

# Five things you need to know today



## Rugby – Craft fair – Calton Centre – Portrait Gallery – Fruitmarket Gallery

Edinburgh rugby fans are being encouraged to travel to Dublin on the last weekend of this month to support Edinburgh Rugby at the Aviva stadium. Head coach, Michael Bradley, has said that a strong supporting crowd would help the team playing away from home. They will have little advantage over the Ulster team who will surely have a large travelling support. Are you going? Send us your match report by Twitter! Edinburgh lost at the RDS in Dublin last night to Leinster 54-13 in a [“sub-standard performance.”](#)

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[Market Tree Events](#) are running a craft and gift market at Cafe Camino, Little King Street today between 10 and 4. (that is behind John Lewis and next to St Mary's Cathedral)

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There is lots to do at the Calton Centre today which is holding an open day from 12.30 according to [The Edinburgh Evening News.](#)

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And at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery there is something unusual going on...

## Mrs Doig's City of Genius



Saturday 14 April

Performances at 11am, 12pm, 2pm and 3pm – each lasts 30

minutes. Suitable for all the family.

An invitation to join Georgian housewife Mrs Doig, as she reveals the gossip about life in the New Town and the characters of Enlightenment Edinburgh.

Then discover the essential etiquette required for mixing with the great scientists and philosophers, perhaps at one of David Hume's famous dinners. What is the correct way to climb aboard your carriage or drink your tea? Mrs Doig is here to help smooth your way through Edinburgh society.

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#### **Artists' BookMarket**

Saturday 14 April, 11am–6pm

Free. No booking required.

Each participant will have a stall in the upper Gallery selling their works throughout the day. Styles of books range from handmade one-off editions to skilfully reproduced photographic monographs with prices starting under £5. Artists' BookMarket is a rare opportunity to talk directly to artists about their inspiration. The programme of free talks and workshops throughout the day will let you hear in more detail from artists of particular interest. For the workshops with Rachel Hazell and Susie Wilson, you may be asked for a small contribution to cover materials. Places will be limited, so please arrive ten minutes before the scheduled time (see below).

#### **Running order for the day 11.15–12.15**

**Workshop: Susie Wilson:** *Origami Folded Books* **12.30**

**Fergus Jordan:** *Under Cover of Darkness* **13.00**

**Isabell Buenz:** *Altered Books: From pre-loved book to piece of art.* **13.30**

**Chris Taylor/Karen Babayan:** *Blood Oranges Dipped in Salt*  
Readings from a new book of short stories by artist Karen Babayan,  
published by the Wild Pansy Press, 2012. **14.00**

**Helen Douglas:** *Book, Body, Senses, Digital* **15.00–16.00**

**Workshop: Rachel Hazell:** *Pop Up Paper Pleasure* **16.15**

**Barrie Tullett:** *Typewriter I love you*  
**17.00**

**Alec Finlay:** *Be My Reader*

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# Response to criticism of Tram project costs

✖ *Bob McCafferty, the Tram Project Director, has hit back at recent criticism of the apparently escalating costs of the project.*

He has written:-

*“The Scotsman newspaper yesterday ran a front page article: - ‘Tram costs hit £600m with two years to go’, with accompanying double page and leader comment. This was followed up today by The Scottish Daily Mail and Daily Record, both of which featured broadly similar content.*

*[The Scotsman headline](#) itself is accurate but the article is speculative, suggesting that the project is expected to run over the £776m budget. This is not the case. The project continues to run to schedule and remains on budget □ and there is no new information to suggest otherwise. The only new piece of information in the article relates to the current spend as being £592m □ the remainder consisting of existing programme details (published late last year) and various comments from individuals relating to fears over rising costs.*

*Costs are not linear*

*The claim that the 'final bill heads for £900m' has no substance and is based solely on the simplistic assumption that costs will be spread evenly over the remaining two years of the project. This is not the case, nor would it be for any construction project of this scale.*

*The project is currently going through its busiest and most constructive period to date. The spend profile remains entirely in line with expectations – as does the progress of works along the length of the route from the Airport to St Andrew Square. Less than £1m has been drawn down against the risk allowance (of £34m) so far – with no requirement in the last quarter.*

*The target programme of works was published at the end of last year to give businesses, the public and other interested parties a better understanding of the nature of the ongoing works and the timescales involved and we continue to share as much information as we can with these groups.*

## *Positive progress*

*Contrary to the Scotsman's portrayal of the current position, there are number of positives:*

*the project has gained fresh momentum due to the new close working relationship being enjoyed between the Council, contractors and Transport Scotland*

*the first major milestone was reached with the handover of the Gogar depot in December 2011 – the same month that dynamic testing began*

*the Mound reopened to buses, taxis, bikes and emergency vehicles on March 3 – four months early*

*remaining utility works were completed three weeks early on Shandwick Place and on schedule in St Andrew Square, allowing main infrastructure works to commence*

*Princes Street works (west of Waverley Bridge) are ahead of schedule and likely to be complete in June*

*works between South Charlotte St and Waverley Bridge will*

*also be complete by summer while work in St Andrew Square should be clear by Christmas.*

*The Chief Executive has today written a short letter to the Scotsman clarifying these points and reaffirming our view that we expect the project to continue as scheduled."*

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## **Software firm move to larger premises**

4sight Financial Software, a leading provider of software and consultancy to the Securities Finance and Collateral Management markets, has moved to new larger offices for its

Edinburgh UK headquarters. The new location will accommodate the growth in headcount required to meet increased demand for 4sight's software products amongst financial market participants in recent years.

This has largely been driven by interest in 4sight's [Securities Lending solution](#) and [Collateral Management system](#) which provide trade lifecycle and risk management, automation and workflow for financial institutions engaging in the Securities Finance, Repo and OTC/listed derivatives markets.

"We are delighted to move to Exchange Place." commented Martin Seagroatt, 4sight's Head of Marketing. "The new location will provide an outstanding working environment and give us the flexibility to increase headcount to support the growth in our global client base the company is currently experiencing."

4sight Financial Software is an independent software solutions provider to financial institutions, with sixteen years of experience and offices and clients worldwide.

4sight's customer base includes a full spectrum of financial market participants from banks, asset managers, pension funds and insurance companies to global broker dealers. Clients in sixteen countries on four continents use 4sight's software to meet their business needs and 4sight offers the reliability and experience of a company with a proven track record.

4sight's product range includes solutions for Securities Finance, Collateral Management, [Collateral Optimization](#), Settlement and Market Connectivity. 4sight's software helps financial institutions to improve efficiency, reduce costs, automate manual processes and control risk.

4sight also provides project management, consultancy services and customer support through its global network of offices.

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# Restaurant Review: Pop Up at The Hub



On Saturday 31st March we were lucky enough to be asked to rendez-vous with the great and the good of Edinburgh at the newly decorated Hub at the top of the Royal Mile for the one night only pop-up restaurant run by the students of Lycée Hôtelier in Dinard with the support of Institut français and Frédéric Berkmler .

11 budding chefs were given 4 days to explore the Scottish Larder and work in some of the best restaurants in Edinburgh; [Restaurant Martin Wishart](#), Roy Brett's [Ondine Restaurant](#), [Wedgwood the Restaurant](#), Craig Wood's [The Wee Restaurant](#), Frédéric Berkmler's [Escargot Restaurants](#).


The 11 students rolled up their sleeves to run their one-night-only restaurant under the guidance of their teachers and a couple of local chefs. They produced a unique menu of French cuisine with the best of the Scottish produce for around 300 ppl which as we all know is no small task.

We arrived and were politely greeted and signed in before being met with a glass of kir (a popular French cocktail made with a measure of crème de cassis (blackcurrant liqueur)



topped up with white wine) and a wine list to pre-order what we would like to drink with the meal. The wine list was selected by Eric Boschman, named World's best sommelier in 2010. The food menu was revealed at this stage but not much was given away, which kept the guests guessing. We selected a bottle from the fantastic wine menu and then set about finding our table. We were on a table with 5 other couples who were a mix of ages and professions, all eager to try the cuisine and most of them sent along by L'Escargot Bleu.

The evening started with a [video](#) showing where and what the students had been up to. It gave a wonderful overview of what had been going on behind the scenes in the build-up to the pop up restaurant. The students had visited many places including [Sunnyside Farm](#) and [Welch Fishmongers](#) where they learnt how to gut a fish and the craft of butchery. As the small talk started around the table the Mise en bouche arrived- Veal tartar. The table were a little hesitant to try the mise en bouche, but were pleasantly surprised by the texture and the flavours. Our French feast had begun.

On to the 'buffet' style starter which included beef pies, pork pâté, sea bream tartar, smoked salmon with citrus fruits sauce... and many other things, but unfortunately, I don't have the full list. Has to be said that a buffet for 300 was not the most speedy process, and the lack of signage was certainly noted when loading our plates, as we had no idea of what was  what. By means of trial and error, the table sat about sampling the selection. A particular favourite of my companions was the beef pork pie, and I loved the salmon pâté. The sea bream tartar with passion fruit marinade was certainly something worth trying.

