the rest of the Board who volunteer their time and expertise so willingly. The staff team at Creative Scotland is exceptional and, despite recent strains, they continue to demonstrate professionalism and a true passion for the artistic and creative life of Scotland. I wish them all the very best."

The Board will now begin the process of finding a new Chief Executive and setting up interim arrangements. In the immediate future, the Senior Management Team will report directly to Sir Sandy Crombie as Chair of the Board.

Andrew Dixon will leave Creative Scotland at the end of January 2013 after completing a programme of handover and transition support to the Chair and the Board.

Police put out seasonal warning over drinking and driving



Police in Scotland are giving their clearest 'Don't Drink and Drive' message yet this festive season and pledging to use every means at their disposal to track down those who fail to heed the warnings.

The basic message from the country's senior officers is that while they support any plan to reduce the drink drive limit those who plan to get behind the wheel should not drink any alcohol.

The Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS) is backing a four week campaign starting today which will target those who drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Across Scotland officers in marked and unmarked vehicles will be on the lookout for offenders as will all officers who are on patrol in their own local areas. Information and intelligence will be gathered on possible trouble spots and potential drink or drug drivers.

Police are urging the public to help end the scourge of drink and drug driving by reporting suspected offenders to the police or to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

The Scottish Government and Road Safety Scotland (part of Transport Scotland) are supporting ACPOS annual festive drink

and drug drive campaign. A television and radio advertising campaign is being aired from 3 December to emphasise the consequences of drink driving by underlining the message that "if you choose to drink and drive, you choose to lose your licence".

Deputy Chief Constable Tom Ewing from Fife Constabulary, who speaks on road policing matters for ACPoS, said: "Throughout my career I have found it astonishing that people are prepared to risk not only the serious consequences of losing their licence but also the threat to life and limb by taking to the wheel under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Last year we saw 7445 people charged with being over the limit which is a simply unacceptable figure.

"We will use every means at our disposal to track down those who drive after taking alcohol or drugs and with our law enforcement partners will ensure that they face the consequences. That is likely to mean a fine, loss of driving licence for at least a year and for repeat offenders and those who give a high reading the chance of losing their vehicle.

"Many serious crashes happen as a result of drivers drinking or taking drugs and as many as one in nine road deaths is related to a drink or drug driver. That is simply not acceptable and we must work together to end the scourge of drink and drug driving. ACPoS fully supports the idea of reducing the limit for drink driving which has been the subject of recent consultation but would stress that our clear advice remains that no alcohol or drugs should be taken before driving a vehicle."

Kenny MacAskill, Cabinet Secretary for Justice added: "If you choose to drink and drive, you choose to lose your licence. But the consequences can be devastating for victims, their families and our communities. On average, an estimated 30 lives are lost on our roads every year due to drink driving.

“The Scottish Government and Road Safety Scotland are supporting the ACPoS annual festive drink and drug drive crackdown with an advertising campaign to remind people of the dangers and the consequences.

“This Government has made it clear that we want a lower drink driving limit as we believe it will help make Scotland’s roads safer. Our consultation, that sought views on reducing the drink driving limit to a level which would bring Scotland into line with most of Europe and which will help save lives on our roads, closed last week. Consultation responses will be independently analysed and we will publish our consultation report early next year. We will continue to work with the police and road safety partners to consider new measures to tackle the scourge of drink driving on Scotland’s roads.”

The Lord Advocate, the Right Honourable Frank Mulholland QC said:

“As the festive season comes around again parties and celebrations will be commonplace. Across Scotland many people will be enjoying time with their families, catching up with old friends and making new ones.

“For some though it may well be a tragic and upsetting time, their lives devastated as family die needlessly because selfish drivers get behind the wheel while under the influence.

“One in nine deaths on the road is as a result of a drink or drug driver which is totally unacceptable.

“While we would encourage all involved to enjoy themselves we urge them to act responsibly and not spoil their celebrations, or those of others, by driving under the influence. The message is simple; if you are driving do not drink and do not take drugs.”

Five things you need to know today



City fires over the weekend – Petitions Committee – Pandas – Sports reporter – Edinburgh entrepreneurs

There were three fires in the city over the weekend according to [STV Edinburgh](#), and this morning there is a further blaze involving Edinburgh crews [at the fire station in North Berwick](#).

The council have introduced a petitions committee and this will have its first meeting at the City Chambers this afternoon at 2:00pm. [You can read more about it here](#).

Our pandas have been in Edinburgh for a year now and the zoo has issued their report card about their progress thus far. [Our article here](#) confirms that the pandas have proved to be a huge draw for visitors to Corstorphine Road.

For those football fans who would like to relive yesterday's ties in the Scottish Cup as it happened yesterday, then look no further than the [BBC website](#). If however you are a Hearts fan you might like to forget clicking through.... We continue to look for someone to report on sports matches for us. Is that you? Do you regularly attend matches involving any sport or Edinburgh team? Then get in touch!

theedinburghreporter@gmail.com

[The Herald](#) reports that Entrepreneurial Spark will open its doors in Edinburgh in February 2013 to start up companies.

Edinburgh crews help to tackle fire station blaze



Around forty firefighters, including some Edinburgh fire crews, have been tackling a blaze at North Berwick fire station in East Lothian this morning.

The building and two appliances housed inside it have been badly damaged by the fire.

The alarm was raised at 5.20am with a report of smoke issuing from the building. When retained crews arrived at the station the building was well alight with heavy smoke coming from the premises.

They were unable to access the station safely and immediately requested further assistance from neighbouring stations.

Crews from East Linton, Haddington, Dunbar, Newcraighall, Tranent, an Incident Support Unit from Marionville, a Command Support Unit from Liberton and a height appliance from McDonald Road all attended at the scene.

The two appliances from within the station were removed when

firefighters were mobilised but were damaged by the fire.

The fire station itself is also badly damaged by the blaze and crews are still tackling the fire.

A spokeswoman for Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service said:

“Firefighters are working very hard to bring the fire at North Berwick’s retained station under control. There is still heavy smoke coming from the blaze and police are in attendance to assist early morning commuters trying to access the train station, which is at the rear of the fire station.

“There is currently no vehicular access to the train station but commuters should be able to get through on foot.

“When retained crews first arrived at the scene the station was well alight and they were unable to safely access the building immediately requesting more resources to the scene.

“A risk assessment was carried out and as smoke was blowing towards the sea it was deemed safest to leave residents in a nearby housing estate indoors and clear from the worst of the smoke and the cold weather.

“Our business continuity plans have been activated to ensure that there is adequate cover in the immediate area given that North Berwick fire station has been significantly damaged.

“Crews have been working very hard in difficult weather conditions to extinguish the blaze. Fire investigation is on the scene but it is too early to say what caused the fire.”

New Petitions Committee meets today

The Petitions Committee will meet today at 2:00pm at the City Chambers under the convenership of Councillor Maggie Chapman (Green Group) to consider the four petitions it has received since 8 October 2012. [You can read all the papers here](#) or you may be able to watch the proceedings live.

There is really only one which is active as two of those received have been deemed invalid and the other is ongoing as it has not yet received enough signatures. The petition which is to be discussed is the position regarding public transport to Kirkliston and South Queensferry both areas of the Almond Ward. It is supported by almost 800 signatures and demands that the council look at providing better public transport to the residents who say that they do not even have a bus service to the airport despite being very close to it.

The council is urged to plug the gap until a commercial operation is set up.

The petition which is ongoing and which will need more signatures to be considered at this committee is the matter of dog control on shared paths, which would mean that any dogs being walked on paths shared by cyclists and horses would have to be on a leash.

The council hopes that members of the public will take this opportunity to influence Council decisions in the city by using the new Petitions Committee.

Taking part in or creating a petition is one way that individuals, community groups and organisations can get involved in what the Council does. It allows people to raise issues of public concern and gives Councillors the opportunity to consider the need for change.

The Committee is part of a package of measures and a new committee structure aimed at creating a more accessible and transparent organisation by opening up decision-making and improving scrutiny of the Council's work. The meeting will also be webcast live as part of a year long pilot programme aimed at opening up democracy in the city.

Members of the public and local businesses can make use of the Council's e-petition facility. Paper petition forms can also be downloaded from the Council's webpages and are available from libraries and other Council buildings.

