

# Transport Committee meeting June 2012



Councillor Lesley Hinds convened the first meeting of the new committee in the Dean of Guild Room this morning at the City Chambers. Although she admitted at the end that it had overrun against her personal estimate of how long it would last, the councillors got through the long agenda in just under two and a quarter hours.

We spoke to Councillor Hinds after the meeting to discuss a couple of the important topics under discussion today:-

[listen to 'Interview with Lesley Hinds' on Audioboo](#)

Councillor Joanna Mowat who represents the City Centre ward, and who is a veteran of the Transport Committee from the last administration had tabled a variety of motions this morning. The first was to insist on some transparency about the Tram Project. It read as follows:-

*"Committee recognises the Council decision to take the tram to St Andrew Square in August last year and calls for:*

*1 a report detailing progress on parts of the route;*

*2 costings for the detailed design of the St Andrew Square – York Place*

*additional section; and*

*3 work programmes detailing when each section of track is to be completed."*

It was agreed that the committee will bring forward such detail to the next meeting. Councillor Mowat also tabled a motion demanding some action on increasing recycling in the city. She wants to have automated recycling bins which might pay a small amount to the people depositing the rubbish, which

is an idea from Norway and some other European countries. It was agreed that the committee will investigate this.

✖ Then she proposed a motion to assist the Northumberland Street residents return their street to some calm. There had been a deputation by the Northumberland Street residents association at the beginning of the meeting and their concerns about safety arising from the increased traffic, lack of traffic lights and the cobbled surface had been aired. The group also claimed that the street is now used as a short-cut to avoid the traffic lights to both north and south of the street, and this makes it dangerous to cross safely, particularly at the Howe Street end where there are often large delivery vehicles. A road safety audit will not be carried out in the street to determine ways to improve road safety. The residents have suggested a traffic island at the junction with Howe Street, or stopping up the road with bollards at one end as some methods of improving the New Town street.

We spoke to her after the meeting:-

[listen to 'Interview with Councillor Mowat ' on Audioboo](#)

There were two other deputations this morning, a deputation from Suntrap about the garden which they run at Gogarbank, and a deputation about the Seafield Stench.

Suntrap's future as a garden for people with learning difficulties and mental illness has been thrown into some doubt owing to the proposal that the owners of the land, National Trust for Scotland and Oatridge College have decided to sell.

Suntrap have made some investigation into funding options such as the Lottery Fund and they are also working with other charity partners like St Columba's and Alzheimer's Scotland to find a way to buy the land and continue their work. A campaign called Save our Suntrap (SOS) was set up in June 2010 to try

and keep the garden open for public use. This long running campaign was simply asking the council for their practical help, not financial assistance as they realise that the council would not be able to commit any further funds to this cause, although one of the proposals made by National Trust for Scotland was to sell the land at Millbuies (only a part of Suntrap) to the SOS campaign for £400,000.

The council agreed to help with advice and lobbying but could not commit any funds to the proposed purchase of the land so that the work there can continue.

The deputation about the Seafield Waste Water Treatment works was very clear and succinct. It was explained:- "There seems to be an attitude that Leith will provide the least resistance being a working class area. Seafield is one of the biggest in Europe. It has non-standard plant and has serious structural problems."

The problem of smells at Seafield is perhaps not something you will know about, unless you live in the area. A plan to get rid of the smell had been adopted and has been monitored. An incident in March meant that the smell reoccurred. After lengthy discussion it was agreed to monitor the problem for a further period and then reconvene with full information to hand to decide what route to take. The Greens were disappointed that further monitoring will be done as they take the view that the plan has already failed and some other way needs to be investigated. But council official Mark Turley was adamant that he did not consider that enough strong evidence had yet been gathered, and more time was needed.

Cycling featured high on the agenda today. The council have already confirmed they will spend 5% of their transport budget on improving matters for cyclists and they are to have briefing sessions with organisations like SPOKES to find out what the priorities should be. Cycling also featured on the discussion about parking at Waverley Station and the formation of shared footways on the route between Bo'ness/Hopetoun.

There were seven new councillors present at the meeting this morning:- Councillors Bagshaw, Lunn, Gardner, Walker, Booth, Doran and Barry.

We spoke to Councillors Bagshaw and Booth both Green Party members who had presented a couple of amendments to some of the council motions today. (Unfortunately as is all too common at these meetings the amendments presented at the meeting are not always circulated to press.)

[listen to 'Interview with Green Councillors Booth and Bagshaw' on Audioboo](#)

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# Five things you need to know today



**Queen's Birthday Honours – Transport Committee – Live Webchat with Lothian and Borders Police – Tea Dance – Potholes!**

Several Edinburgh people were named in the Queen's Official Birthday Honours List published on Saturday morning. Among them were

Duncan MACNIVEN, TD who was lately the Registrar General for Scotland who was awarded a CBE

Dr Gordon Rintoul Director, the National Museums of Scotland. For services to the Museum Sector who was awarded a CBE.

Mrs Unis Shaheen for services to Business and Community Relations who was awarded a CBE.

Jamie Andrew for services to Charity who was awarded an OBE.

David William Liddell Director, Scottish Drugs Forum. For services to Disadvantaged People in Scotland. He was awarded an OBE.

Mrs Mary Nicol who was lately Head of HR Strategy and Policy, Scottish Parliament. For public and voluntary service. She was awarded an OBE.

Jane Elizabeth Ryder who was lately Chief Executive, Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. For services to the Arts and Charity in Scotland. She was awarded an OBE.

Hamish Telfer Adam was awarded an MBE for services to karate.

Alex Arthur was awarded an MBE for services to boxing.

Professor Heather Cubie who was lately Research and Development Director, NHS Lothian. For services to Healthcare Science in Scotland. She was awarded an MBE.

Lieutenant Colonel Helen Elizabeth HOMEWOOD, TD Grade C2 Ministry of Defence receives an MBE.

Mrs Barbara Joan Johnstone for services to Riding for the Disabled. She receives an MBE.

John Knowles, Systems Manager, Information Services and Information Systems, Scottish Government. He receives an MBE.

Professor Scott Murray St Columba's Hospice Chair of Primary Palliative Care, The University of Edinburgh. For services to Medical Science. He receives an MBE.

Mrs Vanessa Orr Long-term Foster Carer, Edinburgh City Council. For services to Vulnerable Children and Young People. She receives an MBE.

Miss Fiona Elizabeth Taylor Ward Sister, Edinburgh Cancer Centre, Western General Hospital, Edinburgh. For services to Cancer Nursing and Care in the Lothians. She receives an MBE.

Thomas Carson for services to charity. He receives a BEM.

Jack Smith for services to education and the community in Loanhead. He receives a BEM.

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Green councillors are concerned that a long-promised cycle lane on Market Street might be under the threat from changes at Waverley Station.

Today at the Transport Committee, councillors will discuss possible changes to parking and taxi-arrangements around Waverley Station, which, if adopted, will include more parking on Market Street leading up the Mound, with no mention that a cycle lane has already been planned and budgeted for there.

Green transport spokesman councillor Nigel Bagshaw said:-

"As part of making Edinburgh more cycle-friendly we need more dedicated cycle space. The cycle lane on Market Street has been planned for some time and we need a firm commitment that it will take priority over more car parking. Some months ago the Green Group raised this with the former Transport Convenor but received no reply. I am looking to the new Administration

to honour that promise.”

Other items on the agenda this morning include the proposal to introduce a 20mph limit in Charlotte Square, and plans to introduce cycling on the Bo’ness to Hopetoun stretch of the B924.

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Tomorrow lunchtime you are invited to join us [when we run our TERLive! event](#) with Chief Inspector Murray Dykes of Lothian and Borders Police. Find out what it takes to police events like the upcoming Madonna concert at Murrayfield. What was needed last week when the Olympic Torch relay passed through the capital? We will be starting at 12.30 and the hashtag is #askLBP.