After the array of starters we waited with anticipation for

the main course. A selection of slowly cooked veal, pork and beef with mash potatoes and swede (rutabaga). This was cooked beautifully and the presentation wasn't bad considering the quantity of guests. The dessert was a variation of the Paris-Brest, a choux pastry filled with whipped cream. To recognise Dinard in Edinburgh, the chefs added a whisky sauce on the side. A deliciously sweet end to the meal.

The food was varied and exciting, and it has to be said that some I loved and would certainly try again, other things I was glad I had tried! Overall the evening was a great success and we are already looking forward to next year.

The Hub, Castle Hill, Edinburgh, EH1 2NE 0131 473 2049

The Reporter Food reviewer, Celia Graham, is a partner in [The Lifestyle Company Scotland](#) You can follow the company and their lifestyle tips on [Twitter](#)

Photos: Gildas Bouric

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# Restaurant      Review:      The Reverie



*The Ultimate in Bespoke Burgers!*

Living the other side of town I had not heard of The Reverie before so I did a little bit of pre-review research and was pleased to find it was a location known for live music and the ultimate in 'Build your own burger'.

We arrived a wee bit later than planned but the owner, Edwin van der Ven, couldn't have been more friendly, welcoming or polite – even after our tardiness! So once seated we took in our surroundings and the menus.

The Reverie is very much a pub, and a lively one at that. Due to its location you could be forgiven for assuming it was a 'studenty' hang-out but it really wasn't. As we sat in the restaurant area looking out the window or overlooking the bar, it felt like a proper vibrant local little pub.

After ordering a great glass of red we examined the menu. Main courses were a no-brainer, how could we come here and NOT order the infamous 'build your own burger'. It was great to see that it wasn't just the normal burgeresque accompaniments like cheese bacon and lettuce! The Reverie offered halloumi, sliced beetroot, tomato chutney and a mass of other choices – the thought of some grilled halloumi had my mouth watering already! But let's not get ahead of ourselves...

For starters Celia opted for her trusty favourite of Cullen Skink and I went for a pot of mussels with white wine and garlic cream. The Mussels were really tasty and much better than other moules on the menu around the capital. The sauce was good enough to drink, and I happily drained the pot. (Be surprised if you didn't! Ed.) Now Celia is a bit of a Cullen Skink connoisseur and although she enjoyed the dish it lacked the thick chowder like substance of her preferred style of the recipe.

And now for the burger...a delight. A beautifully bespoke burger with hand cut chips (or shoestring fries as I opted for). It was just how we had imagined and wasn't it a treat! Celia built hers with cheddar and bacon (terribly traditional) but mine was a bit more 'far out' with halloumi and yummy tomato chutney.

It's not often I can say this, but we were well and truly

beaten! As the live band started Celia and I were offered pudding but after our big burgers we just couldn't find room for another morsel. We did have a quick browse of the puddings and I must say they looked delicious (I had been eyeing the sticky toffee pudding on another diner's table earlier in the evening). So instead of a pudding the lovely Edwin offered us a fresh mint tea – a firm favourite of ours and it was the perfect way to end an evening at this vibrant little spot.

As well as great food The Reverie offers so much in the way of live music and diverse malts and ales too. Every other Sunday the pub plays host to live jazz – the perfect way to unwind after a busy weekend.

[The Reverie](#), 1-5 Newington Road , Edinburgh , EH9 1QR, 0131 667 8870

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## Five things you need to know today



Johnston Press – Edinburgh Airport – Science Festival lecture – Jubilant celebrations in the Capital – Edinburgh Literary news

Johnston Press announced yesterday that the role of the Editor-in-Chief of titles including The Scotsman will no longer exist, and that the present Editor, John McLellan, was now on leave to discuss his future with the company. Mr McLellan tweeted later that he had not (as was widely reported) been escorted from the building, and was grateful for all messages of support.

Here are a few snippets from the internet about what Johnston Press has been up to

[<a href="http://storify.com/edinreporter/johnston-press-remove-the-role-of-editor-in-chief" target="\_blank">View the story "Johnston Press remove the role of Editor in Chief" on Storify</a>]\*\*\*

Ryanair announced yesterday that it may cut back its winter schedule from Edinburgh unless the airport agrees to what Ryanair describes as "more competitive terms".

This demand has come with only weeks to go until a decision is made on who the new owners will be.

Mike Crockart, Edinburgh's Liberal Democrat MP and representative for the airport commented:-"The timing of this announcement is quite clearly a cynical attempt to back the new owners of Edinburgh Airport into agreeing to preferential terms for Ryanair. Unfortunately for them, both the remaining bidders are experienced in running airports and will be well aware of Ryanair's previous track record for this type of bluster.

I would urge Ryanair to stop these alarmist announcements of speculative job losses which serve only to cause needless worry to employees at Edinburgh."

Meanwhile [The Edinburgh Evening News](#) reported the story that

the airport boss has told Ryanair that they will have to pay their way.

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The Psychology of Superstition tonight from 8pm – 9pm)

Dr Stuart Wilson, lecturer at psychology at Queen Margaret University, is presenting [this lecture](#) as part of the Edinburgh International Science Festival.

Friday the 13th is the most superstitious date on the calendar, and many people still feel a vague sense of unease when making plans for that particular day. Superstition is alive and well, but why are so many people still superstitious? Could it be something to do with the natural way in which human minds work? Is being superstitious harmless or can it even be beneficial? This talk will investigate these questions, offering a brief journey through the psychology behind our superstitious beliefs

Dr Stuart Wilson is a lecturer at Queen Margaret University. His current research topics include Religion, Cognition and Society, and Adaptive Memory.

Location: Banshee Labyrinth 29 – 35 Niddry Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1LG

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Is the Queen's Diamond Jubilee being marked in any way in the city? Have you organised a street party? We have found this event which is taking place at the [Usher Hall](#), but we are sure there must be more!

*"The Academy of Ancient Music and the Choir of the AAM will be in Edinburgh following the London celebrations for Her Majesty The Queen's Diamond Jubilee when they perform*

*Handel's Royal Music as part of the River Thames Pageant.*

*One of the first things Handel composed as a newly-naturalised British subject was the Coronation Anthems to mark the coronation of King George II and Queen Caroline (1727). They are still performed at royal occasions to this day. Also part of this celebratory performance is the Music for the Royal Fireworks, composed to accompany a public celebration in London to mark the end of the European War, and well known in Edinburgh for the festival finale fireworks concert; and the Water Music, composed for King George I's 1717 River Thames Pageant.*

*Edinburgh will join in the national celebrations and royal festivities with this glorious concert, featuring Handel's joyous and rousing royal music. “*

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While Ian Rankin is speculating on taking Stephen Fry to the Oxford Bar when he comes to Edinburgh to film Rankin's book *Doors Open*, our other esteemed Edinburgh author, JK Rowling has released some details of her new novel for an adult audience. The *Casual Vacancy* will be about small town politics according to [The Guardian](#). Now where did she get that idea from? We have not spotted her in the public gallery at The City of Edinburgh Council meetings....

Remember you only have till 18 April to register to vote in the upcoming local election. We have [a complete list of all candidates here](#) many with copies of their election leaflets.

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# Cloud computing company coming to Edinburgh

A leading cloud computing company has chosen Edinburgh for its European base, the Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs has announced.

enStratus plans to create up to 30 highly-skilled jobs in Scotland by the end of 2014 and is currently recruiting key staff in preparation for its Edinburgh office opening later this year. The company's expansion to Scotland is supported by a Regional Selective Assistance (RSA) grant totalling £240,000.

Fiona Hyslop made the announcement during a visit to Chicago for Scotland Week 2012, where she is meeting enStratus Chief Technology Officer George Reese.

Ms Hyslop said:

"Scotland is globally renowned for innovation, enterprise and technology. The quality and skills of our workforce in the digital sector have played an important part in the company's decision to locate its European office in Edinburgh, as has the research excellence of our institutions and the competitiveness of our business environment.

"This investment by enStratus demonstrates commitment to Scotland and confidence in what we have to offer. It can only enhance our international reputation for creativity – in this, our Year of Creative Scotland – and as a fantastic investment location.

"The Scottish Government and our enterprise agencies are doing all we can to build sustainable economic growth for Scotland, including providing relevant support where appropriate, and the hard work by our partners at Scottish Development



International and Scottish Enterprise deserves praise.”

George Reese, enStratus Chief Technology Officer, said:

“enStratus is excited to work with Scottish Development International to open our new office in Edinburgh, Scotland, to serve our expanding customer base as well as our development and support needs. We have selected Scotland to establish our new European Office because of the excellent development resources, transport infrastructure, and the favourable exchange rate.”

Anne MacColl, chief executive, Scottish Development International, said:

“That a world-leading cloud computing company such enStratus has chosen Edinburgh as its European base is testament to Scotland’s growing reputation as the ideal place to invest and do business.