✖ Convener of the Petitions Committee, Councillor Maggie Chapman, said: "The Petitions Committee will give a voice to members of the public who wish to raise issues the Council is not already addressing. I urge people to use this new opportunity to participate in local politics and to help improve the lives of people living, working and visiting our city. I am pleased that, in addition to the meetings in the City Chambers, we will also be taking the committee 'on tour' to reach a wider audience, and we will also ensure our young people are included by having youth focussed events."

There is a range of agreed criteria for a petition to satisfy prior to confirmation of validity and consideration by the Committee. Matters that will not be considered include those currently being considered by a committee, included in a work programme or those that relate to a council or committee decision that has been made in the previous six months.

Pandas celebrate one year in Edinburgh



Our two pandas arrived from China amid a fanfare of tartan one year ago tomorrow. The year has passed without the pitter patter of any baby panda paws, but the pair have become the rock star animals envisaged by the zoo. Visitor numbers have increased, and now half a million people have been to visit Tian Tian and Yang Guang at their purpose built enclosure on Corstorphine Road.

Darren McGarry, Head of Animals at Edinburgh Zoo, said:-

“I can’t quite get over just how quickly this year seems to have gone by, it seems like only yesterday that all systems were go and we were getting ready to welcome Tian Tian and Yang Guang to their new home, here at Edinburgh Zoo.

“It’s been altogether a year like no other, welcoming giant pandas to our animal collection, experiencing their very first breeding season and getting to know them as individual animals, has really been a unique privilege. Their first year at their new home has been wonderful in so many different ways and, as with any animal that you haven’t cared for before, we have learnt so much about them. They are entirely different characters and personalities, and we’ve been able to adapt and tailor how we care for them as they have settled in. We now know that they each have their own preferences for particular species of bamboo, that Yang Guang doesn’t like noise so much,

and that Tian Tian has a preference for panda cake!

“There have been so many special moments over the last year, too many to mention, it certainly has been an unforgettable year.”

Here are a few panda facts for you:-

[Panda Report Card](#)

Photos Rob McDougall

Council hopes to preserve Edinburgh Colonies for the future



Next week's planning committee will hear the result of the consultation undertaken earlier this year about our unique sets of colony houses in Edinburgh. These 19th century rows of workers' houses constructed by the Edinburgh Cooperative Building Company have been assessed for their historical and architectural importance, and locals have now had their say.

Residents raised with the council problems relating to altering the size of their garden sheds, and the cycling campaign organisation, Spokes, asked for any restrictions on this to be removed. Now, all applications for sheds will be considered individually in future if the council adopts the

recommendation of the report.

The proposal is that all of these special groups of houses (except the Leith Links colonies) will be designated as Conservation areas in the future (from January 2013 if approved at the meeting), and is based on the 126 responses to the online survey. What is meant exactly by Conservation status? It will designate the area as being of special interest for historical or architectural reasons, and largely controls the changes to the outside of these houses. It will not impose any further controls over interior alterations in addition to planning controls already in effect.

The controls in conservation areas are intended to protect the 'character' of the areas:

- 1. The permitted development right which allows any improvement or alteration to the external appearance of a flatted dwelling that is not an enlargement is removed.*
- 2. Special attention must be paid to the character and appearance of the conservation area when planning controls are being exercised. Most applications for planning permission for alterations will, therefore, be advertised for public comment and any views expressed must be taken into account when making a decision on the application.*
- 3. Within conservation areas the demolition of unlisted buildings requires conservation area consent.*
- 4. Alterations to windows are controlled in terms of the Council's policy.*
- 5. Trees within conservation areas are covered by the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. The Act applies to the uprooting, felling or lopping of trees having a diameter exceeding 75mm at a point 1.5m above ground level, and concerns the lopping of trees as much as removal. The planning authority must be given six week's notice of the*

intention to uproot, fell or lop trees. Failure to give notice renders the person liable to the same penalties as for contravention of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).

[We visited the Abbeyhill colonies earlier this year](#), and perhaps this will give you a taste of the uniqueness of the houses and the people who live in them.

The consultation followed a motion at a council meeting on 30 June 2011 by former councillor Gordon Buchan who asked that the planning status of all colonies was brought into line. It appeared that some colonies were protected by conservation area status and others were not, and that the position should be streamlined.

Leith Links colonies do not meet many of the criteria for conservation area status and may be designated as a standalone development separately, all subject to separate consultation.

The council recommendation is as follows:-

3.1 It is recommended that the Council:

a. designates the following conservation areas: Pilrig Model Buildings (Shaw's Place) Colony Conservation Area, the Rosebank Cottage Colony Conservation Area, the Stockbridge(Glenogle Park) Colony Conservation Area, the North Fort Street (Hawthornbank) Colony Conservation Area, the Abbeyhill Colony Conservation Area, the Dalry Colony Conservation Area, the Lochend (Restalrig Park) Colony Conservation Area, and the Slateford (Flower) Colony Conservation Area;

b. agrees that the Leith Links (Industrial Road) Colony group is not taken forward for conservation area designation at the present time pending further assessment; and

c. agrees that the motion by Councillor Buchan is discharged.

View [Colony Houses](#) in a larger map

There is also a lovely video about the Colonies here

And the council report is here

[Edinburgh's Colonies](#)

Christmas Carols for the Sick Kids




Carols for Christmas to begin the festive season

TOP Scottish celebrities will turn out to enjoy a special festive Carols for Christmas concert to raise funds for the Sick Kids Friends Foundation (SKFF).

The concert will be held on Tuesday 11 December 2012 in the Parish Church of St Cuthbert, on Lothian Road, Edinburgh, from 6:30-8:30pm and tickets are priced at £15.

The charity's fifteenth annual carol service will spread festive cheer in the capital with special appearances from well-known Scottish personalities and some of the children receiving treatment at the hospital.

Stars of the evening include actresses Jennifer Black, Una McLean and Siobhan Redmond alongside MSP Margo MacDonald and the Lord Provost – more celebrities will be announced soon.

 The Edinburgh Academy Chamber Choir will be joined by the Dalkeith and Monktonhall Brass Band to provide much-loved

Christmas music. Some of the young patients from the hospital will perform readings of their own writing, produced sessions with the Sick Kids Friends Foundation Creative writer, Linda Cracknell.

This will be followed by mince pies and a glass of wine.

Maureen Harrison, Chief Executive of the Sick Kids Friends Foundation, said: "We have been organising Carols for Christmas events for more than a decade and we look forward it immensely each year.

"Not only does this event raise much needed funds for us but it also lets us celebrate the most special holiday on a child's calendar.

"The concert will raise funds to help us continue to provide services outwith NHS provisions including the last few thousand pounds required for the purchase of the new Ultrasound scanners which will help thousands of children attending the hospital."

Craigmillar Library site

Submitted by [james milligan](#)

There is a plan being or which has been made behind the backs of the people of Craigmillar & Niddrie.

There's a plan to build a mosque on the site of the old library. The so called councillors who are meant to represent the area have done this behind closed doors & have not consulted with anyone in the area. There are groups

(i.e. childrens groups etc) in the area who have met with the council & have proved they can afford to run their club from the old Library. They would welcome working with other groups in the area but have been stabbed in the back by the council & councillors.

The group who want this land for a mosque applied 3 to 4 weeks after these groups met with the council. So why are they getting the land & building before these groups who have been running for longer and deserve the building?

Also why weren't we given a say when this happened? In the Burdie/Southhouse area they were given a say. My view is that they treat us from this area like third class. How will the people living close to a mosque have any privacy? They won't even have any privacy in their gardens. The public path that's there will be closed off, denying the public a through way to the main road which is very well used by everyone.

The council should explain why this is going on and at least gave us a say and any plans should be stopped.

The Reporter has checked the Council planning portal and there do not appear to be any planning applications lodged for such a development at this time. We also asked local councillor, Maureen Child for a comment. Councillor Child said:- "There is no truth in the rumour that a decision has been made. We can all have 'plans' but to bring them to fruition takes a bit longer and quite a few practical hoops. The process of deciding on the future use of the Library should be as fair and transparent as possible.

The vacated Craigmillar Library will be advertised for let as soon as possible and bids from all local groups will get the same consideration and have the same opportunity to gather support. In understand that several local groups have

expressed an interest. No decision has yet been made and will not be made until all have had an opportunity to make their own proposal and have their say."