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The Scottish National Portrait Gallery is [hosting a tea dance today!](#)

Groups from care homes and older people’s networks are invited to a free summer tea dance in the Great Hall with live music from *That Swing Sensation* and a cream tea. Hosted by *Fly Right Dance Company*, there will be a wartime theme to link with our *War at Sea* Display. Part of Dementia Awareness Week.

To book a place, please call 0131 624 6410

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We are starting a new awareness campaign today. On our pavements and on our streets in the city there are many hazards. Whether it is a pothole or a manhole which is missing a cover then we want to know about it. Today here is a hazard on the pavement on Abercromby Place. Send us yours!



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# Caledonian Challenge 2012



Over 800 participants took part in the charity endurance event this year, struggling through the wind and rain. The final total of how much was raised for the Scottish Community Foundation will be revealed in July after the deadline date has closed. There were at least three Edinburgh sponsors, James Morrow, Nairn's Oatcakes and The Scotsman. Were you there? If you were taking part how did you get on?



Team Speedy Walkers comprising L-R Evan Beswick, Peter Bage and Scottish Community Foundation Chairman Tom Ward.



The Sleepless in Scotland: Picture of one of the support team-dressed up as docs, nurses and patient.

It's hailed as 'the walk of your life' and more info can be found on the website <http://www.caledonianchallenge.com/home.html>.



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# Vote for Edinburgh Castle



*HELP EDINBURGH CASTLE TO WIN TOP UK HERITAGE ATTRACTION AWARD*

Edinburgh Castle, last year's winner of the British Travel Awards top UK Heritage Attraction award has been shortlisted again for the 2012 awards.

People are asked to vote for Edinburgh Castle by visiting the [Historic Scotland website](#) and pressing the 'vote for us' button.

Nick Finnigan, Edinburgh Castle's Executive Manager said: "It was a real honour for Edinburgh Castle to win the BTA's Top UK Heritage Attraction award last year and I am delighted the castle has been short-listed for this year's award.

"With record visitor numbers, the arrival of the Olympic torch and the lighting of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Beacon against the dramatic backdrop of the castle, it has been a really momentous year so far.

"There is so much to see at the castle – the Scottish Crown Jewels, which are amongst the oldest regalia in Europe, the Stone of Destiny and St Margaret's Chapel, the oldest building

in Edinburgh, as well as our costumed performers who bring history to life.


“We also have an entertainment programme with rock concerts, fabulous fireworks at the end of the Edinburgh Festival and New Year which ensures that there is something for everyone to enjoy.

“We have also added to the visitor experience by refurbishing our shops and catering facilities including the opening of the Tea Rooms offering traditional afternoon teas.

“I am hoping that people will vote for Edinburgh Castle by visiting our website and pressing the ‘vote for us’ button.”

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## Five things you need to know today

 **Legionella question at Westminster – Big things on the Beach in Portobello – Council transport strategy – Davidson’s Mains Gala Day today – Live Webchat with Lothian and Borders Police**

Alastair Darling MP is the only Edinburgh MP who has not answered calls or emails from The Reporter, but we are reassured that he is working away down in Westminster. Darling asked the following question in Parliament this week:-“To ask the [Secretary of State](#) for Work and Pensions on how many occasions the Health and Safety Executive in Scotland has visited the premises operated by (a) North British Distillery Company, Edinburgh, (b) Macfarlan Smith, Edinburgh and (c) Burton’s Biscuit factory, [Sighthill, Edinburgh](#), for the purpose of ascertaining that measures to prevent the development and spread of Legionnaires’ disease have been taken in each year from 2007 to 2012; and if he will make a statement.”

*The answers given are as follows:-*

*In the case of the North British Distillery Company no specific visits have taken place to check for legionella, but a visit was made in March 2010 to assess major accident hazards.*

*In the case of Macfarlan Smith “A visit to assess the management of legionella risks was carried out on 4 February 2010.”*

*And, in the case of Burton’s Biscuit Factory “A visit to assess the management of legionella risks was carried out on 17 June 2008.”*

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Councillor Maureen Child tells us that there is a Big Things on the Beach meeting on Monday 18 June at 8pm at the Dalriada. “Want to find out more about **Big Things on the Beach**? Who are the trustees and how does this Public Arts Trust work? Come along to an informal information evening where you can find out a little bit about their history, plans for the future, and long term strategies and goals. Discover the different types of volunteering opportunities available; ranging from helping with one-off events, to joining their unique and innovative Commissioning Group or becoming a Trustee and

helping steer Big Things on the Beach into the future. “

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Members of the public are set to be consulted on the quality of road works in Edinburgh as part of ongoing plans by the Council to ensure streets and pavements are safe and accessible.

The proposal is to re-launch and further develop the Edinburgh Road Works Ahead Agreement (ERWAA), which will be heard at the City of Edinburgh Council 's Transport, Infrastructure and Environment (TIE) Committee next week.

Detailed proposals will be developed over the summer to secure greater engagement from residents and the business community. Neighbourhood Partnerships, the Chamber of Commerce, business groups and community groups would be consulted on issues to improve the overall planning, management, and the coordination of road works.

Proposals include:

- Location, duration and contact details for road works planned by utility companies published on the Council website;
- Details and locations of completed reinstatements following utility works;
- The ability for the public to report defective signage, poor guardrails around road works and issues with the quality of reinstatements via the Council website;
- An increase in the inspection regime for reinstatements to achieve a 100% inspection of them all within 21 months of completion.

The ERWAA started on a voluntary basis in 2007, working with utility companies to minimise disruption caused by road works, improve the quality of reinstatement works and to make sure the public is informed of works.

Councillor Lesley Hinds, Transport Convener, said: “The state of roads and pavements in Edinburgh is a high priority for the public and the new Capital Coalition, and it is extremely important to make sure that disruption is kept to a minimum.

“It is vitally important in terms of public safety that streets and pavements are reinstated properly, as defective repairs can be dangerous.

“It has become clear that there is a strong public desire for involvement in this process, which is why we want to give local communities a simple way of reporting any problems. They encounter road works and are very well placed to monitor their progress, so it makes perfect sense to allow them to help us.”

We published [our audio interview with the Transport Convenor here](#) when she gave us an outline of her plans for the months ahead.

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Davidson’s Mains Gala day is today and North Edinburgh News has more information for you [in their article here](#).

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We are running a live web chat with Lothian and Borders Police and the West Neighbourhood Team on Tuesday morning. What questions do you have for them? We should be pleased to hear from you. [More details here](#).

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# Bonhams Sporting Sale 21 June



A fine selection of works by the famous sporting and military artist, Snaffles, is for sale at Bonhams Sporting Sale in Edinburgh on 21 June.

Snaffles – real name Charles Johnson Payne – was born in 1884. After a spell as a Gunner in the Royal Garrison Artillery, he left the army to concentrate on art and by the outbreak of the First World War had become a regular contributor to the leading periodicals of the day. Snaffles served in the Royal Naval Air Service in WWI and in the Second World War put his drawing skills to good use as a Lieutenant in the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve designing camouflage for ships at sea.

Military life and hunting were preoccupations throughout Snaffles long life –he died in 1967 – and the Sporting Sale features one of his most famous images, the 1940 print *The Season* (£500-600) where these two interests come together. The image shows an exchange of salutes between a mounted Master of the Hunt surrounded by an inquisitive pack of hounds and a Tank Commander amid his stationary vehicles.

The work of Rudyard Kipling was another life-long love. He shared the poet's sympathies with the common fighting man as seen in the 1911 watercolour and pencil depiction of a British soldier on horseback during the Boer War. The inscription – "I don't know whose dam column I'm in – Nor where we're trekkin', nor why" – is from Kipling's 1901 poem *M.I. (Mounted Infantry of the Line)*. The Snaffles work is known as *The Ikonas*, the nickname of the M.I. and is estimated at £1,000-1,500.

In all there are 19 works by Snaffles in the sale ranging in price from £150 -200 to £2,000-3,000.

The Sporting Sale is an annual auction of all things to do with sporting life and features paintings, prints, fishing equipment and books among other collectible objects.