“Scottish Development International and Scottish Enterprise have worked closely with enStratus to provide an integrated package of support towards the opening of this new office, including RSA funding, helping establishing potential site locations and assistance with staff recruitment.

“We look forward to helping the company realise its ambitious growth plans in Scotland – driving long-term sustainable growth back into the Scottish economy.”

enStratus™ is a cloud infrastructure management solution for deploying and managing enterprise-class applications in public, private and hybrid clouds. For the enterprise, managing multiple teams delivering tens or hundreds of applications to the cloud requires consistent governance and automation, as well as the independence to choose the clouds and operations tools that meet business needs.

Built around the annual Tartan Day celebrations in the USA and

Canada on April 6, Scotland Week is an annual week long programme of business, political and tourism engagements aimed at the promotion of Scotland as a great place to live, visit, do business, study and invest with key North American markets in the USA and Canada. Scotland Week will run from April 6 -14, with Ministerial engagements taking place in New York, Toronto, Calgary, Vancouver, Chicago, San Francisco and Houston.

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## Five things you need to know today



**Portobello High School – New jobs in the capital – Self-portrait at the Portrait Gallery – Local Elections – Police seek witnesses to assault**

The campaign group PPAG are continuing with their appeal against the recent Court of Session decision that they were out of time to oppose the building of the new Portobello High School in Portobello Park.

The appeal will be heard on 23 & 24 May. If the appeal is unsuccessful then the contract for building the new school might proceed reasonably quickly. The council have already shortlisted Balfour Beatty for the school, but have been reluctant to go ahead and formally award the contract to the firm. It appears that an early date for the appeal may have


been requested by the council, but not opposed by PPAG.

Meanwhile the supporters of the new High School, [Portobello High School in the Park](#), have begun discussions as to the way they will show their strength by attending the appeal, or at the very least, gathering outside the court.

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About 30 new jobs will be created in Edinburgh following the announcement that cloud computing firm enStratus will open an office here later in the year according to [the BBC](#).

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One of Scotland's most distinguished contemporary artists,  Alison Watt, has unveiled a striking self-portrait, which has been acquired for the recently refurbished Scottish National Portrait Gallery (SNPG). The painting, which was made while the artist was still a student, has been presented by the Art Fund, the national fundraising charity for art, to celebrate the re-opening of the Gallery in December 2011.

Alison Watt was born in Greenock in 1965 and studied at Glasgow School of Art from 1983 to 1988. She first came to public attention in 1987, when she won the annual portrait award organised by the National Portrait Gallery in London, and was commissioned to paint H M Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. In 2000, Watt became the youngest artist to be given a solo exhibition at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, and from 2006 to 2008 was Associate Artist at the National Gallery in London. She was awarded an OBE in 2008.

Although she has rarely engaged with formal portraiture since her early career, Alison Watt has said that there is an element of self-portraiture in all of her work – from the very

beginning, when she would stand in front of a mirror and paint herself obsessively, to the more subtle representations of self implied in the complex and enigmatic paintings of folded drapery for which she is best known today.

Watt's Self-portrait of 1986-7 has been acquired for the SNPG from the artist's collection and has been exhibited only once before, at Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery in Glasgow in 1990. Painted whilst she was ill, it shows Watt with her right hand across her forehead.

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Residents are being reminded that there are only seven days left to register to vote for the local council elections on 3 May.

People can register to vote by calling the Lothian Valuation Joint Board on 0131 344 2500 or downloading a form from [www.lothian-vjb.gov.uk](http://www.lothian-vjb.gov.uk) .

There is also the chance to win some prizes when finding out about registering to vote through the City of Edinburgh Council online blog – [‘Make your vote count’](#) competition.

The competition is running until 18 April, the deadline for registering to vote. Anyone who comments on the blog about which election they first voted in and why, or why this will be their first year voting, will be entered into the prize draw.

The prizes up for grabs are:

- 1 x one-year [Edinburgh Leisure Fitness Membership](#) which will give unlimited access to any of Edinburgh Leisure's gyms, swimming pools, fitness classes and much more.
- 2 x £100 [bonusbond](#) gift vouchers that can be used in hundreds of high street stores, including Oasis, Boots,

hmv and more.

- 1 x pair of tickets for the opening night film premiere and party, courtesy of [Edinburgh International Film Festival](#).

For a full list of rules and those who are eligible visit the [blog post](#).

Andy O'Neill, Head of the Scotland Office at the Electoral Commission, the independent elections watchdog, is also reminding voters that they can still vote even if they can't make it to the polling station on 3 May.

"Even if you will be away on holiday, or think you might be caught up in work you can make sure you have your say by applying to vote by post or proxy. You can print off the forms from [www.aboutmyvote.co.uk](http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk)"

We have full information on all [candidates listed by Ward here](#) with links to their profiles and election leaflets where we have them. Do send us any more information if you have it!

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Lothian and Borders Police have released CCTV images of two men they wish to trace in connection with inquiries into a serious assault that happened last year.

A 24-year-old man was walking with friends at Waverley Bridge around 12.20am on Sunday 27th November 2011 when two men approached and began verbally abusing him.

The men then began punching the victim to the face, causing him to fall against a wall and fracture his jaw.

Both suspects made off towards St Andrew Square via Multrees Walk before being lost to sight.

The first man the police would like to speak to is described as white, 21-years-old, tall with a slim build, dark blond

hair and young features. He was wearing a red jacket with white sleeves.

The second man the police would like to speak to is described as white, early twenties, average height and build with dark eyebrows. He was wearing a dark hooded top with the hood up.

Detectives continue to investigate this incident and would urge anyone who recognises the men in this CCTV footage to come forward.

A police spokesman said: "The CCTV image shows two men making their way along Multrees Walk and we are appealing to anyone who recognises them to contact police immediately.

"Similarly, anyone with any other information that can assist with our inquiries should also get in touch."

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

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## Five things you need to know today



## **David Gilroy sentencing to be televised – Hustings – Pandas – New Hotel opens – Easter Holiday suggestion**

Last month David Gilroy was convicted of murdering Suzanne Pilley who went missing from her office in Thistle Street, and whose body has not ever been found. Now STV have been granted permission to televise the judge, Lord Bracadale, who will sentence Gilroy in the High Court next week. But the proceedings will not be shown live, and the camera will only show the judge .

The Judicial Office for Scotland said:-“The camera will focus on the judge and no other person will feature in the footage except the Macer and the Clerk. The accused will not be filmed.

Filming will commence when the plea in mitigation has concluded.

The footage will be made available immediately afterwards via satellite feed.

This is the first time that permission has been granted to film during a sentencing diet in the High Court.”

An [STV spokesperson](#) said: “This is the first time in the UK that TV news cameras have been allowed to film a sentencing in a criminal court, and we’re pleased that STV has been instrumental in making that happen.

“This development will allow viewers a rare insight into the closing stages of what has been a very controversial murder case.”

Now [The Daily Record](#) reports that the actual trial of Nat Fraser due to start on 23 April may be shown on TV. Fraser is accused of murdering his wife Arlene, whose body has never been found since she disappeared in 1998. So perhaps this decision is the thin end of the wedge?

\*\*\*

Tonight there is a local government hustings taking place at [Restalrig Road](#) convened by Craigentinny and Restalrig Residents Group within the Craigentinny and Portobello Ward. There are eight candidates in this ward. Our list will take you to an individual profile of each one of them.

**Craigentinny/Duddingston Ward** (3 councillors will represent this ward)

[Kevin Ferguson](#) – Scottish Anti-Cuts Coalition

[Joan Griffiths](#) – Scottish Labour Party

[Jason Lingiah](#) – Scottish Conservative and Unionist

[Alex Lunn](#) – Scottish Labour Party

[John Palmer](#) – Scottish Green Party

[Gary John Peacock](#) – Scottish Liberal Democrats

[Stefan Tymkewycz](#) – Scottish National Party (SNP)

[Colin Williamson](#) – Scottish National Party (SNP)

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[The Scotsman](#) explains that The Scottish Government has been accused by the Advertising Standards Agency of misleading the public by publishing an advert which suggested the pandas were a gift from China, rather than clarifying that they will in fact cost the Zoo £600,000 a year. Visitor numbers to the Zoo have increased as a result of the new visitors.

\*\*\*

Whitbread PLC has opened a new Premier Inn hotel on Princes Street. The hotel will create 32 jobs within the community, bringing a total of £8.4 million into the local economy.



The brand new 97 bedroom hotel at number 122 enjoys fabulous views of the Castle. A short walk from Edinburgh Waverley Rail Station in the heart of Edinburgh's city centre, and situated in the heart of city centre shopping.

Alisa Riva, Manager of Premier Inn [hotel on Princes Street Edinburgh](#) commented: "We are delighted to welcome another hotel to the capital. The fantastic location and incredible views of the castle means it's perfectly situated for all types of guests whether they are here for business or leisure. Premier Inn Edinburgh Princes Street provides guests with affordable accommodation that does not compromise on quality and we look forward to welcoming guests from March."