The Reporter invites any other comments below.

Scottish National Portrait Gallery announces 2013 programme



An exhibition of Man Ray portraits, an Annie Lennox retrospective, and an exhibition of new works by Ken Currie are among the highlights of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery's 2013 programme.

The Gallery is delighted to announce that Annie Lennox, one of the nation's most internationally acclaimed singer-songwriters, will present her exhibition, ***The House of Annie Lennox*** early next year. Curated in partnership with the V&A and the artist herself, it will be given pride of place on the ground floor from the 23rd of March 2013. The exhibition focuses on the artist's work over three decades, as an iconic performer, singer-songwriter, recording artist and political activist. Tracing her unique career from its early beginnings, the exhibition includes The Tourists, Eurythmics, and her solo work through to the present day, with an array of stunning photographs, iconic videos, and a dazzling selection of costumes taken from her personal archive.

The Robert Mapplethorpe Photography Gallery on the Portrait

Gallery's first floor showcases the Gallery's outstanding holdings of Scottish and international photography, newly commissioned work and innovative displays and exhibitions. In 2013 the space will be the venue for two major exhibitions of mid-twentieth century photography. ***Man Ray Portraits***, presented in collaboration with the National Portrait Gallery in London and supported by Baillie Gifford Investment Managers, is the first major museum retrospective of the highly influential artist's photographic portraits and features over 100 works from his career in America and Paris, dating from 1916 to 1968. Drawn from collections, such as those of the Pompidou Centre, the J. Paul Getty Museum and New York's The Museum of Modern Art and Metropolitan Museum of Art, the exhibition will demonstrate Man Ray's central position among the leading artists of the Dada and Surrealist movements. It will feature portraits of lovers, friends and contemporaries, ranging from two of his most significant muses, Lee Miller and Kiki de Montparnasse, to fellow artists, Pablo Picasso and Salvador Dali, and American author, Ernest Hemingway. Running from 22 June 2013 to 8 September 2013, the exhibition will be a key highlight of the Gallery's summer season. The show then travels to The *Pushkin Museum* of Fine Arts, Moscow.

Impressive photography of a different nature will be explored in ***Edith Tudor-Hart: In the Shadow of Tyranny***. The Viennese-born photographer left Austria for Britain after being arrested for her political activities in 1933. Notoriously, she worked as an agent for the Soviets in both Austria and Britain (where she was involved in the recruitment of Anthony Blunt) and was pursued by the security services until her death in 1973. This exhibition, which runs from 2 March to 26 May 2013, will include remarkable black and white photographs that reflect the politically-charged atmosphere of interwar Vienna and Britain, along with Tudor-Hart's later psychologically penetrating imagery of children, some of which were created in Scotland. The exhibition will transfer to

Vienna.

Another highlight of the Gallery's summer season will be an exhibition dedicated to the work of distinguished Glasgow-based contemporary artist, **Ken Currie**. One of the outstanding figurative painters of his generation, Currie is widely admired for his intensely powerful and provocative work, which includes his haunting, luminous painting *Three Oncologists* (2002) and the searing self-portrait *Unfamiliar Reflection* (2006) in the Gallery's collection. Currie has always been fascinated by the work of artists such as Velázquez, Goya and David, and his own painting has often obliquely engaged with the traditions and concerns of old master portraiture.

On a lighter note, from February 2013 to May 2014 modern Scotland's special contribution to the world of comedy will be celebrated in ***Tickling Jock: Comedy Greats from Sir Harry Lauder to Billy Connolly***, supported by players of People's Postcode Lottery. The exhibition will bring together images of 50 stars including Lex McLean, John Laurie, Molly Weir, Rikki Fulton, Jack Milroy, Stanley Baxter, Johnny Beattie, Una Maclean and Ronnie Corbett. Works from the Galleries' twentieth-century collection will be supported by loans from the Scottish Theatre Archive (University of Glasgow), the Citizens Theatre and the King's Theatre, Glasgow.

Dress and fashion will be at the heart of the Gallery's events programme in 2013, though the fun starts early in December 2012 with ***Dressed to Thrill***, a dynamic Friday night event in celebration of Scotland's sartorial past. The splendour of the Gallery's interior will provide a portal to the 16th and 17th centuries as the building is filled with live period music for a historical catwalk show with commentary from one of Britain's greatest costume designers, Jenny Tiramani. Also on the bill is a talk on the clothes Mary Queen of Scots chose to wear on the day of her execution, by historical dress expert

Professor Maria Hayward. Tickets for the 7th December event are on sale now.

The Director of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Christopher Baker, said: “Building on the great success of the re-developed Portrait Gallery we have created a rich programme of exhibitions and events which will draw many visitors to explore the Gallery’s incredible collection and the wonderful building which houses it. The exhibitions offer a wide range of inspiration – from the finest photography from around the world to the most brilliant contemporary Scottish painting and performance. ”

Scottish National Portrait Gallery
1 Queen Street, Edinburgh EH2 1JD
Telephone: 0131 624 6200
nationalgalleries.org

Five things you need to know today



Portobello Market – Tonight at the Usher Hall – Tonight at The Queen’s Hall – Local MP raises cycling matters at Westminster – Debate at Holyrood on Monday

Today there will be another Portobello Market Day in Brighton Park. The market organisers say:-

"It's the market before Christmas and we have a few fun things happening. There will be a bauble hunt for the kids with a selection stocking as the prize, face painting and Phil the wicker man. We're also hoping for a local school to provide carol singers on the day as well. Pea Green Boat are returning this month, together with Portobello Witch so we'll have 24 traders at this months market.

All our usual traders will be there for your shopping needs, from award winning oils, locally produced fresh meats, great fresh bread, artisan cheeses, hand-made soaps, cards & gifts, seasonal veggies, planted window boxes, chutneys and relishes, garden furniture and a first class BBQ for all you hungry mouths, plus our regular provider of latte, cappuccino etc. A full list of stallholders is available [here](#)." In Brighton Park, Brighton Place, Portobello, Edinburgh, EH15 1LJ, 9.30am – 1.30pm. Please note that there will be no market in January. The next market after that will be on Saturday 2 February 2013."

The Origin 15th anniversary Christmas concert takes place tonight at the Usher Hall. You are promised a fabulous Christmas celebration. [More details here.](#)

Dance Base is the centre for learning about dance in Edinburgh situated in a lovely building in the Grassmarket. This weekend you can see the fruits of their learning at their shows staged at The Queen's Hall [where you can book your tickets](#):-

Dance Base's legendary Christmas Shows are an annual chance for dancers from the community and outreach programmes to get on stage and show the audience their moves. Each show is different; Saturday 1 December features dancers from:

Ballet Fusion
Ballet Improvers
Belly Dance Beginners
Belly Dance Improvers
Bollywood
Burlesque Improvers
Classical Ballet Absolute Beginners, Beginners, Improvers and Intermediate
Contemporary Intermediate
Hairspray Performance Group
Highland Dance Beginners & Improvers/Intermediate
Jazz Beginners
Jazz Intermediate
Musical Madness
Stage Jazz Advanced/Professional
Tap Intermediate
Tap Advanced

Mark Lazarowicz is the MP for Edinburgh North and Leith and in Westminster [this week he raised the question](#) of enforcement of Advanced Stop Lines. These are the red boxes with a cycle in them for cyclists to be positioned ahead of other traffic at traffic junctions, usually where there are traffic lights. Norman Baker the Under-Secretary for Local Transport [responded that he would ensure it gets some consideration.](#)

Young debating talent will take over at Holyrood this Monday!

The sixth annual St Andrew's Day Debate will take place in the Scottish Parliament on Monday 3 December.

Held in partnership with The Scottish Government and the English Speaking Union, this unique event brings together students from schools and universities across Scotland. The

student teams pair up to compete in heats in the hope of making it through to the final to be held in the Parliament's Debating Chamber.

Deputy Presiding Officer Elaine Smith MSP who will be chairing the event said:

"Hosting the St Andrew's Day Debate is an apt way for the Scottish Parliament to mark St Andrew's Day. It is therefore fitting that the Debating Chamber will host these budding debators of the future as they take part in the final.

"I would also encourage members of the public to come along, as previous years have shown that the calibre of debate from these young people deserves to have as wide an audience as possible."