**For further sale information please go to [www.bonhams.com/scotland](http://www.bonhams.com/scotland)**



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# St Andrew Square tonight



Unfortunate weather today for the start of the Under the Stars films being put on by Essential Edinburgh. We just hope it dries up tomorrow so that we can go along....maybe tomorrow...

Here is what's on this weekend:-

[Under the Stars 2012](#)

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## **Greens worried by delays to community council elections**

✖ Edinburgh Greens have expressed their dismay at a year-long



delay in elections to the city's community councils, arguing that there is urgent need to respect their role and engage more people in community decision-making.

Community councils were told by The City of Edinburgh Council that elections due to be held this autumn must be delayed to October 2013. This is particularly bad news for those areas needing a fresh start, such as the Southside, where the community council was disbanded last year.

The Greens pledged in their election manifesto to engage more of the public in local democracy by devolving more Council spending to community bodies, following a review of the workings of Community Councils and Neighbourhood Partnerships.

They have also pledged to follow up the success of the feith Decides programme to ensure around £10 million, or 1% of the council budget is spent via participatory budgeting.

Councillor Steve Burgess, Green councillor for Southside / Newington Ward said:-

"Our community councils should have a vital role in making local decisions and holding the Council to account. I'm dismayed that because of a technicality, elections have been delayed for a whole year and I'm worried that the process of reinvigorating community councils will stall. The Council needs to revise speedily the scheme for Community Councils.

"A lot of very dedicated people put their time and energy into making them work. We need to build on that as an asset and broaden it. I want the Council to set out a clear plan and timescale so that when elections are held in 2013, there is a proper campaign to get people involved and we don't waste further time."

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# Changeworks holding a Make Waste History summit



## *Enterprising Pupils Give Waste the Push*

Final preparations are underway for Changeworks' Make Waste History Summit, 19 June 2012, bringing together 50 pupils and 12 teachers from Edinburgh secondary schools to put the lid on waste.


This year's summit being held in Portobello aims to give pupils skills, inspiration and ideas to creatively crack Waste Minimisation, one of the Eco Schools Green Flag topics. Workshops for pupils and teachers cover practical topics, such as **how to be a social reporter**, carrying out a **waste audit to action** and what you need for a successful **eco committee**.

Ownership of a school's green activities is for the most part in the hands of eco team pupils. The Summit promotes behaviours to produce good results: being proactive, decision making, solutions orientated and taking action. Portobello High School is this year's Summit host and particularly fitting as they're celebrating their 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of being awarded the Eco Schools Green Flag.

**Sophie Bigg**, Geography teacher and Eco Schools Co-ordinator said:- "Pupils were saying to me just today that it's great to have such a high profile event like the Waste Summit happening at the school.


"We've found tackling waste very difficult for a large schools like ours. Shock tactics can work but you also need new ideas and inspiration. For us, sharing good practice is the best part. We get to meet with other people with similar struggles

and hear how they've overcome eco challenges. Valuable and sustainable campaigns can come out of big events such as the Summit. We're particularly proud that delegates from our link school in Kenya will be here to take part. They're here as part of our work on Citizenship and sustainability is part of that. It's a fantastic way for them to see what we do to tackle waste in Scotland."

 Photos Helen Pugh

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## Royal Blind fundraisers have their feet back on the ground

 Royal Blind are very grateful to their twelve brave supporters who spent last Sunday abseiling 165 feet off the Forth Rail Bridge at South Queensferry.

A spokesman said:-" Our wonderful supporters, who clearly have a head for heights, raised much needed funds for Royal Blind and its services. Well done and THANK YOU!"

Royal Blind are delighted to announce that they have secured a limited number of spaces for the next Forth Bridge Abseil which is taking place on Sunday 21st October 2012. This event is open to anyone over the age of 16, no previous experience is necessary, all abseil equipment will be provided and an instruction session will be given prior to your descent.

If you are interested in being part of this very special event please contact the Marketing & Fundraising Team on 0131 229 1456 or e-mail [events@royalblind.org](mailto:events@royalblind.org) for more information about how to register.

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# First Aid for Fairies to be launched at Lorne Primary School – and a Competition for you!



Pupils at Lorne Primary School in Edinburgh will help Scottish children's author Lari Don launch the final book in her award-winning First Aid for Fairies children's fantasy series next week, but meantime we have a competition for you! (See below)

The pupils of Lorne Primary School are big fans of the series and will celebrate the publication of the last book, Maze Running and Other Magical Missions, by creating artwork based on their favourite fabled beast characters.

The popular series, in which a group of mythical beasts (including a selkie, a centaur, a dragon and a phoenix) take part in adventures all over Scotland, began with Lari Don's debut novel First Aid for Fairies and Other Fabled Beasts, winner of a Royal Mail Award for Scottish Children's Books.

 Lari explains why she's returning to Lorne Primary to launch the book: "The pupils at Lorne know my fabled beasts almost as well as I do, and have created pictures of their favourite characters from the books to mark the end of the series. Lorne Primary is the perfect school to launch this last book, because they have a phoenix as their school badge, so this feels like Catesby the phoenix's school!"

All four books in the First Aid for Fairies series are set in real-life locations throughout the country from the Borders to Orkney. Last year Lari launched the Set the Scene Competition for primary school pupils to suggest locations to be used in Maze Running and Other Magicial Missions. The book's heart-stopping opening takes place in the maze at Traquair House in the Borders, as suggested by competition winner Emily Wright, where one of the series' main characters is almost fatally injured.

Ending the First Aid for Fairies series, which has spanned four books and taken more than 5 years to write, is a difficult process for Lari and some of the books' readers. The first book in the series was Lari's debut novel and Maze Running will be her 11th book. "It was a hard decision to end the series after four adventures, because I've had such great feedback from readers about these characters and this world," she explains. "But the characters have grown up so much over the four books that if I kept writing about them, I'd be writing about teenagers, which would be a different kind of book entirely! Also, I have a lot of other ideas I want to explore. Saying goodbye to Helen, Yann and the other fabled beasts is very sad, but I hope readers will keep enjoying these books, and that they will also enjoy whatever I write next!"

Lari will be visiting Primary 5 and 6 classes at Lorne Primary School on Tuesday 19th June, to see their artwork and read to them from Maze Running and Other Magicial Missions.

Lari has worked in politics and broadcasting, but is now a full-time writer. She grew up in the north-east of Scotland, and lives in Edinburgh. She is the author of the First Aid for Fairies series and Rocking Horse War for older children, as well as three picture books for younger readers, The Big Bottom Hunt, How to Make a Heron Happy, and Orange Juice Peas. For more information visit [www.laridon.co.uk](http://www.laridon.co.uk)

**The Edinburgh Reporter** competition to win a set of signed books written by Lari Don launches today. The question you have to answer is this:-

**How many books are there in Lari Don's First Aid for Fairies series?**

- a) three
- b) four
- c) six

Please email your entry to **theedinburghreporter@gmail.com** with First Aid for Fairies in the Subject line and please include your contact details so that the publisher can send you the prize. Entries must be received by us by 12 noon on Friday 22 June 2012. Winners will be notified by email.

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## **Big Bubbly Events at Espionage**



**New Tantalising Table Packages Launched at Espionage**  
– Try Cocktails & Cupcakes to Champers & Canapés

Calling all social summer butterflies who love delicious drinks, fantastic food and a great night out with their best mates! Espionage, one of the top bar and nightclub venues in the heart of Edinburgh's city centre has launched a range of tantalising table packages. There's everything from 'Very Bubbly' (champagne and strawberries – perfect for getting in

the mood for Wimbledon!) to 'Very Italiano' (beer and pizza).

The table packages are a fantastic option for birthday parties, stag or hen dos or just a good old knees up with your friends. Everything is brought to your table, so it's nice and easy for you and your friends.



There are seven different table packages, with prices starting from £9 each for the 'Very Italiano' (beer and pizza) up to £28.33 each for 'Very Posh' (a bottle of Veuve Clicquot, bottle of spirit and canapés).