\*\*\*

For some it is still the Easter holidays and we could give you no better recommendation than take those active children out to the Museum of Flight where there is lots to see and plenty of room to run around too. There are more than 85 planes including the venerable Concorde. More details on what you can see [including buying tickets online here.](#)

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# Free Fringe looking for purveyors of the spoken word

*Peter Buckley Hill's Free Fringe is back in 2012 with a new venue and needs more shows to fill it*

Scots poets are being invited to reconquer the city of R.L. Stevenson, J.K. Rowling and Norman MacCaig by taking part in the largest arts festival in the world, but without having to pay for venue hire or indeed their inclusion in the brochure.

Free Fringe, where performers charge nothing for entry, rattle a bucket at the end and ask for nothing towards the costs of running the organisation, have secured a whole new venue in Edinburgh's New Town. They are now looking for storytellers, spoken worders, poets and Makars to fill it, from 12 noon till 10pm, from the 4-25 August 2012 (or at least hour-long parts thereof!) Now they have secured a new space at the Fiddler's Elbow to add to their 2011 collection of 34 stages in 30 venues, but they need acts to perform there.

The Free Fringe has now been going for seventeen years, and it has become a Fringe within a Fringe. Last year approximately 20% of the shows at the Fringe were at the Free Fringe. Unsurprising, when performers need not pay the £295-£395 to go in the official brochure, but are included in Free Fringe's own brochure (with a circulation of 100,000) for free.

Its spoken word section has been going for three years under its head, the red-headed Richard Tyrone Jones, of 'Utter!' spoken word, who said: "I wouldn't be able to afford to go to Edinburgh and appear in a paid venue. Instead it makes me proud to have programmed poets from around the world to do their shows with us, often debuts, including Tim Turnbull, Helen Mort, Aisle 16, Baba Brinkman and Peterborough's Dead Poets, who got five four star reviews. But many awesome

Scottish performers such as the Chemical Poets won't be performing this year, and it meks me sair dulesome."

"But with this new venue, the 40-capacity [Fiddler's Elbow](#) on Picardy Place, we can give probably another 24 poets their own one-week run. You have to be prepared to chip in with helping keep the venue happy, and to give out Free Fringe programmes with your flyers, but you'll get to meet other writers from around the world – and audiences are bigger than for paid shows. The disadvantage is you are less likely to be reviewed but it is more about the sense of camaraderie, and the other shows you get to share. All you have to lose is your flyer-photocopying and accommodation costs – which is nothing if you live here already! And if you do, can I rent your sofa please? I've still not got my accommodation sorted."

Those interested are invited to read the Terms & conditions on the Free Fringe website to decide if it is for them, then to contact [schedules@freefringe.org.uk](mailto:schedules@freefringe.org.uk) with a show title, proposal, a few samples of work in video, audio or documents, how long a run they would like to do, when during the festival and at what time of day and they will try to meet your preferences.

And if you're not Scottish, they insist you're almost just as welcome.

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## **Link celebrates its golden anniversary with an award**



The Link group of charitable registered social landlords, voluntary organisations and social enterprises has achieved the prestigious Investors in People Gold recognition.

Staff gathered recently to receive the award, which recognises the commitment Link has to continuous improvement through the management and development of its staff.

Link is especially pleased, in this its golden anniversary, to receive this award as less than 2% of organisations who receive Investors in People accreditation achieve Gold status.

Link Group Vice Chairman, Roy Stirrat said: "We are delighted to be in the top 2% of companies with Investors in People status. It is recognition of the approach we take as an organisation to make the best use of our people and resources to achieve efficiency, best value and continuous improvement in delivering high quality services to our tenants and customers."

Peter Russian, Chief Executive of Investors in People Scotland, said "This is a fantastic achievement for Link. I would like to congratulate the organisation and its people on their commitment to continuous improvement. Investors in People specialises in transforming business performance through people. We help organisations achieve their objectives. I hope that more organisations in the area will be encouraged sharpen their competitive edge by choosing to work

with us.”

The Investors in People accolade also tops off a year where Link was named among the top 50 “Best Workplaces in UK 2011” and one of the top 25 “Best Workplaces in Scotland 2011” by the Great Places to Work Institute. The Best workplaces scheme honours and recognises organisations that have achieved outstanding effectiveness in HR and people excellence.

Photograph shows Roy Stirrat, Link Vice Chair with Peter Russian, Investors in People Scotland, Chief Executive

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## Chip pan fire in Leith

A 47-year-old man was rescued by firefighters from a flat on Elliot Street in Edinburgh during a fire yesterday afternoon.

Three fire engines and a height appliance attended the blaze at the first floor flat after a call came in at 2.34pm. Six firefighters wearing breathing apparatus extinguished the fire using a hose reel.

A Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service spokeswoman said:- “This fire started with an unattended chip pan, and

quickly got out of control. The gentleman attempted to extinguish the fire himself and suffered burns to his hands.

“We urge people to throw out their chip pans and use thermostat controlled deep fat fryers, as chip pans can easily over-heat and catch fire. If a fire does start, turn off the heat if it is safe to do so, get everyone out – closing doors behind you and call the fire and rescue service out immediately on 999.”

Firefighters treated the casualty at the scene until paramedics arrived. He was taken to hospital by ambulance suffering from burns and smoke inhalation.

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## **Edinburgh MSP heralds progress on cancer waiting times**

✘ Gordon Macdonald MSP has welcomed the launch of a new £30 Million programme by The Scottish Government that is set to improve cancer survival rates by increasing the proportion of Scots who are diagnosed in the earliest stages of the disease.

Gordon stated *“The SNP is working hard to improve cancer survival which is why we launched our £30 million Detect Cancer Early programme. This fund aims to diagnose cancers earlier and treat patients when less aggressive treatment is required. Thousands of Scots are affected by cancer and that is why the SNP Government has taken steps to ensure that patients are seen by doctors and specialists as quickly as*

*possible."*

This new two year campaign will focus on the three most common cancers in Scotland – breast, lung and bowel cancer. NHS Scotland, healthcare professionals and Scottish charities are working together to promote the importance of early detection of cancer. By acting quickly on the first signs and symptoms of cancer you can increase your chances of surviving the disease.

The latest NHS Lothian statistics, covering October – December 2011, show that 98.5% of Lothian patients suspected to have cancer started treatment within the target time of 62 days.

To find out more about cancer and the signs and symptoms, contact NHS Inform by phoning 0800 22 44 88 or log on to [www.nhsinform.co.uk](http://www.nhsinform.co.uk).

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## **Investment for green buses very welcome**

*SNP AND GREENS WELCOME £1.8M FOR GREEN BUSES*

A £1.8million investment that will see a further 26 low carbon vehicles added to the Scottish bus fleet including Lothian Buses has been welcomed by an Edinburgh MSP.

Other firms include Henderson Travel, National Express Dundee,

MacEwen's Coach Services and Deveron Coaches Ltd who will all benefit from the cash as successful bidders from the second round of the Scottish Government's Green Bus Fund.

✖ Gordon MacDonald, SNP MSP for Edinburgh Pentlands and member of the Scottish Parliament's Infrastructure and Investment Committee, said:

"This is fantastic news that underlines the SNP's commitment to green travel. This latest round of funding, which comes in the backdrop of huge cuts to our budget from Westminster, shows the Scottish Government's dedication to ensuring our bus industry gets the support it needs. This will also help us reach our target of reducing carbon emissions by 42 per cent by 2020 and cuts fuel costs for the bus industry.

These vehicles are saving companies huge amounts of money on fuel prices, with Lothian Buses saying they increase fuel efficiency by over 50%. Last year the Scottish Government funded 48 new low carbon buses and today we have backed a further 26. I'm also pleased to see many of the buses will be manufactured at Alexander Dennis in Falkirk, supporting Scottish business. Low-carbon buses produce 30% fewer greenhouse gas emissions than a current diesel bus of the same capacity. This latest round is building on the good work already made in helping bus companies, passengers and the environment."

Edinburgh Greens have also welcomed the news of further hybrid vehicles for Lothian Buses, but say that The Scottish Government money must be seen in the context of their significant cuts to bus funding overall.

The Greens estimate that after this second round of funding from the Green Bus Fund, around 74 of Scotland's 5400 buses will be hybrids.

Steve Burgess, Green councillor for Southside/Newington ✖ ward said:-



“The number 10 hybrids have been very popular and I congratulate Lothian Buses on securing another ten green buses for the city. This is good news for cutting climate-changing pollution and good news for air quality on our busy streets.

“Buses have been a very low priority for the SNP Government and this money needs to be seen in the context of cuts to their funding of bus services. We need a far more ambitious approach if we are going to make our public transport system both greener and more affordable.”