The finals will take place in the Parliament's Debating Chamber from 16.30 on Monday 3 December 2012. Members of the public are welcome to attend and winners will be announced at completion of events. There will be five prizes awarded for:

- Best University Speaker of the Day
- Best School Speaker of the Day
- Best Contribution from the Floor
- Runner-up St Andrew's Day Debating Championship
- Winner of St Andrew's Day Debating Championship

Local MP supports World Aids

Day



Local Edinburgh MP Ian Murray joined UK international and student activists from the Stop AIDS Campaign, at an event to mark World AIDS Day today.

Ian spoke with activists about how far we have come in the HIV epidemic, with 8 million people now accessing HIV treatment, and AIDS-related deaths declining, from a peak of 2.2 million in the mid-2000s, to 1.8 million in 2010.

But he also heard how far we still have to go, with 7.6 million still going without the life-saving medication they need, and joined with the UK activists in asking the government, for HIV and AIDS, Why Stop Now?

Lotti Rutter, of the Stop AIDS Campaign said 'We were delighted to talk to Ian Murray today, about how the UK **can't** stop now in its commitment to HIV and AIDS. We have come so far, and we also have a unique opportunity now to see the epidemic sent into decline by the end of the decade.'

'That's why we need a UK blueprint for the AIDS response. The UK needs to demonstrate its commitment, and map out exactly how it will scale up the right investment and ensure all people living with HIV, including the 100,000 people living with HIV here in the UK, are reached with the services they need', she added.

Ian Murray said:- 'I support the Why Stop Now campaign this World AIDS Day. It is critical that investment in HIV and AIDS is sustained so we can save millions of lives'

The Stop AIDS Campaign is a coalition of 80 UK NGOs, faith-based and academic agencies, working at the heart of the global response to HIV and AIDS for 25 years. www.whystopnow.org www.stopaidscampaign.org.uk

Fighting Against Cancer Edinburgh Christmas Fair – TODAY!



FACE (Fighting Against Cancer Edinburgh) will host their annual Christmas Fair at the Edinburgh Cancer Centre at the Western General Hospital **today 1 December 2012.**

There will be an abundance of stalls, including delicious home baking as well as Christmas crafts that friends have been working on throughout the year. As always, there will be a visit from Lothian and Borders Police motor cycle unit plus this year the famous Edinburgh Pandas will make an appearance to celebrate their first anniversary of arriving at the Zoo.

Crime writer Ian Rankin, who is a great supporter of the charity, won't make the event due to other commitments, but he has kindly agreed to sign personal Christmas messages for friends on his brand new Inspector Rebus book, 'Standing in Another Man's Grave' which can be collected at a later date.

The book follows the newly retired Detective Inspector John Rebus join Lothian and Borders Police Cold Case Unit.

FACE was founded in 1990 and originally stood for Fighting Against Cancer in Edinburgh but has now come to represent the activities of a group of people working throughout the South East of Scotland.



The charity is based in the Western General Hospital and raises money to improve the facilities for the benefit of patients there and the peripheral clinics in Fife, Edinburgh and the Lothians, the Borders and Dumfries. It differs from other cancer charities such as Cancer Research UK, which provides money for major enhancements in cancer care in the form of new Buildings and Research.

Throughout the year FACE undertakes many projects at both the Western and also at the Royal Hospital for Sick Children in Edinburgh, where they continue to provide Aromatherapy sessions for patients within the wards of the hospitals.

✖ Last month, [The Edinburgh Reporter featured Shona Pryde](#), a 29 year old health care professional from Murrayfield who spent her holidays climbing Mount Kilimanjaro to raise money, specifically to help fund the annual trip to Lapland.

Shona's efforts were very much appreciated by FACE, and on Sunday 16 December 2012 a party of 44 will travel to Kittila in Lapland to see Santa Claus in his Arctic home. The party includes children who have been receiving treatment at the 'Sick Kids' and others who sadly have lost very close members of their family.

Actually this will be the second time that the volunteers have seen Santa this year as took time out from his busy schedule to make a special appearance at the FACE Ball earlier this month at the Balmoral Hotel where an incredible £7,000 was

raised, and a great time was had by one and all.

The fair runs from 11.00am till 3.00pm.

Photographs are from last year's Lapland trip, (except the one of Shona who was in warmer climes!).

Lothian Buses invite you to get on board the Christmas Grotto bus!



Lothian Buses is bringing some extra festive cheer to the Capital with the launch of its Christmas Grotto Bus. To thank passengers and the local community for its support during 2012, the mobile Winter Wonderland, complete with Santa Claus, will pop-up in the City during December.

On Sunday 2, 9 and 16 December, between 12 and 4pm, the bus will be stationed on Castle Street, as part of the Ethical Christmas Fair and the Real Scottish Christmas Fair, where children young and old will have the opportunity to visit Edinburgh's latest Grotto. For a charitable donation, families can meet Santa and receive a token gift (subject to availability). All proceeds will go to the Lothian Buses Charity of the Year, Lothian Autistic Society.

Ian Craig, managing director of Lothian Buses, says:

"Christmas should be a merry time and we're delighted to be able to bring some extra festive cheer to Edinburgh, and raise money for Lothian Autistic Society with our Grotto Bus."

“It is fantastic to team up with this year’s Castle Street markets to give something back to our passengers. Our engineering team have transformed one of our open top buses into an eye catching Santa’s Grotto.

Tania Pramschufer, hands up media said:-“Hands Up Media are delighted to welcome Santa’s Grotto golden bus being provided by Lothian Buses. Further festive cheer to this years Real Scottish & Ethical Christmas Fairs will add even more magic and that the Lothian Autistic Society will benefit as well children of all ages who come to visit Santa on the bus.”

East End traffic alterations from tomorrow



Alterations are being made to traffic arrangements at the East end of Edinburgh city centre from tomorrow, Saturday 1 December 2012.

There will be a series of overnight works to upgrade an existing manhole in Broughton Street located outside St Paul’s and St George’s Church, at the junction of Broughton Street and York Place, in order to accommodate a new drainage connection.

The works include the installation of temporary traffic signals and a temporary bridge structure over the excavation area. Pedestrian access will be maintained at all times.

York Place will have two lanes open for buses using the Edinburgh Bus Station during the festive period. The council

says it hopes that this additional bus lane will relieve the bus traffic that was previously using Little King St and St James Place, improving general traffic access to the NCP and John Lewis car parks and delivery access to the retailers.

Transport Convener, Councillor Lesley Hinds welcomed the opening of an additional bus lane on York Place and said:-
“The tram work is progressing well in line with the revised schedule and this means that we can adopt a more flexible approach over the festive season, where possible, to improve access. We recognise that this is a very busy time of year for the bus station and the opening of an additional lane will help avoid congestion and help traffic to run smoothly.

“In terms of the manhole upgrading on Broughton Street, the work has been programmed in order to minimise traffic disruption as far as possible by only carrying out overnight works on weekdays. The initial phase of work to excavate the road surface will unfortunately create noise, so we would like to apologise in advance to local residents and businesses and to assure them that every effort will be taken to minimise disruption.”

For the Broughton Street works, the contractor has been granted dispensation to work on Saturdays from 6:00am until 10:00pm and on Sundays from 10:00am until 8:00pm. During the weekdays only overnight working will take place between the hours of 8:00pm until 6:00am.

During daytime hours, the excavation will be covered by the temporary bridge structure and traffic will be managed by the existing traffic signal system.

The bridge structure will be removed in the evening to carry out the works and traffic will be managed through the use of the temporary traffic signals.

The works initially will involve excavating the road surface and will create noise; thereafter, there will be noise no

greater than current traffic levels.

After the festive period, York Place will return to one lane for buses accessing the Bus Station. An update will be provided nearer the time.

More information on these works and the Edinburgh Tram Project is available on the Council's [website](#) or by contacting 0800 328 3934 or trams@edinburgh.gov.uk.

Find us on twitter [@edinburghtrams](#)

Muirhouse Musician Releases Album

Edinburgh singer/songwriter James Campbell is releasing a CD inspired by his life in Muirhouse.

James and I grew up in the same area and went to the same high school. I bumped into James around a fortnight ago which was the first time we had seen each other since around 1984.