### **There's also (based on six people)**

Very Mex – Nachos and tequila – £110

Very Sweet – Cocktails and cupcakes – £60

Very Posh – Veuve Clicquot champagne, bottle of spirit of your choice and canapés – £170

Very Bubbly – Moët & Chandon Rosé Champagne & Strawberries – £115

 To book call 0131 477 7007, email [edinburgh@espionage007.co.uk](mailto:edinburgh@espionage007.co.uk) or come in for a chat.

For more information on Espionage, go to [www.espionage007.co.uk](http://www.espionage007.co.uk).

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# **Missing person appeal moves**

# to Blackpool

✖ Police from Edinburgh are today making a fresh appeal in Blackpool for information regarding a missing woman who is believed to be in the area.

Thirty-year-old Laura Gorrie has not been in touch with friends or family since she was reported missing from her home in Edinburgh on 22nd May; concerns are growing for her welfare as she suffers from diabetes and is required to take medication regularly.

Laura was seen boarding a bus from Edinburgh to Glasgow on the 22nd May, and was last seen getting on a train to Blackpool later the same day.

She is described as being 5ft 8ins tall, heavy build, with long brown hair, and was wearing glasses.

When she was last seen she was wearing blue jeans, a red jacket and black trainers with white soles, and was carrying a Burberry-style bag.

Detective Constable David Robertson, who is making inquiries in Blackpool, said: "It's more than three weeks since Laura was in touch with any of her friends and family so we're starting to grow concerned for her welfare.

"I would like to appeal directly to Laura to let her know she's not in any trouble, we just want to make sure she's safe and well and taking her diabetes medication.

"Furthermore, we would ask for people in the Blackpool area to let us know if they have seen her recently, or if they have any information regarding her whereabouts. They can contact their local police station, or get in touch with us direct on 0131 311 3131.

"We know Laura likes going to amusement arcades so we would




ask people in the arcades in Blackpool to look at the photographs we have released and keep an eye out for her. Greggs the baker is also one of her favourite shops, so we would also ask people to look out for her there.”

Anyone with any information should contact Lothian and Borders Police on 0131 311 3131, or the charity Crimestoppers in confidence and complete anonymity on 0800 555 111.

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## **Exhibition of world class photojournalism at Holyrood this summer**

 *World Press Photo exhibition returns to Parliament in summer*

The very best of international photojournalism returns to the Scottish Parliament in July when the World Press Photo (WPP) winners will be on display in the Main Hall. Award winning photographer Ilvy Njiokiktjien will also give a free public lecture about her work.

Edinburgh is the first UK venue for the travelling exhibition which showcases the winning entries in all nine themed categories. From the overall WPP winning photo featuring a Yemeni mother in burqa cradling her injured son, to the iron man world championships, child brides and a cliff-climbing polar bear, WPP captures world conflict, sport, nature and daily life in a powerful exhibition.

Scottish Parliament Presiding Officer, Tricia Marwick MSP said:-

“The World Press Photo exhibition shines a light on people and events across the globe capturing, through striking images, how headline news has affected the lives of ordinary people.

“Many of the images deal with war and conflict and are a powerful reminder of how fortunate we are in Scotland where debate relies on words not weapons.

“The exhibition also reminds us of the risks taken by photojournalists to capture these images. The exhibition features the work of French photographer Rémi Ochlik, whose series on the conflict in Libya won the General News category. He was killed earlier this year when a shell hit the building where he and other journalists were working in Homs, Syria.”

The World Press Photo exhibition will be on display in Parliament’s Main Hall from Thursday 5 July to Saturday July 28, Open Late on Thursdays. Entrance is free.

Now in its 55th year, the annual World Press Photo Contest is the world’s leading international contest for photojournalists, setting the standard for the profession. The judging is conducted at the World Press Photo office, in The Netherlands.

The contest draws entries by professional press photographers, photojournalists and documentary photographers from across the world, with 5,247 photographers from 124 countries participating this year with 101,254 pictures submitted by the mid-January deadline.

The jury gave prizes in nine themed categories to 57 photographers of 24 nationalities from: Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, China, Denmark, France, Germany, India, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the USA.

With around 100 local exhibitions produced every year, the

World Press Photo exhibition tour of prize-winning photographs is the most popular traveling photo event in the world.

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## School meals in Edinburgh



There is a Twitter debate raging today, some of which you will see on our Twitter feed on the right hand side, after the ruling by Argyll and Bute Council to stop a 9 year-old blogger called [VEG](#) (otherwise Martha) from taking her camera to school to photograph her £2 school meal for her blog. The blog has had over 2 million hits and has raised funds for the charity Mary's Meals.

There are very good and well-researched articles on [Edinburgh Eye](#) and [Paul Clarke Photography](#), among many others, which will give you a more detailed view on the ins and outs of the whole matter. Our point is not to rerun the arguments here either for or against freedom of photographers, schools' policies on photography, the quality of school meals or indeed Argyll and Bute's own PR strategy which has resulted in this statement this morning:-

*Argyll and Bute Council wholly refutes the unwarranted attacks on its schools catering service which culminated in national press headlines which have led catering staff to fear for their jobs. The Council has directly avoided any criticism of anyone involved in the 'never seconds' blog for obvious reasons despite a strongly held view that the information presented in it misrepresented the options and choices available to pupils however this escalation means we*

had to act to protect staff from the distress and harm it was causing. In particular, the photographic images uploaded appear to only represent a fraction of the choices available to pupils, so a decision has been made by the council to stop photos being taken in the school canteen.

There have been discussions between senior council staff and Martha's father however, despite an acknowledgement that the media coverage has produced these unwarranted attacks, he intimated that he would continue with the blog.

The council has had no complaints for the last two years about the quality of school meals other than one from the Payne family received on 6 June and there have been no changes to the service on offer since the introduction of the blog.

Pupils have a daily choice of two meals from a menu which is designed with pupils, parents and teachers. Our summer menu is about to be launched and includes main course choices like meat or vegetarian lasagne served with carrots and garlic bread or chicken pie with puff pastry, mashed potato and mixed vegetables.

Pupils can choose from at least two meals every day. They pay £2 for two courses and this could be a starter and a main or a main and a desert. Each meal comes with milk or water. Pupils can have as much salad and bread as they want. Salad, vegetables, fruit, yoghurt and cheese options are available every day. These are standing options and are not a result of any changes in response to the blog site.

As part of the curriculum for excellence, pupils in all our schools are regularly taught about healthy eating and at lunch breaks staff encourage pupils to make good choices from what is on offer. We use a system called 'Nutmeg' to make sure everything is nutritionally balanced. Our staff also get nutrition awareness training so they know how to provide a

*good healthy meal. There is portion sized guidance which we adhere to and it is matched to the age of the child so they get the right amount of food. Second portions would mean too many calories for pupils.*

*In Lochgilphead Primary School we are piloting a new pre-ordering scheme which is designed to encourage class discussion around meal choices and also improves the accuracy of meal choices. The pupils use a touch screen to select their lunch option and the data is downloaded in the kitchen so they know how many portions of each meal are required. As they place their order, the pupils are given a coloured band which relates to their meal choice that day. They wear it during the morning, and at lunchtime they hand it to the catering assistant, who will give them the corresponding meal.*

*The council's focus is now on supporting the school in the education of young people in Argyll and Bute.*

But it did lead us to wonder what information there is about meals being served up in our Edinburgh schools. And perhaps part of the reason for the blog, which we have read since it started, was to highlight the quantity and quality of the meals being served, which of course we are unable to comment on. What do your children think of their school meals in Edinburgh?