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## Nominations for Walter Scott Prize announced



*The shortlist for the £25,000 Walter Scott Prize for historical fiction has been announced recently by the Duke of Buccleuch, at the launch of the Borders Book Festival programme in Melrose. Our photo shows last year's winner, Andrea Levy.*

With settings ranging from pre-revolutionary France to the Wild West of the 1850s, via two World Wars, the shortlist of six books was chosen by a new panel of judges from novels published during 2011.

*The shortlist is:*

*On Canaan's Side by Sebastian Barry*

*The Sisters Brothers by Patrick de Witt*

*Half Blood Blues by Esi Edugyan*

*The Stranger's Child by Alan Hollinghurst*

*Pure by Andrew Miller*

*The Quality of Mercy by Barry Unsworth*

The books are by authors from Ireland, Canada and England, and cover such diverse subjects as the jazz age in Nazi-occupied Europe, slavery in the English coalmines, and the closure of a cemetery in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Paris. The Walter Scott Prize, founded in 2009, is the largest annual UK prize to be judged outside London, and honours the legacy and achievements of Sir Walter Scott, founder of the historical novel.

The judging panel for the Walter Scott Prize this year included new judges Kirsty Wark, Professor Louise Richardson, and Jonathan Tweedie, who joined existing judges Elizabeth Laird and Elizabeth Buccleuch, and chair Alistair Moffat. The judges' criteria include originality and innovation, quality of writing, and the ability of a book to shed light on the present as well as the past. The judging panel described making a very difficult choice from 'the strongest longlist for the Prize so far'.

Also announced today, a new sponsorship deal with Jura Single Malt Whisky means that each of the shortlisted authors, as part of their prize, will have the opportunity to stay for a week in the exclusive Writer's Retreat on the Hebridean Isle of Jura, sample the award-winning whisky and write a short story inspired by their stay. This will be the first time writers of historical fiction have made use of the retreat.

Rob Bruce Head of PR for Jura Single Malt Whisky said:

‘Jura has a long literary history, and the shortlisted writers will follow in the footsteps of George Orwell who wrote his famous novel 1984 whilst saying on the island. We have welcomed a number of other talented writers to Jura over the last few years including Alexander McCall Smith, Will Self and Stuart MacBride, however we have not yet had a writer who specialises in historical fiction, so we are very much looking forward to reading their short story that is inspired by their time on the island.’

Shortlisted authors are invited to attend the award announcement and ceremony on 16<sup>th</sup> June, which is a public event as part of the Borders Book Festival in Melrose, and which will include exclusive readings from the works by the actor John Sessions, and a presentation by former prizewinner Hilary Mantel.

The Judges said of the shortlisted books:

***On Canaan's Side* by Sebastian Barry**

*‘This is a real historical novel, writing that reeks of the period. The simplicity of the writing belies a deep empathy and understanding of his subject and characters’*

***The Sisters Brothers* by Patrick de Witt**

*‘A tremendously enjoyable story, with really valuable*

*historical detail as well as dark humour'*

***Half Blood Blues* by Esi Edugyuan**

*'Illuminates a corner of history as yet unilluminated, with emotions that almost become characters in their own right'*

***The Stranger's Child* by Alan Hollinghurst**

*'You cannot help relishing the elegance of his writing and the quality of the prose'*

***Pure* by Andrew Miller**

*'A wholly unexpected story, richly imagined and beautifully structured'*

***The Quality of Mercy* by Barry Unsworth**

*'A terrific story which successfully knits political, historical and personal strands'*

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**Oxfam need you to run a**

# marathon for them in Edinburgh




*Run in the Edinburgh Marathon Festival for free with Oxfam*

Challenge yourself to running in the Edinburgh Marathon Festival with Oxfam on 26 -27 May 2012, and help fight poverty in the UK and around the world.

The Edinburgh Marathon Festival (EMF) is one of the biggest and best running events in the UK, with 16,000 runners taking part last year. If it's your first marathon, or you are looking for a new PB, the course has been voted the fastest course in the UK. But the EMF is not just a marathon. With a half marathon, team relay, 10k and 5k, there really is a distance to suit everyone.

If you run with Oxfam you can expect to receive the perks of running for one of the affiliated charity partners. You will not only be running with 200 other dedicated runners, you will also be provided with training tips from Olympic runner Liz Yelling, fundraising advice and materials, enthusiastic race-day cheering, and an exclusive post-race party including food, drinks and a much needed massage!

The money raised by the Oxfam running team goes to help  people living in poverty worldwide. To see first hand this amazing work, the Running Team Manager, Lucy Fenner, recently travelled to Zimbabwe. Many of the communities she saw there were without basic needs such as food and clean water. Cholera and other diarrhoea-causing diseases are easily spread in countries like Zimbabwe, so teaching basic hygiene and sanitation is essential. "Teaching things such as how to

construct simple taps, and improving access to fresh water are simple, but life-saving aspects of Oxfam's work". The locals she met there were delighted by the differences the Oxfam projects had had. "In one village I saw a toilet that had recently been installed. It sounds basic, but the community didn't have one before, causing disease, death and stunted growth of many children in the community. The local clinic was already reporting a decline in visits from that community." It costs just £50 to do build a toilet, which has such a drastic impact on people's lives.

Money raised by Oxfam runners is making a real difference to people's lives and it will continue to do so. To get a place with Oxfam in the EMF,

### **Visit**

[www.oxfam.org.uk/edinburghmarathon?cid=ref\\_edinburgh\\_edrep](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/edinburghmarathon?cid=ref_edinburgh_edrep)

Or **text** EMF + your NAME to 70066

And if running is not your thing, then maybe you would like to get involved as a volunteer at the cheer points, post-race reception, or as a massage therapist?

Register your interest at <http://bit.ly/Edvolunteer>

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## **Competition – Come on Edinburgh – Pukka Up!**



We have a new competition for you to win places on the guest

list for Friday 27 April 2012 at [Mood Nightclub](#) when [Pukka Up](#) will be hosting one of their tour dates before embarking on Ibiza for the season.

**The Question is this:-** Where will Pukka Up's after parties be in Ibiza this season?

Please email your answer to [theedinburghreporter@gmail.com](mailto:theedinburghreporter@gmail.com) by 20 April 2012 at 12 noon with the words Pukka Up in the subject line.

*Over the last eight years Pukka Up has become a club brand synonymous with flirtatious fun and free-spirited clubbing. From one-off boat parties to a global club brand Pukka Up has blossomed into the party that prides itself on being the exciting and fashionable face of 21st century hedonism. Pukka Up is a party that is built on an unrivalled atmosphere thanks to its dedication to crowd interaction. The events create the memories that make Pukka Up the brand clubbers just keep coming back to. With established residencies in some of the biggest clubbing destinations in the world, Pukka Up has become an established international trend-setter from the coastline of Ibiza to the farflung clubs of China or anywhere in between that has a house beat and dancing feet.*

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## **Greens launch manifesto for**

# fairer city

## ✘ GREENS LAUNCH MANIFESTO TO MAKE CITY 'FIT FOR THE FUTURE'

Edinburgh Greens have launched their local manifesto, which you can read in full below, for the Council elections on 3 May 2012 with a set of ambitious policies for the capital. The party wants to end the culture of the “We know best” Council of recent years, and argues that the City Chambers needs at least one party which is prepared to look to the long term and the big challenges Edinburgh faces.

The Greens predict an increase in their Councillor numbers from three at present to between six and eight. As well as sitting councillors [Steve Burgess](#) and [Maggie Chapman](#), its leading candidates include community councillor [Melanie Main](#), seeking to replace Alison Johnstone who is now a Green MSP; and highly-regarded community campaigners [Nigel Bagshaw](#), [Chas Booth](#), [Gavin Corbett](#) and [Peter McColl](#).

Among the priorities the party sets are:

- Making Edinburgh fit for the future by backing community scale renewables and ramping up energy efficiency in homes and businesses; making public transport work for everyone and redesigning streets with the needs of all citizens in mind.
- Heralding an Open Council and challenging the “we know best” culture by introducing new rights for people to petition the Council; live webcasts of Council meetings, and handing over more of the budget to community decision-making.
- Protecting what is special about Edinburgh by standing up for public services against privatisation; championing local facilities like Leith Waterworld, and defending and improving our parks and green space.

Launching the manifesto, Councillor Steve Burgess said:



“This is manifesto full of ambitious policies for a fairer, greener Edinburgh. We all know that the city in 20 or 30 years time will look and feel different from now. Greens want to steer this change so that our streets and our homes are fit for the future, while standing up for and protecting what makes Edinburgh so special.

“We think people are fed up with the ‘we know best’ attitude of the Council and we want to open things up and give more control over local spending to local communities. That’s why we’ll bring the council into the 21st century with webcasts, e-petitions and community voting on local projects.

“Green councillors have been the source of many fresh ideas in recent years and we will continue to champion bold thinking. We need a real rethink of street design to bring them alive again and make them safer and more attractive for pedestrians, cyclists and other vehicles. That is why Greens back the proposals by architect Jan Gehl to transform Princes Street as part of a process for the city as a whole.”