James explained he wanted to do an album covering the changes in Muirhouse over the years, and the re-generation that is happening now in the area. Indeed, one of the blocks of flats where James was brought up was recently demolished. The building was in the process of being torn down while James recorded his album in the area's North Edinburgh Arts Centre.

Here James and I chat about his album, the reasons behind it and details of its upcoming release event.

[Chat With James Campbell](#) by [Basher1969](#) on [Mixcloud](#)

The CD is being given away free tonight from 6pm at the North Edinburgh Arts Centre.

Edinburgh Bus Tours launch Gaelic tour



Last year, Edinburgh Bus Tours achieved the highest accolade from VisitScotland attaining five stars for excellence in recognition of its exceptionally high standard of facilities and services for visitors. This prestigious award, only achieved by a small percentage of visitor attractions, puts Edinburgh Bus Tours alongside other five star attractions in Edinburgh, including Edinburgh Castle and Royal Yacht *Britannia*.

This St Andrews Day, Lothian Buses are launching their Gaelic tour with the help of Tollcross Primary School, Edinburgh's only Gaelic **speaking primary school**.

Ian Craig, Managing Director, Lothian Buses said:

Our new Gaelic tour has been supported by the Scottish Government. There is no other company in Scotland providing a Gaelic spoken tour and with a growing number of Gaelic speakers in Central Scotland and an increased number of Scottish people holidaying at home the decision for us to launch this tour was simple.

Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Languages Alasdair Allan said:

"The Scottish Government is committed to increasing the number of people learning, speaking and using Gaelic across Scotland. For the language to survive and thrive it requires ongoing support for communities and networks of speakers and for

initiatives which expand and strengthen its position in modern Scottish society.

“That’s why I welcome the launch of this unique Gaelic tour by Lothian Buses. As the language continues to flourish in Edinburgh this presents another opportunity to further raise its profile among speakers and non speakers alike. I wish Lothian Buses every success with this innovative project.”

✖ The tour was translated by Facal, specialists in transcription and translation based in the Scottish Highlands.

Alasdair MacLeoid, Facal said:

We are delighted to have been involved in this interesting and innovative new project embedding Scottish Gaelic as an audio option on the Majestic Tour of Edinburgh, and wish Lothian Buses every success with this venture.

We are confident that Gaels visiting Edinburgh as well as local Gaelic-speakers and learners, young and old, will make use of this facility; and hope to see such a service extend to other tours, towns and cities across the country.”

The Majestic tour, which is part of Edinburgh Bus Tours, leaves from Waverley Bridge, taking in the sights of Edinburgh Castle, Royal Botanic Garden, Royal Yacht Britannia and the Palace of Holyroodhouse.

Alice Brown, Head Teacher, Tollcross Primary said:

We are delighted that Lothian buses are recognising the growth in the use of Gaelic in Edinburgh. This will allow visitors to Edinburgh and local people to enjoy a tour in Gaelic. Our Gaelic Medium pupils are looking forward to their tour very much.

During the winter season, Edinburgh Bus Tours will be running their City Sightseeing, Edinburgh Tour and Majestic Tour, all

featuring pre-recording commentary.

Individual Tour tickets are priced Adult £12, Child (5-15) £5 Senior/Student £11 and Family £28 are valid for 24 hours.

During the Winter Season, a GRAND TICKET allows 48 hours unlimited travel instead of 24 hours on City Sightseeing Edinburgh, the Edinburgh Tour, AND the Majestic Tour. Prices are Adult £16, Child (5-15) £6, Senior/Student £14 and Family £37.

For more information visit www.edinburghstour.com.

Scottish solicitors seek further meeting with Justice Minister

Solicitors from across Scotland reaffirmed their concerns over government plans to introduce contributions in criminal legal aid, describing the proposals as 'regressive, unworkable, unfair and a risk to our system of justice' at a meeting held in Edinburgh last night.

The Law Society of Scotland had organised a meeting of representatives from law faculties and bar associations from across Scotland, following a series of announcements by solicitors in favour of direct action in protest against elements of the Scottish Civil Justice and Criminal Legal Assistance Bill currently before the Scottish Parliament.

The solicitors reaffirmed their principal concerns over the

legislation, namely that the proposals are:-

Regressive – The current threshold of £68 disposable income per week will mean people will be forced to pay towards the costs of their defence when they simply cannot afford to so.

Unworkable – The proposed mixed collection system which would leave solicitors collecting in summary cases is impractical and unworkable. The Scottish Legal Aid Board is the body best equipped to collect contributions in all summary and solemn cases.

Unfair – In many cases, those who plead not guilty will have to pay a far greater contribution than they would with a guilty plea – as much as double the contribution – leading to a perverse incentive for those who cannot afford to pay the higher cost.

The Law Society has now agreed to organise a meeting between the faculties and the Cabinet Secretary for Justice so these concerns can be discussed in detail. The meeting is likely to take place early next week.

President of the Law Society, Austin Lafferty said: "Solicitors want a legal aid system that protects society's most vulnerable, not one that forces some of the poorest in our society to pay sums they cannot afford. They want a system that is fair, not one that encourages the innocent poor to plead guilty in order to pay less. They also want a system that is workable, not one that forces lawyers to become unpaid debt collectors for the government.

"Solicitors fear the Scottish Government's proposals are regressive, unworkable, unfair and risk undermining these fundamental principles. As the people who work at the coal face of our justice system, they should be listened to.

"The justice system cannot be immune from the need to save

money from the public purse, we know that. That is why solicitors have accepted a series of reforms over recent years which were designed to make our justice system more efficient and save money, including significant cuts to solicitor fees. But there comes a point when proposals go too far or go in the wrong direction.

“There is still time for Ministers to think again before the Scottish Parliament gives final consideration to the Bill. We plan to use that time to press our case for a legal aid system that is fair and protects the most vulnerable in our society.”

The Justice Minister sent a letter to the Law Society of Scotland on 21 November 2012 following an initial meeting to discuss the changes to the Legal Aid system [which you can read here.](#)

Five things you need to know today



Our free Photojournalism training evening – Picardy Place roundabout – Get your sandbags here – Santa Cruises in December – St Andrew’s Day celebrations

We are running a free photojournalism session next Wednesday 5 December 2012 from 6-9pm. If you have already sent an email to us to book your place then do not send us another one but if you would like to book a place now there are a few left. So please email theedinburghreporter@gmail.com

The event will be held at the [ESPC showroom at 85 George](#)

[Street](#) and you may arrive anytime from 5.30 onwards. We look forward to meeting you!

More details of [this event can be read here.](#)

The revamped Picardy Place Roundabout has been described as a 'cyclist blender' by an urban planner at Heriot-Watt [according to cycling website road cc](#) There is an opportunity on Monday to drop into Macdonald Road Library to have a look at the plans. Here is the email from The City of Edinburgh Council which gives you all the information you might need:-

On 31 July 2012, the Council's Finance and Resource Committee agreed a budget of £5.5 million to upgrade roads and pavements and carry out a range of environmental improvements along Constitution Street, Leith Walk and Picardy Place.

Preliminary design ready for consultation

Based on stakeholder feedback from a range of previous consultations (carried out by the Council and by community organisations), a preliminary design for these streets has now been developed for consultation.

The preliminary design and a survey on the proposals will be available online from Saturday 24 November 2012, at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/leithimprovements . Hard copies will also be available for viewing at McDonald Road and Leith Libraries.

Key elements of the preliminary design

An integral element of the works will be to resurface roads and tidy up and even out pavements. There are also a number of additional elements that are proposed which will be central to the consultation survey. These include:

Improvements for pedestrians – proposals to make junctions at Kirkgate, Annandale and Baltic Street easier and safer to cross, proposals for a number of new islands in the centre of Leith Walk, and resurfacing the raised road areas at the side streets.

Improvements for cyclists – proposals for a combination of cycle lanes and segregated cycle ways at Picardy Place and London Road roundabouts, reducing the number of traffic lanes on the roundabout approaches and addition of advanced stop lines at signalled junctions.

Improving the appearance of the streets by replacing Leith Walk pavements with new grey slabs, relocating large domestic waste bins into road lay-bys and removing unnecessary signage; we will also seek people's views on additional planting.

Consultation – your chance to have your say

Survey: We would like as many people as possible to take part in the survey which will be available online from Saturday 24 November 2012 to Sunday 13 January 2013, from www.edinburgh.gov.uk/leithimprovements ; or in hard copy at McDonald Road and Leith Libraries or by phoning 0131 529 7061.