It turns out that there is a menu published online for all Edinburgh and Midlothian schools. Here they are:-

School meals in Edinburgh are charged at £1.75 per day. Most Primary Schools in Edinburgh will be eating from this one today. Since it is Friday most children in Edinburgh today will have a choice of tuna, cheese or egg rolls with pudding, cookie, fruit and milk or milkshake:-

Amey supply school meals to Broomhouse, Castlevue, Craigour Park, Craigroyston, Forthview, Oxbgangs, Pirniehall, St David's RC, St Joseph's RC and St Peter's RC Primary Schools from this menu here:-

[Amey Final Menu 2012](#)

And Mitie provide school meals for two of our primary schools, Bonaly and Juniper Green Primary Schools from this menu:-


[Mitie\\_menu\\_2012\\_\\_4\\_](#)

Meanwhile in Midlothian they choose from this menu here:-

[Midlothian Menu A4Jan12](#)

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# Five things you need to know today

 **Guide Dogs need protection – World Blood Donor Day – Live Webchat with Lothian and Borders Police – Under the Stars in St Andrew Square – Fringe by the Sea**

Edinburgh East MP Sheila Gilmore has supported the campaign to stop attacks on guide dogs, and attended a reception at the Houses of Parliament this week. The Edinburgh East MP was amongst the 150 Members of Parliament that backed the charity's call.

New figures that were released on Monday, 11 June 2012, showed attacks on guide dogs are at an all time high and now running at an average of eight a month. Guide Dogs held the reception to highlight the charity's growing concern about attacks on

guide dogs by other dogs and to ask MPs for their support.

The government is currently consulting compulsory microchipping but has said its preferred option is to microchip puppies only. Under this plan, it would take 10 to 15 years before all dogs are microchipped. Guide Dogs believes it would take too long to have an impact and wants to see the compulsory microchipping of all dogs within two years.

Guide Dogs sees the compulsory microchipping of all dogs as a vital first step towards reducing the number of attacks, but believes the Government should go further.

Sheila Gilmore said:-*"Action needs to be taken to protect guide dogs and their owners from irresponsible dog owners. Microchipping is one step that would make a real difference."*

David Cowdrey, Guide Dogs' Campaigns Manager, said:-*"An attack on any dog is frightening, but for a guide dog owner it is much worse. With more than eight reported attacks on guide dogs a month, the trauma caused by these unprovoked attacks could leave a blind or partially sighted person a virtual prisoner in their own home."*

*"We welcome Sheila Gilmore's support for our campaign, and ultimately we want the law changed so an attack on an assistance dog is treated as seriously as an attack on a person."*

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Mike Crockart, Edinburgh's Liberal Democrat MP, is supporting World Blood Donor Day.

Mike will be giving blood on Friday at 11.00am at the Edinburgh Donor Centre in Lauriston Place. The MP has also tabled an Early Day Motion welcoming National Blood Week and World Blood Donor Day.

Commenting ahead of giving his donation, Mike said:

"Each summer sees a reduction in blood donations of up to 20%. The message to everyone this year, whether travelling abroad on holiday or enjoying the celebrations at home, is 'Give Before You Go'. In the run-up to the London Olympics, British blood stocks need to be built up by an extra 30% in preparation for the additional visitors we will welcome to the UK for this summer's events. I am doing my little bit to help by visiting the Edinburgh Donor Centre and I would encourage others to do the same".

For more information about giving blood in your area visit [www.blood.co.uk](http://www.blood.co.uk)

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We are running a live web chat over lunchtime this coming Tuesday 19 June 2012 with Chief Inspector Murray Dykes about policing in the West Neighbourhood area, but he will take some general questions too as long as they are not about live criminal cases. Join us on Tuesday but send us your questions now! You will [find us here](#) on Tuesday morning, and you can join in on Twitter. The hashtag is #AskLBP.

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We rather fancy Back to the Future tonight in St Andrew Square although we might all have to get our winter woolies and waterproofs out again...But there are also films on from 12 noon today. (The Ladykillers!) [More details here.](#)

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News today from Fringe by the Sea...





Fringe by the Sea 2012 is nearly here !  
we're about to go live!

On Friday 15th June the official website,  
at [www.fringebythesea.com](http://www.fringebythesea.com) will be up and running and on  
Friday 22nd June the printed programme will hit the streets.  
**Tickets will go on general sale on Friday 22nd June in two  
places.**

1. Online through our website
2. From the Fringe by the Sea office at 43e Melbourne Place,  
North Berwick, at the east end of the High St, in the big car  
park!

The office will open 10am – 6pm Mon. – Sat. and 12noon – 4pm  
on Sundays. Phone 01620 890 787

*We may not be able to accept credit or debit cards, so  
please bring cheques or cash.*

**But....** subscribers can buy them two days earlier, from  
**12 noon on Wednesday 20th June.**

Just sidle into our office in North Berwick and say the word  
“Skiffle”, or go online, choose the event you want and when  
prompted enter the word SKIFFLE.

Then you are well on the way to a great fun week!

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## Legionnaire's outbreak

A further death linked to the outbreak of Legionnaires' disease in Edinburgh was confirmed last night.

A man with significant pre-existing underlying health conditions died last night in Edinburgh Royal Infirmary.

Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing Nicola Sturgeon said:-

“My sincere condolences go to the family and friends of the

patient who passed away in Edinburgh tonight in a case linked to the outbreak of Legionnaires' disease in the city. My thoughts are with them at this very difficult time.

"Despite this sad and tragic development, it remains the case that we believe the outbreak to have peaked. However, we continue to monitor the situation carefully and advise anyone with any concerns to contact the special NHS 24 helpline on **08000 85 85 31**.

"The Health and Safety Executive and Edinburgh City Council are continuing to make progress in their investigations into the possible source of the outbreak."

Dr Duncan McCormick, Chair of the Incident Management Team and Consultant in Public Health Medicine at NHS Lothian, said:-

"Whilst we realised that further deaths were a possibility this additional death is extremely sad and I would like to express my sincere condolences to the family of the patient."

There is a [page on the NHS Lothian website](#) with full information on Legionnaire's disease symptoms.

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## Musselburgh Ladies Day today



If the weather forecast is correct there will be as many brollies as bottles of bubbly on show at Musselburgh's Jenners & Frasers Ladies Day today but it will take more than a spot of rain to dull the enthusiasm of a 9000 capacity crowd.

The East Lothian track is celebrating its eighth successive sell out for this ever popular fixture and Grand National winning rider turned successful flat race jockey Graham Lee could prove a big with the ladies. Lee rode plenty of winners for Jim Goldie over the jumps and has already extended that profitable association on the level, so he will be a warm order to land the £12,000 HBJ Employment Solutions Ladies Day Cup (4.00) on the Goldie-trained Jonny Delta.

This promising stayer won a similar race on Scottish Champions Day at Musselburgh last autumn and made an encouraging reappearance over a slightly shorter trip at Hamilton last month. Jonny Delta will be seen to better advantage over today's 1m 6f and is narrowly preferred to Philip Kirby's five time course winner Amazing King. Graham Lee can initiate his winning double on Lean On Pete in the 1m £8,000 HBJ Claims Solutions Handicap (2.20). Trained by Ollie Pears, Lean On Pete was sent to the front too early when gambled on to score at Wolverhampton last time out and was caught close home. Lee has been booked to take the ride today and can be relied upon to get the fractions right over this shorter distance.

With the Jenners & Frasers Handicap Stakes divided, Musselburgh now has eight races with the first moving forward to 1.20pm, gates open at 11am.

Musselburgh Racecourse commercial manager, Karen Taylor, said regardless of the conditions the course was set for another successful Ladies Day. She said: "When the Olympic Torch visited Musselburgh yesterday (Thurs) we were bathed in glorious sunshine and we hope there is some left over for our Ladies Day. The forecast is not what we hoped for and race goers should come prepared but nonetheless we are sure it will

be another great day of racing and fashion. With a 7000 attendance at the Edinburgh Cup, 9000 today and our next meeting on 29 June, we will have pulled in around 20,000 race goers in June and that is a great achievement by any standards.”

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## Olympic flame relay hits Edinburgh in style!



On day 26 of the national relay which has seen the Olympic flame go literally from Land's End to Shetland and ending in London at the start of the 2012 Olympics, the torch and the flame stopped off in Edinburgh after a tour of Scotland, and Edinburgh can be proud to say we bade a very Scottish farewell to the flame, even the weather came out to support the greatest show on earth.