Councillor Alison Johnstone, now Green MSP for Lothian, added:

“It is clear by now that the Greens are the party to trust on the environment, on waste and pollution and on green spaces. But Green councillors will work just as hard for carers as for cyclists; for schools as well as renewables, for a Living Wage as much as animal welfare. Yes we want to see all homes insulated, but we will fight just as hard to support tenants battling with shoddy landlords. We stand for a fairer Edinburgh as well as a greener one.”

All candidates for the forthcoming election are listed by Ward on our [dedicated Council Election 2012 page](#) with a link to each candidate profile.



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# Young Edinburgh Writers – A Room With Our View



If you go down to the Central Library today you will get a nice surprise on the mezzanine floor. They have installed a bed. No it's not for you to lie down and contemplate your upcoming exams. The bed is the main part of an installation by the Young Edinburgh Writers Group led by Dorothy Baird who tutors a group of teenage writers in expressing their creativity in words.



 The surfaces in the bedroom are all covered with lines  of poetry composed by members of the group, and there is a leaflet with all the poems printed in it, produced by Gregor Wilson, one of the teenagers who have formed the group and created the room.

The idea of the bedroom is that it is a very important place for teenagers to study, contemplate and often take refuge. The Reporter spoke to organiser, Dorothy Baird, to find out more:-

[listen to 'Young Edinburgh Writers ' on Audioboo](#)



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# Police still searching for Armed Robbers

✖ Lothian and Borders Police are making a fresh appeal for information following an armed robbery in Barnton Avenue West, Edinburgh, on Friday 9 March 2012.

A number of designer handbags and a quantity of very distinctive jewellery were among the £15,000 worth of property and £5,000 of cash that was taken by the three suspects, who tied the homeowners up while they ransacked the property.

The 58-year-old man and his 48-year-old wife were restrained and threatened with a knife when the men targeted the house about 9.30pm a month ago. Fortunately neither of them were seriously injured.

Detectives on the inquiry team are now appealing to traders all over the country to be aware that people may be trying to sell on these items.

In addition officers are appealing for information about two vehicles that were seen travelling together in the area of Barnton Avenue West on the day of the robbery. One is described as being a dark-coloured saloon, the other is a silver-coloured people carrier with blacked out windows.

The suspects, three men, were all wearing dark clothing. Two of them are described as being around 6ft tall, and spoke with foreign accents, the other with a Scottish accent. One of the men was wearing white trainers.

Detective Inspector Gordon McCreadie said: "In the past four weeks there has been extensive work done in terms of CCTV

viewing and house to house inquiries, and as a result we are now keen to trace the drivers of the two vehicles that were seen in the area on the day of the robbery. The dark-coloured saloon and silver-coloured people carrier with blacked out windows seem to have been travelling together, so may have caught the attention of passers-by.



“We also now have a detailed list of the property that was stolen, and as such we are asking people – in particular traders – to take a look at the images of some of these items, and consider whether someone has tried to sell this on to you recently.

"We have had a good response from the public to our earlier appeals, but once again I would appeal for anyone who may have some information regarding this incident, and who has not already spoken to us, to contact us on 0131 311 3131."

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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# Dr James Hansen is Edinburgh Medal Winner



*Edinburgh Medal to be awarded later today.*

The recipient of the 24th Edinburgh Medal, Dr James Hansen, the American climate scientist who is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, an adjunct professor in the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences at Columbia University and at Columbia's Earth Institute will speak in Edinburgh tonight.

Perhaps best known for bringing global warming to the world's attention in the 1980's when he first testified before Congress, Dr Hansen's background in both space and earth sciences gives him a broad perspective on the status and prospects of our home planet.

Hansen admits that if it hadn't been for his grandchildren, and the knowledge of what they would face, he would have concentrated on the pure science, and not persisted in taking a public position pointing out the challenges that humanity faces. It is this message that he brings to Edinburgh when he presents climate change as a moral issue of unprecedented scale. Described by Al Gore as 'the scientist with the most powerful and consistent voice calling for intelligent action to preserve our planet's environment.' Hansen believes that while today's adults obtain benefits from fossil fuel use, the consequences will be felt mainly by young people and future generations as well as the fellow species with which we share our planet.

More than 30 years ago Hansen, who is 70, and his team created

one of the first global climate models and used it to predict much of what has happened in the climate since. Hansen has now concluded, on the basis of analyses of Earth's climate history and global observations made by other scientists, that the threats posed by global warming have increased markedly because of the absence of effective policies. Unless prompt action is taken to place a rising price on carbon emissions – by collecting a fee from fossil fuel companies and distributing the funds to the public – the planet will be committed to devastating consequences borne upon today's young people.

Dr Hansen say:- “I am honoured to receive the Edinburgh Medal and I hope that I can use the occasion to draw attention to the urgency of addressing climate change, with a different approach, one that would be effective. Our parents did not know that their actions could harm future generations. We will only be able to pretend that we did not know.”

Dr Simon Gage, Director of the Edinburgh International Science Festival, said “We are truly delighted to award the 2012 Edinburgh Medal to a scientist whose tireless and principled voice has had such an impact on the climate debate. His advocacy around the most pressing issue of our time and his insistence that he has a duty to society as well as to science makes him an outstanding recipient. “

The Edinburgh Medal is a prestigious award given each year to men and women of science and technology whose professional achievements are judged to have made a significant contribution to the understanding and well-being of humanity. The Medal is supported by the City of Edinburgh Council and SEPA and will be awarded at a ceremony later today.

The Rt. Hon. George Grubb, Lord Lieutenant and Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh, said: “Dr Hansen is an extremely worthy recipient of the Edinburgh Medal. An internationally lauded scientist, he has worked tirelessly to highlight the grave

risks posed to our planet by the effects of climate change. Indeed, through his efforts, Dr Hansen has been instrumental in bringing climate change to the forefront of the global political agenda.”

The Vote of Thanks, following the Edinburgh Medal Address: The Case for Young People and Nature, will be given by Professor James Curran, MBE, Chief Executive of SEPA, who has worked in environmental science and regulation for 30 years.

Professor James Curran, MBE, Chief Executive of SEPA said “Climate change is arguably the most severe threat facing our planet today. It is already affecting us all and seems destined to worsen for generations to come. James Hansen can take the credit for having brought the issue of climate change to the world’s attention, often in the face of personal attack. All of us have a responsibility to take action to adapt to its implications and, even more urgently, to do all that we can to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support international action. For his foresight, commitment and courage, James is a very worthy recipient of the Edinburgh Medal, and I am delighted that SEPA has been able to support the award.”

Tickets for the Medal Address are sold out but Dr Hansen is taking part in two other great festival events with some of the country’s most important voices on climate change. Tickets for ‘Our Climate Future’ with Lord Anthony Giddens and Professor Pete Smith, Science Director of Scotland’s Climate Change Centre of Expertise, and for ‘Fixing the Planet’ with, among others, Professor Stuart Haszeldene OBE, are available from [www.sciencefestival.co.uk](http://www.sciencefestival.co.uk) or 0844 557 2686

The first Edinburgh Medallist in 1989 was the theoretical physicist and Nobel Prize winner Abdus Salam; of the subsequent twenty Medallists, three have gone on to be awarded the Nobel Prize.

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# Conservatives are fielding candidates in every Ward this May

✖ The Conservative Group on The City of Edinburgh Council have 11 councillors in the present council. These are spread across Colinton/Fairmilehead (where there are two), Corstorphine/Murrayfield, Fountainbridge/Craiglockhart, Forth, Almond, Meadows/Morningside, City Centre, Pentland Hills, Southside/Newington and Inverleith Wards. They are fielding 20 candidates across all Wards in the forthcoming election in May.

Their manifesto is shown below. The Conservative Group ✖ leader, Jeremy Balfour, summed it up for The Reporter:-“We want to give strong leadership and a clear vision for the City. We will take the difficult decisions which this Administration have failed to do.

We want to look at all Council budgets and make sure the money that we spend is done efficiently and on key services.

We want to work in partnership with business and the Third Sector. On the Third Sector we will let them know what money they will get from the Council for a 3 year period rather on an annual basis. This will allow them to forward plan with more certainty. We will also appoint a Third Sector Campaign amongst the Administration Councillors to engage with this sector.

We want to give parents more power over their Child's education.”



Three councillors are retiring:-

Alastair Paisley is retiring from Pentland Hills Ward.

Kate MacKenzie is retiring from Almond Ward.

Gordon Buchan is retiring from Fountainbridge/Craiglockhart.

You can find out who is standing for election in your Ward [on our dedicated Council Elections 2012 page here](#) and then click through to a full profile of each candidate. In the forthcoming Local Government election, voters will be electing 58 councillors to represent them across the city's 17 wards. There are 7 four-member and 10 three-member wards in Edinburgh.