Drop in Event: Officers will be in attendance at a drop in event to discuss the preliminary designs and gather people's

views at McDonald Road Library on Monday 3 December, from 10am to 8pm.

Your feedback will help us develop a final design that will balance the range of needs of those who use these streets. The final design will be reported to the Transport and Environment Committee on 19 March 2013.

A new initiative is being launched today to help Edinburgh residents protect their homes from flood damage.

The City of Edinburgh Council and [Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service](#) have joined forces to encourage people to be prepared for floods. Rather than waiting for heavy rainfall, residents who are concerned about potential flooding are being offered free sandbags now, to help protect their properties.

Sandbags are now available to collect from specially built storage sheds at the following locations:

Tollcross Fire Station – 6 West Tollcross EH3 9QN

Crewe Toll Fire Station – 223 Telford Road EH4 2PW

Sighthill Fire Station – Calder Road EH11 4AT

Liberton Fire Station – 19 Kirk Brae EH16 6TS

Newcraighall Fire Station – 90 Newcraighall Road EH21 8QS

Marionville Fire Station – 51 Marionville Drive EH7 6BH

South Queensferry Fire Station – Ferryburn, Rosebery Avenue EH30 9QS

Powderhall Depot – 165 Broughton Road EH7 4LG



Today is St Andrew's Day. Some government buildings may be closed today, although the rest of us are carrying on as normal. There are many things going on in the city to mark our patron saint's day.

You may like to read the article about [St Andrew's Day in The Scotsman](#) and why it is worth celebrating by Lady Susan Rice the managing director of Lloyds Banking Group Scotland. Full of comparisons to her native USA where they celebrate Thanksgiving in November with a vengeance. (The Reporter enjoyed a full turkey dinner last Thursday in Boston which is regarded as the home of Thanksgiving.)

Later this afternoon Edinburgh Castle Esplanade will burst into life for a spectacular celebration of St Andrew's Day, with 'Carnival at the Castle', produced in association with Scotland's Winter Festivals. The spectacle will tell the show of how St. Andrew came to be the patron saint of Scotland and will include an array of theatre, dance, music, projections and illuminations, followed by a short firework display.

We have a list of other things to do to help you celebrate St Andrew's Day [over here.](#)

Happy St Andrew's Day!



Today in Scotland we celebrate St Andrew's Day which for some seems to be a holiday. Is it a holiday where you are? It is a Bank Holiday but other employers can choose whether or not to offer the holiday. Here are some of the things we have found to help you celebrate.

There is of course an app to help you with your own version of St Andrew's Day and will test you on your knowledge of our patron saint and allows you to download a playlist for the day. You will [find the app here.](#)



There is a Google Doodle.....

Free tickets are still available for more than 40 of Scotland's top heritage attractions to people who pre-register online as part of this year's St. Andrew's celebrations.

The ticket giveaway, which is being run by Historic Scotland, includes attractions such as Stirling Castle, recently voted the UK's best loved heritage attraction by members of Which ? magazine and Urquhart Castle on the banks of Loch Ness.

Edinburgh Castle's 10,000 free tickets have now all been allocated for the weekend of 1st and 2nd December however there are still lots of great sites across Scotland to explore.

Visitors need to register in advance at a special website,

www.ticketgiveaway.co.uk

in order to download a free ticket for each person for the attraction they would like to visit over this weekend.

The Ticket Giveaway is part of the Scottish Government's Winter Festivals programme – which celebrates three of the country's most distinctive festivals – St. Andrew's Day, Hogmanay and Burns Night.

Stephen Duncan, Director of Commercial and Tourism at Historic Scotland said:-

“This is a great way to enjoy some of Scotland's best loved heritage attractions and uncover some hidden gems along the way. There is no limit on the number of sites that people can sign up for however there are some restrictions on the number of tickets available at certain sites to maintain a quality visitor experience.

“Visitors need to register in advance to gain free access so we'd advise people to sign up as soon as possible so that they don't miss out on the opportunity to visit a great heritage attraction for free.”

Apparently the Saltire is being flown from 10 Downing Street today (alongside the Union Jack). Any other places where it is being hoisted?

The First Minister has posted a St Andrew's Day message...

First Minister Alex Salmond has used his St Andrew's Day message to highlight Scotland's proud history of invention and

discovery as he extended a warm invite for overseas visitors to join in the country's Winter Festival celebrations.

Recorded at Lochgelly Primary School in Fife following an invitation from a primary six pupil for the First Minister to visit, the message focuses on the impact the Scottish innovation of universal free education has had on Scotland's history and the importance the excellent work being done in schools across Scotland has for our future.

During the message the First Minister is seen watching the school's country dance practice and leading discussion on St Andrew before sending his warmest wishes to Scots and Scots at heart on the occasion of the national day.

Mr Salmond uses the film to extend an invite to the world to visit Scotland and join in our Winter Festival Celebrations, which run from St Andrew's Day through Christmas and Hogmanay, then right through to Burns Night at the end of January.

The Castle Esplanade will burst into life for a spectacular celebration of St Andrew's Day, with 'Carnival at the Castle', produced in association with Scotland's Winter Festivals. The spectacle will tell the show of how St. Andrew came to be the patron saint of Scotland and will include an array of theatre, dance, music, projections and illuminations, followed by a short firework display.

Some restaurants and cafés are offering special deals across the weekend which you might like to take advantage of.

The Edinburgh Larder 15 Blackfriars Street EH1 1NB, United Kingdom 0131 556 6922 is offering a set St Andrew's Day lunch menu and dinner menu for £25.

Stac Polly are offering a set dinner menu on St Andrew's Day for £36 per person.

Candy cupcakes – Will have a limited edition Tunnock's teacake cupcake – A take on the traditional Scottish cake, the cupcake

will have a biscuit base, vanilla sponge topped with marshmallow and dipped in chocolate

Mimi's Bakehouse – Offering a menu of Scottish classics including Scottish Lamb Hotpot/Macsween Haggis Stovies and Cranican Cheesecake. They will also have limited edition Scottish Tablet cupcakes on offer

Cuckoo's Bakery – Offering a limited edition Millionaire's Shortbread cupcake



RUSKO ' UK Tour' featuring RUSKO @ The Liquid Rooms

This is one of 7 dates on his UK Tour and is an Exclusive with his only Scottish Date!

Xplicit is proud to present RUSKO on his UK TOUR

Leeds-born, LA-based dubstep pioneer Rusko is hitting the UK for a 7 day UK Tour to coincide with his new KAPOW EP which is available online now.

The tour will round-off a hectic and productive year for Rusko, which has already seen the producer and DJ release his second album, Songs, unveil a collaborative project with West Coast hip-hop heroes Cypress Hill, perform a month-long Las Vegas residency and maintain a seemingly-never-ending touring schedule.

This will also see Rusko play his first weekend date in Scotland since 2009 and a first in the capital!

The Prime Minister, David Cameron has posted the following message to all Scots:-

“For centuries, Scotland’s greatest asset and greatest export has been its people.

“Scotland’s people are international in their outlook and have taken their flair, inventiveness and determination to succeed to the four corners of the globe. Scots are aspirational for themselves and their country.

“Scots have helped bring peace and security to nations, made some of the world’s greatest inventions, and been at the forefront of international trade in every continent.

“Scottish companies and Scottish people are a critical part of the UK’s efforts to compete in the global race.

“A small country with a big heart and a big voice. Scots and Scotland have done so much to shape our modern world. So this is a day for everyone to celebrate our shared history and look forward to our future prosperity together.

“A happy St Andrew’s Day to all Scots – wherever you are.”

Police to send Christmas cards to offenders



Lothian and Borders Police are sending Christmas card reminders to members of the public who are the subject of an outstanding warrant.

Officers in the North of Edinburgh have been targeting any individuals who are required to either pay their court-ordered fines or who have had an arrest warrant issued .

Those who are known to live in the North of the city will receive this reminder over the next month and are urged to settle any warrants as soon as possible or they may face further police action over the festive period.

The Christmas card reminder has previously been used within the city to good effect. Last year around 600 cards were sent to petty criminals who had failed to turn up in court, ignored fixed penalties or defaulted on fine payments. The pilot scheme ran in 2010 and the results have so far proved positive.