The flame will pass through Musselburgh and the borders tomorrow before re-entering England en route ultimately to the Olympic opening ceremony in London. It is part of one of the most comprehensive tours the flame has undergone, with organisers boasting that 95% of Britain's people were within an hours journey of the flame. The flame was carried in its final leg up to the castle by Lesley Forrest.



The streets were lined with people from around 5pm until the flame arrived at around 7:20 for a full reception at the castle, the location where the Edinburgh Tattoo is usually

held. Over 6,000 free tickets were given away for the event at the castle but many more lined the streets, windows and rooftops along the route.



The sunshine and the massive turnout added to the festival atmosphere on George IV bridge and Castle Hill, with people drinking and talking jovially. Flags were waving all along the route, satires greatly outnumbering Union flags, this reporter also glimpsed French and Brazilian colours flying for the flame. The international appeal of the flame and the Olympics is something Paul Deighton, chief executive of the London Olympics Organising Committee was keen to state, saying that the Olympics was a rare opportunity to show the world what Britain can do, both in the arena and in bringing people to the streets.



With the sun burning down on the spectacular castle venue, the crowds were whipped into excitement before the arrival of the flame by a series of entertainers and festivities including Glasgow chart-topper Emeli Sande. Allan Wells, Olympic 100 metres gold medallist in Moscow 1980 said that the excitement brought to Edinburgh with the flame was encouraging, and hopes the Olympic spirit inspires a generation of Brits to take up sport.



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## Happy Birthday Hard Rock!

 Today marks the 41st birthday of the famous Hard Rock Cafe,

born in 1971 in London there are now Hard Rock Cafes Hotels and Casinos all over the world.

The Reporter visited the George Street branch in Edinburgh today to join in the celebrations, with a fantastic balloon arch to welcome guests and all the staff dressed in 70s clothing, they really know how to put on a party in the George Street Cafe.

The very first Hard Rock Cafe opened its doors to the public on 14 June 1971, in London. Founded by Isaac Tigrett and Peter Morton, two music-loving Americans, Hard Rock Cafe was an instant classic, attracting droves of customers with its first-rate, but moderately priced, casual American fare, warm service and ever-present rock 'n' roll music and sensibility.

From Burgers to Fish and Chips, and a great kids' menu to choose from today's visit was well worth battling the traffic in Edinburgh to get to.

And of course Hard Rock Cafe was the scene earlier this year of The Asps winning the Scottish heat of Hard Rock Rising 2012 Battle of the Bands.

We have an interview with Lesley Ross who is Sales and Marketing Manager for Hard Rock Cafe here in the capital and she told us what was in store for guests both today and over the next few weeks.

This interview was done in the Hard Rock Cafe just after Barry had demolished what he called the 'awesome' Local Legendary Burger.....!

[Interview with Lesley Ross](#) by [Basher1969](#) on [Mixcloud](#)

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# Today at Holyrood



*Several of our Edinburgh MSPs were in good voice today at Holyrood.*

First of all at General Questions this morning, we heard Colin Beattie SNP member of the Scottish Parliament for Midlothian North and Musselburgh, ask when the Sheriffhall roundabout will be redeveloped, to which the Minister for Infrastructure and Capital Investment, Alex Neil, replied that with the 30% cut in budget offered by the Westminster Government affordability of such a plan has been made difficult.

Alison Johnstone, Lothians Green MSP, asked how many of The Scottish Executive's employees have their salaries paid 'off-payroll'. The Finance Secretary John Swinney answered that there were 20 people identified but that they had all been paid less than £2,000 per annum. He said that tax avoidance is important and there was no real need to take any action.

Colin Keir, SNP MSP for Edinburgh West, asked about the social and economic impact of Community Hubs which are paid for by the Scottish Futures Trust, and highlighted the glowing example set by the Drumbrae Hub which has just welcomed 55,500 visitors through its doors since it opened earlier this year. Alex Neil confirmed that £1.4bn will be spent on similar hubs over the next 10 years.

Malcolm Chisholm, Labour MSP for Edinburgh North and Leith, enquired about the delay in procuring the North East Health Centre planned for his constituency which the Minister explained was due to the delay in getting agreement in detail among the parties. [The Edinburgh Evening News](#) had an article on Monday about the progress of various Health Centres and it seems to be an area where getting agreement or forward movement is proving difficult.

Then at First Minister's Questions, first of all a question on suicide by Marco Biagi, SNP MSP for Central Edinburgh. The MSP urged action from the First Minister after highlighting the disparity in suicide rates in Scots than compared to those living in the rest of the UK, based on research published this week by academics from the Universities of Edinburgh and Manchester.

Mr Biagi highlighted the need to target those in society at risk before individuals take their own lives and highlighted the high rates of suicide in those with mental health conditions, and he said afterwards:- "It's clear from the research that alcohol and drug misuse rates in Scotland are major causes of our higher suicide rate, and the Scottish Government is already taking strong action in these areas.

"The high rate of suicide in Scotland in those with mental health problems such as depression is also a real concern. It is an alarming statistic that 11.3% of Scottish adults are currently prescribed antidepressants, higher rates than in England or the USA. While prescription drugs play a crucial role in helping treat depression and other mental health issues it is key that the right balance is given to other forms of treatment and support. I welcome the moves made by the Scottish Government to examine how this balance is achieved in the forthcoming Scottish Mental Health Strategy."

The First Minister was very sympathetic to the idea being promoted by Marco Biagi, but Labour's Kezia Dugdale MSP came off rather worse when she asked the First Minister to clarify how many new jobs have been created as a result of the modern apprenticeship programme. The First Minister was quick to point out that as at 31 March there were over 35,000 Modern Apprenticeships of which almost 22,000 were aged between 16 & 19. When Ms Dugdale pressed him on the number of these which were simply given to people in work rather than genuine unemployed persons, Mr Salmond reminded her that the rules on these apprenticeships have not been changed since her party



was in charge of the Scottish Government, and that it was intended for those who were either employed or unemployed. He also explained that the number of modern apprenticeships have doubled since 2007 when the SNP came to power.

After lunch Sarah Boyack, Labour Lothians MSP, mentioned the Fountainbridge Canal Initiative to the Environment Minister, Richard Lochhead, as an example of good practice in the way to promote and develop canal use, and finally Malcolm Chisholm asked another question, this time about the number of complaints regarding the Seafield Stench at the Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works. The answer was that SEPA had dealt with one complaint, Scottish Water 21 and The City of Edinburgh Council 243. The Minister explained that the problem in March this year had been brought about by dry weather during the winter.

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## **Transport Convenor Lesley Hinds in conversation with The Edinburgh Reporter**



The Reporter met up with New Transport Convenor, Councillor Lesley Hinds to find out what she is planning to do with our city's streets. We jumped on a bus with this experienced councillor and talked about potholes, road markings, cycling, a proposed Transport Forum and...of course, trams. Now that the SNP group have agreed to moving the trams project forward, will they be delivered on time and within the revised budget?

Have a listen and please let us have your comments below.

[listen to 'Transport Convenor Councillor Lesley Hinds' on Audioboo](#)

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## **Boroughmuir High School to stay in Fountainbridge**

✖ The results of a consultation on the future of Boroughmuir High School show there is majority support for a new build in the Fountainbridge area of the city.

The City of Edinburgh Council published the [figures](#) last week ahead of a full Council meeting on 28 June 2012 to discuss the next steps for the project.

Local community groups, individuals and pupils took part in the consultation with 86% of those who expressed a preference choosing the option to build a new school in this location. The other option, to refurbish and extend the existing building at Viewforth, was supported by 14% of those who expressed a preference.

Participants were asked to consider the educational merits of both options after the Fountainbridge site was bought by the Council from Lloyds Banking Group in December 2011. The Fountainbridge site is the Council's preferred location for the school and it is expected that it will form part of the wider development of the canal side and an exciting new vision for the area.

A series of public meetings took place and people were also encouraged to submit their views via email and post.

Education Convener, Councillor Paul Godzik, said:- "I welcome the results of the consultation and am pleased that so many people took part. Both options to redevelop the school were valid, but on balance I do agree with the conclusion that the Fountainbridge site is the best option for the new Boroughmuir High School.