[Manifesto 2012](#)

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## Football – Spartans WFC lose some points



*This was not such a good weekend for Spartans WFC.*

In the Scottish Women's Premier League game at Ainslie Park, the match between Spartans and Inverness ended 2-2 with the away side coming from two goals down to take a share of the spoils.

Spartans managed to take a two goal lead into half-time through a brace by striker Sarah Ewens, but Inverness produced a determined response , fighting back through a strike by Natalie Bodiam and a last minute awarded penalty which was calmly converted by Captain Karen Mason ending the game all square.

Spartans started the game with great confidence and within the first minute almost took the lead through a Louise Mason shot. Diana Barry started the move, flicking the ball back to Sarah Ewens whose first time pass found Louise Mason wide on the right however her shot went inches wide of the post.

✖ With the wind picking up the pressure on Inverness continued and after just five minutes Chloe Fitzpatrick sent a sizzling shot wide of the near post after some precise build-up play by Molly McKean. And it was McKean who was next to test the Inverness goal however her shot from 22 yards sailed well over the bar.

Even though the game was turning into a midfield battle with very few clear cut chances, Spartans were continuing to test the visitor's goal and 20 minutes gone Lana Clelland sent a shot that went just wide of the far post. Louise Magilton picked the ball up on the half way line and the fullback charged into space before playing a delightful pass over the oncoming defender into the path of Clelland who, in one swift move, cut infield and fired in a right foot shot that failed to trouble the keeper.

Spartans vice-captain Barry, who was wearing the Captain's armband due to Louise Young being out injured, was starting to orchestrate moves from the front and it was through her creative passing that allowed Spartans to test the Inverness keeper on the half hour mark. Barry found Mason on the right who played a first time ball in to Ewens but as she went to shoot Karen Mason slid in to flick the ball out for a corner.

Eight minutes before half time Spartans finally took the lead with Ewens firing a right foot shot into the bottom corner of the net. Ewens herself picked the ball up on the edge of the area and, after stepping past one challenge charged into the area sending a low right foot drive into the bottom corner, giving the home side the lead. ✖

Within three minutes of that opening goal Ewens got her second of the game, from 30 yards out, the striker sent a fierce lobbing drive past the outstretched hand of the Inverness keeper doubling both her goal tally and her team's half time lead.

The second half started in similar fashion to the first with Spartans pressurising the Inverness goal. Bobbi Beveridge, who had come on just before half-time for the injured McKean, picked the ball up on the halfway line and after a mazy run through a field of players smashed a fierce right foot shot that flew well wide of the mark.

However, Inverness, moments later had their first clear-cut opportunity and after some exquisite build-up play saw Finella Annand play the ball through to Becky Dingwall who, in using her pace to get past the Spartans defence, was just unable to beat the alert Rachel Harrison who was quick off the mark to clear the danger outside her area.

This opportunity was just a warning of what was to come and moments later Inverness reduced the deficit with Natalie Bodiam firing the ball home. After latching onto a Karen Mason clearance, the striker used her strength to hold off Victoria Farquhar before burying the ball past the diving Harrison.

✖ Inverness continued to press the Spartans goal and again a clever ball over the Spartans defence was only just cleared by Keeper Harrison who managed to head clear with Bodiam bearing down on her.


Bodiam was starting to cause the Spartans defence some serious problems due to her pace and movement and moments after her last opportunity the number 11 latched onto a Kirsty Deans pass and in one swift movement turned and fired a shot that whistled past the post.

With only 20 minutes remaining Spartans came close to regaining their two goal advantage with substitute Ann Taylor

firing in a right foot shot that went just wide of the top corner. Fitzpatrick picked the ball up on the half-way line and flicked the ball over to Claire Crosbie who found the run of Barry who quickly played in Taylor who was clear on the right wing. The striker, with the Inverness defence charging down on her, fired in a first time shot which sailed just past the post.

However this was a momentary lapse in the Inverness pressure with Dingwall and Bodium causing the Spartans defence serious problems. Dingwall, after managing to get clear of the chasing defence, fired in a shot that Harrison tipped onto the bar, and collected at the second opportunity.

With five minutes to go, the game started to open up and this allowed Spartans to come close to sealing the victory. Ewens, who was on a hat-trick, latched onto a Fitzpatrick through ball and, after taking the ball past two defenders, flicked it past the advancing keeper only to see it hit off the post and away for a goal kick.

It was however Inverness who left the ground the happier  as, with a minute to go, the away side were awarded a penalty with Victoria Farquhar, who had been solid in defence, was adjudged to have pushed Inverness striker Bodium just inside the area. Up stepped Inverness Captain Mason to fire the ball home and ending the game all square with a cup-tie between the same two teams taking place next week.

Spartans coach Mike Ross was disappointed with losing a two goal lead and felt his team should have played better. He said: "I am very disappointed with the result, after looking comfortable at half time our standards dropped and this allowed Inverness to get back into the game. However next week we play them again and I am looking for a strong and spirited response from everyone in the team."

Spartans: Rachel Harrison, Ashley Nicolson, Louise Magilton,

Louise Moultray, Victoria Farquhar, Chloe Fitzpatrick, Molly McKean (Bobbie Beveridge, 41 mins), Lana Clelland (Claire Crosbie, 70 mins), Louise Mason (Ann Taylor, 72 mins), Diana Barry, Sarah Ewens. Subs: Ann Taylor, Nichola Sturrock, Heli Hakkinen, Bobbie Beveridge, Danni Pagliarulo, Claire Crosbie

Inverness City Fc: Kim Jappy, Marnie McArthur, Sarah Main, Megan McCarthy, Karen Mason, Finella Annand, Hannah Markley (Megan Gillies, 69 mins), Kirsty Deans, Hannah Gordon (Becky Dingwall, 5 mins), Lorraine Cadden, Natalie Bodiam. Subs: Becky Dingwall, Beth MacDonald, Megan Gillies

Report by Edmund Brown and photographs by Carson Ralton.

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## Five things you need to know today

✖ **PORTOBELLO PARK – Dreams -VOCAL manifesto – Encouragement to vote – SPOKES manifesto**

Yesterday we carried the story that the campaigners for the building of the new Portobello High School PFANS were cheered by the fact that land campaigner, Andy Wightman was supporting their cause. Now the group campaigning against the siting of the new school in Portobello Park, PPAG, have made their replies on their Facebook page. They have said this:-

*“The issues involved in the appropriation of common good land are complex and what Andy Wightman is saying is not consistent with advice from elsewhere. In particular he fails to distinguish between common good land where there is a right to alienate, and common good land where there is no right to alienate. Both Andrew Ferguson, a very experienced*

*local authority solicitor who specialises in this area and Professor Robert Rennie, also a specialist in this area, have expressed views with which PPAG's senior counsel, Roy Martin QC, agrees. These views do not support those expressed by Mr Wightman."*

*In addition they offer a full explanation of what one of the foremost conveyancing professors said in support of a case involving Highland Council, and which they feel supports their own:-*

*"Further to Andy Wightman's remarks about the merits of our case, the following seems to suggest that, if City of Edinburgh had stuck with their original promise – to provide replacement open space – they might not be in their current situation. Professor Rennie's advice to Highland Council (4 August 2010) was that they could not appropriate Bignold Park, Wick for the building of a school because of its use as a public park. Bignold Park is considered to be inalienable common good land and so it cannot be appropriated for an educational purpose. Further, there is no method to obtain court consent for this as a petition under Section 75 would be incompetent. He said that the only possible counter argument would be if it can be shown that new land is being provided by the Council as a replacement park in which case Bignold Park, although originally part of the inalienable common good, would then form part of the alienable common good and could be appropriated for educational purposes. Having considered the case law Professor Rennie concluded that an alternative park would have to be available immediately Bignold Park ceases to be available failing which any objection to the Council's use of Bignold Park for educational purposes would be likely to succeed."*

So if what the campaigners are saying is that all that Edinburgh Council have to do is offer some ground in replacement to the part being taken up by a new school, then is this possible and where would it be?

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Much wetness and raining here in the capital this morning. We chose this library photo of Baxterbear at the Castle, but you will see a photo of him with his Easter Egg if you have a look

at his website. We hope you all had a Happy Easter and that you were well-behaved with the chocolate!

If your dreams were not sweet enough however then Richard Wiseman has the app for you. A new iPhone app called Dream:ON will detect when you are about to dream and play suitable music.... If you download it then you will become part of a big experiment to try it out. The study has been launched at the Science Festival according to [The Guardian](#).

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VOCAL is a charitable organisation which supports carers with information, training and advocacy. They have published their own manifesto setting out what they would like to see in a new council after May 2012. This is a copy of it here:-

[Local Manifesto 12 a 4](#)

If you are one of the 47,404 carers in The City of Edinburgh, then you might find some of their information useful. They also have some funding available to allow carers a short break. Contact [VOCAL on their website](#).