Safer Neighbourhood Team Officers from Leith and Drylaw Police Stations will be actively looking people subject of a warrant, so they are advising them to take responsibility in order to ensure that their festive plans do not involve the police.

With the courts not operating over the public holidays, anyone arrested risks the possibility of spending Christmas Day and Boxing Day in the cells at St Leonards, where the chances of some festive cheer are non-existent.

Inspector Kevin McLean said: "The festive period is a busy time for our communities as they get ready for the Christmas and New Year Celebrations.

"However, while we appreciate that the public have many things to deal with at this time, it is essential that those who currently have an outstanding warrant against their name come forward and settle these.

"Failure to do so may result in your arrest and the possibility of spending time in police custody as opposed to time with friends and family."

Christmas Light Night – fizz or damp squib?



So they lit the tree on The Mound tonight and let off a few bangers....and this is our capital city where we claim that people should come for the ultimate in Christmas and New Year entertainment.



Now it has to be said that the tree is a very welcome present from the people of Hordaland in Norway and the fireworks were very lovely indeed thanks to the professionalism of 21st Century Fireworks. But the rest?

Well, sorry if it sounds a bit bah humbug, but we feel that this year's Light Night was just a wee bit of a letdown.



A large Santa Claus 'walked' up The Mound with the help of his elves. Then a girl and her teddy bear on a bed were transported up The Mound, while fighting each other with pillows. This was billed as a "bespoke show called the *Christmas Dream Machine*. The performance will include illuminations, aerial performances, flying Christmas presents and pyrotechnics, culminating with the traditional lighting of Edinburgh's Christmas Tree and a short burst of fireworks from the Castle Esplanade."

Our Lord Provost said a few words of welcome to the estimated 15,000 people in the city centre in his usual eloquent fashion.

[listen to 'Donald Wilson at Edinburgh's Christmas' on Audioboo](#)

Finally the 'girl' was magically whisked into the air and somehow she managed to light the tree. You will be able to see our video here soon.



Our Christmas celebrations are organised by events company [She's Gott It!](#) and are also supported by Essential Edinburgh and Marketing Edinburgh. The company have been on contract to the council for some years now and in 2010/11 the budget for Edinburgh's Christmas was almost £200,000 with another £112,000 of public and private sponsorship contributed to the public purse.

Nickie Gott, managing director of She's Gott It!, Edinburgh's Christmas producers, enthused at the launch of the event:- "There is no better place than Edinburgh during the festive period. With the remarkable Light Night starting things off in style, the city centre will be buzzing with activity and excitement. The capital is so magical at this time of year and we hope that our programme will amaze and delight the entire family."

The crowd who afterwards tried to make their way down The Mound and who converged on the German Market in an attempt to make their way to Princes Street and finally to St Andrew Square appeared to be quite bad-tempered.

Now whether that was as a result of the show or the cold we simply cannot say. But as for us? We felt a bit short-changed.

Musselburgh to inspect before Friday's racing



Musselburgh will hold a precautionary inspection at ahead of tomorrow's Saltire 2012 Race Day.

Clerk of the Course, Harriet Graham, is confident that if the forecast of -2 degrees overnight and up to +4 degrees is correct, racing will go ahead. Frost covers will be put on any vulnerable areas overnight and Musselburgh say they are erring on the side of caution.

The outcome of the 8am inspection will be posted on the racecourse's website www.musselburgh-racecourse.co.uk and on its Facebook and Twitter feeds.

Feature race at the East Lothian course is the £12,000 Weatherbys Printing Handicap Chase (2.20) which sees last year's multiple course winner, Red Tanber, make his second appearance of the winter season but Bruce Mactaggart's chaser was pulled up at Musselburgh last time out and will be hard pressed to beat the recent hurdles winner Nine Stories, and the Nicky Richard trained Houston Dynimo, a winner on the flat at Musselburgh last summer in the hands of Paul Mulrennan.

Houston Dynimo scored on his chasing debut at Worcester and was a creditable second behind the progressive Stormy Weather at Wetherby in mid-November. He jumps well and will be suited by the drying ground at Musselburgh.

Nicky Richards can initiate a lucrative double by winning the £8,000 Weatherbys Printing Services Novices' Handicap Chase

(1.10) with Tutchec, still a maiden over fences but a respectable second to Secret Desert at Ayr on his latest outing. Tutchec made a number of mistakes on the heavy ground but was still in front approaching the last fence and was only headed on the run-in.

The CEEJ Ltd Juvenile Hurdle (12.40) could develop into a head-to-head between the recent Wetherby winner Asteroid Belt, and the impressive Market Rasen scorer Kashmir Peak, now in the care of John Quinn.

Formerly trained in Ireland by Ger Lyons for whom he showed useful form on the flat, Kashmir Peak has pleased his new trainer ever since he arrived at his Malton stable at the end of September and he proved a decisive nine length winner from Don't Take Me Alive when a well backed favourite on his hurdling debut at Market Rasen.

It could be a great day for Greystoke trainer Nicky Richards whose Parc Des Princes has a sound chance of taking the 2 mile hurdle at 2.55. Parc Des Princes, a course winner at Musselburgh, was still travelling well when unseating his rider down the back straight at the last Musselburgh meeting. Given a clear round he will be hard to beat.

Gates open at 10.30am and first race is off at 12.10pm. For more details visit www.musselburgh-racecourse.co.uk

Honours for Edinburgh Dentist

✘ Dr Elaine Halley of Cherrybank Dental Spa has been recognised as the Best Employer in Scotland.

Cherrybank also received 'Best Marketing at the Dentistry Scotland Awards 2012 which was held at Gleneagles Hotel at the beginning of November and was a finalist in seven other categories.

This is the second year the awards have been run. They were set up by Dentistry Scotland Magazine to recognise outstanding achievement in Scottish dentistry.

Dr Halley is widely regarded as the first dentist in Scotland to really push the boundaries of Cosmetic Dentistry, and she is the only one to have achieved accreditation by the British Academy of Cosmetic Dentists (BACD). She set up Cherrybank Dental Spa in Perth in 1995, and more recently started a second practice in Edinburgh in 2009.

The practices offer a complete dental service, from hygiene and general dentistry right up to Smile Design and Fixed Teeth In A Day. With a focus on 5 Star service they discreetly attract people whose health is a priority, those who are nervous or just people who enjoy a bit of luxury, including many high profile clients.

Last year, Dr Halley was awarded Outstanding Individual of the Year, and Cherrybank Edinburgh was recognized as the Best New Private Practice in Scotland.

Dr Halley said, "We're so proud to be awarded the Best Employer and Best Marketing awards. It has not been easy to expand in the current economic climate, and our success is absolutely down to our great team. We're passionate about delivering every single patient the best that modern dentistry can offer, and to do that you need great people. We focus on

attracting the best people, but also offering all our team members unrivalled training and personal development.”

Steve Philip, Business Development Director at Cherrybank said “We’re delighted to win Best Marketing. Our marketing strategy is concerned with helping people who are not happy with their current dental situation to find us. There are more and more dentists now recognizing that great dentistry is about clinical excellence, and outstanding customer care. Not only do we offer more treatment options, but people can see that a trip to the dentist can be an enjoyable experience. We also work hard to educate our patients and our practice’s communities about the benefits of improved oral health, how to keep your teeth for life, and how to improve your confidence by improving your smile.”

The two practices now employ a team of over 35 dental professionals, as well as a number of visiting experts.

For more information, see <http://www.cherrybankdentalspa.com> or call Cherrybank Dental Spa On 0845 1309445.

Submitted by [Steve Philip](#)

Friends of the Earth attack Cairn Energy’s “cowboy tactics”



This morning on Lothian Road at the offices of oil company, Cairn Energy, activists dressed as cowboys highlighted the

company's potential role in the destruction of the Arctic. Their oil exploration plans include effectively lassoing icebergs which threaten their offshore drills. The cowboys were attempting to show how this might be done.

Cairn Energy, a Scottish-based oil and gas company, announced earlier this year that they will continue drilling for Arctic oil in 2014.

FOE Scotland say that Cairn's earlier activity in the Arctic was heavily criticised by the environmental sector and Arctic experts alike and that much criticism was focussed on the inadequacies within their oil spill response plan.