"Pupils and parents have waited so long for progress on this matter. I am delighted the focus now is on delivering a new school that is equipped to deliver the highest standard of education in a first-class learning environment.

"I look forward to working with teachers, pupils and parents in the months ahead, and also for the new school forming a key part of the overall regeneration of the area."Plans will now be drawn up by Allan Murray Architects and work is expected to start on the new Boroughmuir High School in summer 2014. The expected completion date is summer 2016.

Council approval to consult on two options for the future development of Boroughmuir High School was given in November 2011. The consultation period ran from 20 February to 30 March 2012 and four public meetings were held between 5 and 14 March.

A total of 180 representations were received from 177 groups and mostly individuals (3 individuals submitted two responses).Of the 177 respondees, 152 expressed a distinct preference with 131 (86%) being for new build on the Fountainbridge site and 21 (14%) for refurbishment of the existing building.

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# Opinion – Community Councils – do they really work?

by Sean Watters

## Community Councils: Representing their communities?

There has been much talk in the air recently of local democracy and empowering communities; Reform Scotland have published a report on [Renewing Local Government](#); the Jimmy Reid Foundation have produced [The Silent Crisis](#); the author and campaigner Andy Wightman has launched a [Campaign for Real Local Government](#); and the new City of Edinburgh Council administration is talking of handing back powers to a more local level.

In all of this Community Councils are sometimes mentioned, on occasion as being symptomatic of a problem but at other times as a possible route to reinvigorating local democracy. However, if we are to go down that route a hard look needs to be taken at how Community Councils currently operate.

There are 43 Community Councils in Edinburgh. At the last round of elections in 2009, not a single election actually took place. Nowhere were there more candidates than places, and so no elections were triggered. That has to raise concerns about accountability and legitimacy.

There is an argument that by giving Community Councils more powers people will take more interest in them and participation will increase. But if power is simply passed over to Community Councils as they currently operate, then that could lead to a diminishing of democratic accountability, because there are large question marks as to how well Community Councils are currently performing their duties.

That's not to say that Community Councils don't do good

things. Community Councillors are well intentioned people, who care about their communities, and give up their time to that end. But when you look at the rules and the guidance on Community Councils, what's clear is that the core duty is consultation. They exist to act as the voice of the community, but to do that you first have to find out what the community wishes to say. And for too many Community Councils meaningful consultation with the communities they serve is minimal. Yes they have limited resources, and as volunteers there are constraints of time, but in today's world of electronic and social media consultation doesn't have to be onerous. Yet many Community Councils remain resistant to it.

However, there's another side to this, because whatever deficiencies exist within the function of Community Councils aren't simply down to Community Councils themselves. It's in large measure down to a failure of Local Authorities to take Community Councils seriously.

In the City of Edinburgh's Scheme for Community Councils there is the following provision;

*"Community councils should engage widely with their local communities to represent their views on the Neighbourhood Partnerships. It is essential that these views are demonstrated to be representative of the community and, accordingly, the community council will have in place recognised consultative mechanisms to validate their views; and devise strategies to secure greater involvement by all sectors of the community."*

A laudable statement of intent that, unfortunately, is simply nonsense.

Has anyone at City of Edinburgh Council ever asked any Community Council to demonstrate that the views they're expressing are representative of the community?

Have Community Councils ever been asked to report on the

consultative mechanisms they have used? To provide some evidence that they are indeed accurately reflecting what their community thinks?

Has anyone at City of Edinburgh Council ever conducted an audit or review of Community Councils to assess how well they are fulfilling their functions and following the guidance they are issued with?

The answer to all the above questions is no.

Performance monitoring and evaluation is fairly standard practice these days, certainly within many departments of the Council. So why not when it comes to Community Councils?

Because the City of Edinburgh Council doesn't take Community Councils seriously enough to bother.

Certainly they'll protest that that isn't the case, and that they take the role of Community Councils very seriously indeed, but if they did they'd take some interest in how effectively they were operating. They don't. The Council's attitude to Community Councils is revealed by their actions, not their words.

As previously stated Community Councils do good things, and the individuals who volunteer are conscientious and well meaning. So certainly Community Councils could provide a useful platform to build from. But if there is a concern about the state of local democracy, before we look to another reorganisation of Local Government or devolving powers to arbitrarily defined communities, we could first take the simple step of trying to ensure that Community Councils are actually performing the duties they're supposed to be performing.

That is finding out what their communities think, and accurately reflecting that.

Sean Watters is Chair of Portobello for a New School (PFANS). He also represents Towerbank Parents Council at Portobello Community Council meetings and you can follow him on [Twitter](#).

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## Save the Children open new shop in Morningside

✖ *Charity need staff for their new shop in Morningside*

Save the Children are opening their fourth shop in Edinburgh this Saturday in Morningside Road.

The charity is appealing to local people to help run the new shop and to donate items that can be sold to raise money for Save the Children's work around the world.

Alison Byers, Save the Children Retail Regional Manager, said:-

"We're really excited to be opening a new shop in Morningside and we had a great response to our appeal for volunteers last month.

"All of our shops are run entirely by volunteers so we still need a few more people to add to our team.

"Working in our shops is really fun as the jobs vary from pricing stock to creating eye-catching window displays to finding treasures amongst the donations and even promoting our wider campaigns to customers. We'd also love to receive any

stock donations people can make to the shop. This can be clothes, books, toys or household items."

Anyone interested in volunteering at the new Save the Children shop can get more information by dropping in at 390 Morningside Road or contacting Alison Byers on 07826 859 127 or [a.byers@savethechildren.org.uk](mailto:a.byers@savethechildren.org.uk)

Photo © SANDY YOUNG 07970 268944

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## Bowling marathon in Balerno

After months of preparation involving help from many friends in and around Balerno Bowling Club Ross Young and Grant Wilson kicked off on their 24hr Bowlathon on Saturday 9th June at 1pm! The game which was **Team Young v Team Wilson** played continually for the full 24hrs, achieving what they set out to do.

They raised just short of £2,000 which will be split between the Special Care Baby Unit at St John's Hospital, Livingston and the Edinburgh Transplant Unit and Games Team.

Ross Young who is a co-founder of the Bowlathon has chosen The Edinburgh Transplant Unit/Team after being diagnosed in August 2005 with Polycystic Kidney Disease.

Ross said:- *"Since 2005 I have been treated with medication then dialysis and lucky enough to receive my transplant on 18th Nov 2010. I now participates in the British Transplant Games travelling Britain each year to help raise awareness for the need of organ donation. From my personal experience and other like me it is obviously life changing for myself and my*



*family and friends. Both my young sons have the start of Polycystic kidneys however this shouldn't affect them if it does at all until adulthood. So raising awareness of organ donation will always be high on my agenda as there is a high chance that later in life I will need a further transplant."*

Grant Wilson who is also a co-founder of the Bowlathon decided to opt for SCBU as his charity as his oldest son Logan was born 9 weeks premature back in June 2006. Grant said:- *"Logan who has just turned 6 is now thriving and living life to the full after his precious care from SCBU."*

Anne Blake who joined both Ross and Grant this year is delighted to be involved in such a great event to raise funds for both causes and has a special interest at heart as Claire her daughter has Liver problems and in time will need a transplant.

Gordon Macdonald MSP commented *"I was happy to support their fundraising event and visited them on Saturday afternoon to wish them every success in completing their 24 hour challenge. I'm sure all three of them are extremely tired but very happy after the success of their marathon Bowlathon"*

The boys are still collecting for both charities, so if you would like to donate please e-mail [roscoyoung@virginmedia.com](mailto:roscoyoung@virginmedia.com) or contact him by phone 07738 699 207.

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## **Five things you need to know today**



## **Olympicmania – Legionella update – Planning committee – Dirty streets – Edinburgh Arrow**

Well Edinburgh welcomed the Olympic Torch Relay last night with gusto. Earlier in the afternoon, Lord Provost Donald Wilson had officially launched the Olympic Rings which are sitting on The Mound with the help of Alan Wells OBE who won an Olympic Gold Medal for the 100metres and a silver medal for the 200 metres at the 1980 Moscow Olympics. We have several articles all with photos from around the Olympic Relay in and just outside Edinburgh from last night and this morning. We hope you like them. Edinburgh author Alexander McCall Smith wrote an article in yesterday's [Guardian Writers' Relay](#) welcoming the torch to the capital.

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The latest reports on the Edinburgh Legionnaires' outbreak show that there are two further confirmed cases of the disease.

This takes the total confirmed cases to 41. There are two fewer suspected cases, taking this total to 47.

As a result the total number of overall cases remains unchanged from yesterday at 88.

At noon yesterday, of those cases being treated in hospital 11 were in intensive care and 19 were on general wards.

A total of 18 cases are being treated in the community, 32 have been discharged from hospital and one person has died.

Seven cases are being treated outwith the NHS Lothian area. The ages of the confirmed cases ranges between 33 and 81, with more males than females affected.

NHS 24 has received 831 calls to the dedicated helpline for Legionnaires' disease.

The Health and Safety Executive and Edinburgh City Council are continuing their investigations into the possible source of the outbreak.

Health Secretary Nicola Sturgeon said:

“These numbers today again offer reassurance that the worst of the outbreak is over. The increase of confirmed cases and reduction in the suspected cases is in line with our expectations. However, there is no room for complacency and we will continue to monitor the situation very closely over the coming days.

“Investigations are continuing into the source of the outbreak and the risk to the public remains low, however anyone who is concerned should continue to contact NHS 24’s dedicated helpline on 0800 0858 531 or their GP.”

Dr Duncan McCormick, Chair of the Incident Management Team and Consultant in Public Health Medicine at NHS Lothian, said:

“I am pleased to note that there has been no increase in the number of cases in the last 24 hours and that the total number of patients affected still remains at 88. These numbers are in line with what we would expect at this stage in the outbreak.

“The number of confirmed cases has increased by two to 41 but these two patients are not new and were known to us as suspected cases.

“It is encouraging to see that the number of patients being treated in critical care has reduced and that overall more patients are recovering and being discharged home.

“Staff are continuing to do an excellent job although it seems that the number of patients presenting with symptoms or concerns is beginning to tail off which is a welcome sign.”

A further update will be issued on the latest situation and the number of cases this afternoon.

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The council planning committee meets this morning at the City Chambers. [The full agenda is here.](#) One of the reports focusses on the ten colony developments in the city which look as though they will all now be given conservation or listed status. Only five developments are listed so far.

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[STV Edinburgh](#) tell us the reaction of local residents to the cleanliness survey in Gorgie, which has been revealed as one of the dirtiest areas in the city. Do you think there is anywhere that needs a clean up? Then tell us!

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The Edinburgh Guide reports on the Edinburgh Arrow which was competed for earlier this week. Alan Alstead was the winner. [Read more here.](#) and you can have a look at the film [The Edinburgh Reporter](#) made of last year's event.

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## Edinburgh University hosting talk by human rights defender today

Dr Binayak Sen, human rights defender and former political prisoner, will today speak at an event hosted by Edinburgh

University on how his attempts to speak out on behalf of the poor led to his conviction on 'trumped up' political charges.

Dr Sen is an internationally acclaimed public health professional who has worked for over three decades with poor, indigenous and other marginalised people on issues of basic livelihood, health services and social justice in Chhattisgarh, one of the poorest states in India. An outspoken defender of the marginalised and dispossessed indigenous people of India, Dr Sen has been a fearless critic of the government and its treatment of its people.

As a result of his human rights work, Dr Sen was arrested under draconian 'anti-terror' laws in 2007 and imprisoned without bail for two years whilst awaiting trial. On Christmas Eve 2010, a local court in Chhattisgarh went on to convict and sentence Dr Sen to life imprisonment on the charge of 'Sedition'. Dr Sen was eventually granted bail by the Supreme Court of India in April 2011. The Scottish Action for the release of Binayak Sen gained momentum in 2008 and Amnesty International declared him a prisoner of conscience, leading a high profile campaign for Dr Sen, including highlighting his case at the 2009 Edinburgh Festival where thousands of Scots demanded justice for the Indian doctor.

Dr Binayak Sen will talk about his own experiences within the wider context of inequity and dispossession of the indigenous peoples.

Ahead of the event Dr Sen said:

‘Communities already affected and debilitated by chronic hunger are being robbed of their access to common property resources that have been essential to their survival. Their survival depends upon their resistance, yet this resistance is being criminalised and dubbed ‘sedition’.’

The event will be chaired by Dr. Anuj Kapilashrami, chair of the Scottish Action and Dr. Crispin Bates from the University of Edinburgh and other speakers include Richard Simpson MSP, who was a vocal supporter of Binayak Sen during Amnesty’s campaign; and Shabnum Mustapha, Programme Director for [Amnesty International Scotland](#).

Richard Simpson MSP, said:

‘As a former GP and former Justice Minister, I supported the campaign for the release of Dr Binayak Sen. The role of a doctor is to help their patients; Dr Sen went further and chose to work with marginalised rural communities who weren’t receiving proper healthcare and challenged the discrimination and injustice his patients and their communities were facing and continue to face. I applaud the work Dr Sen has been doing and congratulate him on receiving the Gandhi Foundation peace award.’

Shabnum Mustapha, Programme Director for Amnesty International Scotland, said:

‘I am absolutely delighted that Dr Binayak Sen is visiting Edinburgh – a city which showed its support for his case through the thousands of petitions the public signed. As a

former Amnesty Prisoner of Conscience, Dr Sen is a man who has shown immense courage and determination over decades, helping the poorest communities in India for which he was unjustly targeted by the state authorities. India is the world's largest democracy and should be upholding people's human rights. Invidious discrimination and unlawful killings of marginalised communities that Dr Sen was campaigning against must stop. I hope his receiving of the Gandhi Foundation peace award will reinforce that message."

Dr Sen's visit to Scotland follows his receipt of the Gandhi Foundation International peace award, at the House of Lords earlier this week (Tuesday 12th June).

The event is hosted by the Centre for South Asian Studies and Global Public Health Unit (University of Edinburgh) and supported by the Scottish Action for the release of Binayak Sen, Amnesty Scotland and Scotland Against Criminalising Communities.

Venue – Meeting Room 6, Crystal McMillan Building, 15 George Square, University of Edinburgh **at 4-6p.m**

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## **Tenants shape the future of**

# housing in the city

- ✘ Council tenants are being given the opportunity to shape the future of Edinburgh's housing services.

The launch of the [Tenant Participation Strategy 2012-2015](#) is being celebrated at a special event in the Capital tonight at 6.30p.m. in the City Chambers. The aim of the strategy is to improve the ways tenants can participate in decisions on housing and related services in their communities.

It builds on previous tenant participation events organised by the City of Edinburgh Council and the [Edinburgh Tenants Federation](#) such as the annual Tenants' Conference.

Councillor Cammy Day, Housing Leader for the City of Edinburgh Council, said: "This strategy is an open invitation to tenants to give us their views on what really matters to them. They have an important role to play in how the Council provides housing and other related services.

"It's important that tenants have a voice and this strategy gives them the opportunity. By taking part in the decision-making process they can help contribute to the development of quality housing in this city. There are undoubtedly some huge challenges ahead and we are always looking at creative and innovative ways to deliver more social and affordable housing in the city.

"With the help and support of our tenants we can be confident that future challenges will be tackled together."

Betty Stevenson, Convenor, Edinburgh Tenants Federation, said: "Volunteers from Edinburgh Tenants Federation have worked tirelessly with the Council to agree the content of the strategy and this is the culmination of a lot of hard work.

"We look forward to working with the Council to ensure there



are better housing conditions and services by involving tenants in decision making.”

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## Olympic Torch – more photos from Festival Square



Some of you were up very early to catch the sun and the last sight of the Olympic Torch as it left the Capital en route for Holyrood and Musselburgh and beyond...