Paul Daly, Corporate Accountability Campaigner at Friends of the Earth Scotland, said:- "Cairn's oil spill response plan was literally laughable. They had some daft ideas that demonstrated quite how little regard they have for the environment and the Arctic.

"Cairn needs to have a serious re-think about their Arctic commitments. We urgently need to transition to a low carbon economy, not take advantage of the effects of climate change to find oil in newly exposed areas."

Professor Wadhams of Cambridge University, who recently appeared on the BBC's acclaimed 'Life and Death of an Iceberg', gave evidence to the UK government's 'Protecting the Arctic' enquiry stating that Cairn Energy is a 'cowboy operation'. Professor Wadhams highlighted that Cairn's work is slapdash and dangerous – particularly given the sensitive, unique and unforgiving Arctic territory.

The enquiry concluded that there should be no Arctic drilling until there are much more stringent safety measures in place.

Chair of the Committee, Joan Walley MP, said: "The infrastructure to mount a big clean-up operation is simply not in place and conventional oil spill response techniques have not been proven to work in such severe conditions."

Book Week Scotland's Reading Hour at the museum

Alexander McCall Smith to lead Reading Hour at National Museum of Scotland for Book Week Scotland

Celebrated authors Alexander McCall Smith and Lari Don will lead a read-in at the National Museum of Scotland this Friday to mark *The Reading Hour*, a time when thousands of people across Scotland are being encouraged to stop what they are doing and enjoy reading.

The Reading Hour, from 11am on 30 November 2012, will celebrate a love of books and the sheer pleasure of reading. The Hour is part of Book Week Scotland, the first national celebration of books and reading, initiated by the Scottish Government and delivered on behalf of Creative Scotland by Scottish Book Trust.

People can visit the National Museum of Scotland to take part in one of the events below or simply bring along a book, find a quiet corner and read. Anyone without a book can pick up a free copy of *My Favourite Place* or visit the Museum's [Library](#) or [Info Zone](#) for inspiration.

My Favourite Place, produced by Scottish Book Trust, features

over 30 stories and poems written by the public and well-known writers such as Michael Palin and Liz Lochhead.

Craig Fletcher, Learning Manager, National Museums Scotland, said:

'We're delighted to be taking part in this national celebration of reading. As well as the events we're hoping that the galleries will be filled with people finding their own inspirational space to read!'

Marc Lambert, CEO, Scottish Book Trust, said:

'The Reading Hour is an opportunity for people across Scotland to take part, collectively, in a national moment of reading, and to reflect on all the benefits reading brings to individuals and communities. Ultimately the message is a simple one: a well-read populace creates a happier, more productive, more articulate and better informed nation.'

Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs, will attend Friday's event. She said:

"Book Week Scotland is capturing the collective imagination of our creative nation, encouraging everyone in Scotland, of all ages and with all interests, to embrace reading's unique capacity for personal enrichment, education, solace, pleasure and growth."

"The Scottish Government is firmly committed to increasing

learning through the arts and culture, and to promoting the value of taking part in cultural activity. Through Book Week Scotland – and The Reading Hour – we're engaging the whole of Scotland in these important aims."

Events at the Museum

Meet Alexander McCall Smith

11:00-11:30am, Fri 30 November, Grand Gallery, Level 1

Alexander McCall Smith is one of the world's most prolific and most popular authors, having written his highly successful No 1 Ladies' Detective Agency series and the Scotland Street novels. Join him at the start of reading hour for a unique chance to enjoy some public readings of his work.

Storytelling with Lari Don

11:15-11:45am, Fri 30 November, Living Lands Gallery, Level 1

Storytelling for pre-schoolers. Join children's author Lari Don for a traditional storytelling ride on the museum's Magic Carpet! Free, places limited, sign up on the day at the Information Desk, Entrance Hall, Level 1 (Meet at Lighthouse Lens, Grand Gallery).

Bookbug

11:50am -12:30pm, Fri 30 November, Animal World, Level 1

Join us for an animal inspired song and rhymes session on the

Magic Carpet.

Free, places limited, sign up on the day at the Information Desk, Entrance Hall, Level 1, for ages 0-4 years. (Meet at Lighthouse Lens, Grand Gallery)

Five things you need to know today



Seven arrested at Hearts match – Edinburgh's Christmas – South Bridge Creative Christmas Fair – EACC Executive Meeting – Leveson Enquiry

Lothian and Borders Police confirm that seven men were arrested during the Hearts v Celtic fixture at Tynecastle last night.

A number of the men, whose ages range from 20 to 44 years, are expected to appear at Edinburgh Sheriff Court today.

Match Commander Superintendent David Carradice said:- "Our priority is everybody's safety and we will take action against the small number whose disruptive behaviour spoils the match for the decent fans. It is important to remember there was CCTV and video recording equipment within the ground. Working with our colleagues in the FOCUS unit, this will enable police to take action in the coming days to trace those responsible for unacceptable behaviour. "

***The South Bridge Creative Christmas Fair
at South Bridge Resource Centre,
on Thursday 29 November
2012 between 11am and 3pm.***

SBRC is holding its annual Christmas Fair to celebrate the work of all the creative groups that use the centre. There will be ceramics, textiles, cards, books, jewellery and more for sale, plus baking.

Come and meet some Remaders and find out what we've been doing this year, and our exciting plans for 2013.

The next EACC Executive Meeting will be [held this evening](#) at 7.00 pm in the City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh.

The Leveson Enquiry report will be out at lunchtime today in all its glory. What does this have to do with Edinburgh? Well even though this was a UK government report there are signs that Holyrood might be prepared to take steps to tighten its rules for the Scottish press, which might affect us and every Scottish-based newspaper and press outlet. [All Media Scotland](#) has said that First Minister Alex Salmond is ready to amend the rules for press regulation which is a matter devolved to Holyrood. (Broadcasting is a matter reserved to Westminster.)

You can order a copy of the full report should you wish to read it from The Stationery Office, but it will set you back a fairly hefty £250, so we imagine it might be just a bit too much for most, so they are also offering the executive summary as well.

The Guardian has been running a good coverage of the enquiry in the first place, and we imagine they will live blog the day's events as Prime Minister, David Cameron decides what to

do with the Leveson Enquiry report. You can access Andrew Sparrow's [rolling politics blog here](#).

Eight accused of disabled parking badge frauds



Eight people have been charged as part of a joint initiative to tackle the fraudulent use of disabled parking badges in Edinburgh.

Lothian and Borders Police and The City of Edinburgh Council Fraud Prevention Officers ran Operation Bevel within the Capital between Monday and Tuesday of this week to identify anyone wrongly using the distinctive blue passes.

As a result of the two-day enforcement activity, a number of individuals were charged with various alleged fraud offences. These include displaying a badge when not being registered disabled and using and displaying a badge that did not belong to them.

A blue disabled parking badge entitles the owner to park in marked disabled spaces, in areas where parking is not normally permitted and parking without payment in pay and display spaces

However, both police and council officers have been gathering intelligence on individuals who are not permitted to possess these passes.

Five men aged 33, 37, 48, 53 and 54 and three women aged between 39, 49 and 63 have been reported to the Procurator Fiscal and will appear in court at a later date.

Sergeant Kevin Rafferty said: "The use of a blue disabled parking badge is exclusively for those with a registered disability. However, we have observed a number of people utilising these passes for their own personal purposes.

"Working alongside our partners at the City of Edinburgh Council Fraud Prevention Unit, we carried out a two-day enforcement phase in the city and were able to identify eight people, alleged to be using the badge fraudulently.

"We have also gathered further intelligence, which will be followed up by our colleagues at the council and may result in further charges in the near future.

"Displaying a stolen badge or utilising one if you are not registered disabled is a crime and we will continue to work alongside our partners to bring anyone responsible to account for their actions."

Councillor Lesley Hinds, Transport Convener for the City of Edinburgh

Council, said: "The charging of these eight individuals is a very satisfying conclusion to many months of painstaking investigation and intelligence gathering by the Council's dedicated Fraud Prevention Officer.

"Most blue badges are used correctly but sadly there is still a small minority of individuals who seem to believe that the law doesn't apply to them.

"This close joint working between the Council and Lothian and

Borders Police should send a strong message to anyone still flouting the law that we will not hesitate to bring them to justice.”