We have a [comprehensive list of all the council candidates here listed by ward](#), with a link to their individual profiles and copies of their election leaflets where we have them – and we have quite a few now, but still need more!

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You have to register by 18 April 2012 to be able to vote in the upcoming election. The council is running a competition and you might win a year's pass to Edinburgh Leisure's gyms and pools, but only if you add your comment to [this blog post here](#)...and there are only 11 comments at the time of writing so you could be in with a chance!

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Local cycling group Spokes have also published a manifesto of their own suggestions to candidates as to what they might say about cycling and cyclists in the city. You can read that here:-

[SPOKES 2012 Election Manifesto FINAL](#)

We attended the hustings that Spokes organised a week or so back and you can follow what each candidate had to say to the cyclists [in our Liveblog article.](#)

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## Further drop in value of Capital's homes



Latest figures from ESPC – the largest property marketing firm in East Central Scotland – show that the average selling price of a property in Edinburgh between January and March was £195,221. This meant prices were 5.9% lower than at the start of 2011 when the average house price in the Capital stood at £207,497 and actually takes prices back to where they were in the first quarter of 2009, according to the firm.

Recent months have seen an upturn in the number of homes selling and this continued in March according to their records. During the first three months of the year the number of completed sales was 12% higher than that recorded at the start of 2011.

David Marshall, business analyst with ESPC commented:- “Recently we’ve seen an increased willingness from sellers to accept a slightly lower offer in order to get their sale



completed. Over the last three months, over 80% of properties sold have been secured for less than their Home Report valuation, with homes going for an average of about 6% less than the valuation figure. As a result prices have either remained flat or inched down in most areas but the number of homes being sold has risen.

Edinburgh has seen a slightly larger decrease in prices compared to last year but in most cases house values are now back in line with, or slightly above the levels we saw at the start of 2009.”

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## Five things you need to know today



### **Clipper Round the World yacht race – Bus tours – Films – Storytelling Centre – The Steamie**

The Edinburgh Inspiring Capital yacht is preparing to race the next leg which is from Oakland Bay in San Francisco to Panama. Do you know the people who are taking part in the Round the World Clipper Race? [Their full details are here](#) and we would love to know a bit more about them and how they have enjoyed the experience!

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There is a new bus tour on the block. Lothian Buses has started a new tour around the UNESCO World Heritage Site taking in the delights of the New Town amongst others. [More](#)

[details here.](#)


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A lecturer at Edinburgh University wants all your videos. He wants all the clips he can get to make a documentary film as part of Creative Scotland. [The Edinburgh Evening News](#) has more. Have you seen our new live video clips? They are at the top right hand side of the site. Our latest is an interview with the Open Eye Gallery about their exhibition. We have also filmed the opening of a new post office in Bruntsfield and have clips of a couple of council candidates. We also have [the full list of all council candidates here](#) with their election leaflets where we have them, and a link through to their full profile. We are also compiling a list of all Edinburgh hustings and you can add in any that we have missed on our notice Board [which you will find here.](#)

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News from The Scottish Storytelling Centre about something on tomorrow morning:-

### **A treasure hunt for carrots with lapin**

 [Tania Czajka](#) has a cunning plan to teach little ones basic French... dress it up in a cute puppet adventure and before you know it your little ones will know their pois from their chou!

Czajka was inspired to set up her company after the children she worked with in nursery schools responded positively to her French puppet games. *'I realised they could learn so much and so easily through puppetry'*. [Read a full preview from The List.](#)

Join us on **Tuesday 10 Apr** at **11am** or **3pm** for Lapin's adventure as he searches out a special [carrot for Easter](#)... perhaps with the help of the Easter Bunny!

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Celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of one of Scotland's best loved plays!

It's Hogmanay in a Glasgow wash house, and the girls need to get their washing done before the bells. Join Dolly, Magrit, Doreen and Mrs Culfeathers as they laugh and cry their way through the last day of the year – with a little help for the not so handy Andy.

First performed in May 1987, ***The Steamie*** has delighted and entertained audiences all over the world. Writer Tony Roper directs this new anniversary touring production. [Tickets here](#)

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## Land Reform campaigner lends support to Portobello park petition



*Common Good expert describes park protesters claim as 'nonsense'*

Andy Wightman, expert on the Common Good land in Scotland and well known campaigner for land reform, has criticised claims by a protest group about the implications of a recent court

ruling.

The Portobello Park Action Group (PPAG) has lodged an appeal after losing a legal bid to stop a new Portobello High School being built on what is known as Common Good land. After almost six years in preparation the project was due to start on site last autumn, but the supporters of the new school say there are fears the legal appeal could delay completion of a new school for years.

Lady Dorrian, in the Inner House of the Court of Session, dismissed [PPAG's](#) case because of the 'considerable delay in bringing this petition' but also made clear that the case would have failed on merit.

Since launching their appeal PPAG have made several claims about [Lady Dorrian's judgement](#) that have angered local residents who are in favour of the school. A petition has triggered an emergency meeting of Portobello Community Council, (due to be held next week), to demand that PPAG remove misleading claims from their website and ask that they drop their appeal "in the interests of the community in general and the children and young people of Portobello in particular."

Asked to comment on claims about the case, Andy Wightman made several remarks.

On the suggestion that the ruling could lead to Common Good assets being sold across Scotland, Andy Wightman said:- "It is nonsense to suggest that the ruling provides a green light for selling off common good assets. Sales will be governed by existing legal precedent and the Portobello case has no bearing on them."

Regarding PPAG's statement that the ruling meant "no-one will be able to challenge decisions to appropriate or alienate common good land in law" Andy Wightman noted that decisions would still be open to challenge, that the ruling had

clarified the legal situation regarding the appropriation (change of use) of Common Good land, and that “the Portobello decision has no bearing whatsoever on alienations.”

[Andy Wightman](#) also said:-“The appeal would turn on grounds that are extremely narrow and would be unlikely to succeed.”

Sean Watters, Chair of Portobello for a New School (PFANS), commented:-

“This confirms what we’ve been saying; PPAG’s statements about the recent court case are simply wrong. They need to stop making these claims.

Most importantly they need to recognise that their appeal has little hope of success. It will only cause more delay and expense, as well as anger within the local community. We desperately need a new High School. It’s time to get on and build it.”

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# **Richard Bacon – Live from Edinburgh**



*Richard Bacon is to broadcast his BBC Radio 5 live show from the Edinburgh International Science Festival next Wednesday 11 April 2012 .*

The Science Festival will play host to the broadcast from the National Museum of Scotland between 2-4pm, featuring a line up of some of the UK's most exciting and interesting scientists who are also appearing at the Festival.

Joining Richard on the show will be stand up scientist Robin Ince and Professor Robin Dunbar, discussing the science behind comedy. They will reveal what happens to us when we laugh, and how we do it.

Blue Peter's resident scientist, Steve Mould, will also be making an appearance along with Helen Arney who together make up two thirds of the Festival of Spoken Nerd – the country's premier night for the insatiably sci-curious.

Flying in from down under, Australia's premier maths communicator, Simon Pampena will chat with Richard to try and find out just why are the Brits so bad at maths? And leading physicist Prof. Jim al-Khalili will provide listeners with a beginners guide to physics.

Richard has been presenting his programme on BBC Radio 5 live for the past 2 years, with 1.6m weekly listeners and 35,000 podcast downloads every day. The show often features leading figures from the world of science, showcasing Richard's love of the subject, with notable guests appearing on his show in the past including Adam Hart-Davis, Simon Singh, Kevin Fong and Professor Brian Cox.

Richard built his career presenting iconic shows including Blue Peter, the Big Breakfast and Top of the Pops and most recently presented a BBC 3 documentary investigating internet trolling.

The Edinburgh International Science Festival runs until Sunday 15 April. Full details of the programme and all tickets can be found at [www.sciencefestival.co.uk](http://www.sciencefestival.co.uk). Tickets can also be purchased by phone through the Science Festival Box Office on 0844 557 2686 or in person at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival shop, 180 High Street, Edinburgh (open 10.30am – 5.30pm Monday to Friday, 11.00am to 5.30pm Saturday).

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# Crags centre reopens



## *Sports Centre Tips-off with Fresh Start*

The Crags Community Sports Centre got a fresh start last week at a 'tip-off' event to mark the re-opening of the Centre.

The 'tip-off' marked the official hand over from The City of Edinburgh Council to a new community organisation set up specifically to run the Centre for the long-term. The new charity has a strong basketball theme with local club Boroughmuir Blaze and governing body **basketball**scotland teaming up with Castle Rock Edinvar Housing Association.

Local residents, volunteers, council leaders, community organisations and politicians got together to mark the occasion which featured many local people who campaigned for over twenty years to have the Centre built.

The 'tip-off' event included the March round of the South-Central Primary Schools Basketball League which features eight teams from surrounding schools. League leaders St Peter's and James Gillespie's Primary Schools are featured in the event photo alongside Councillor Ron Cairns, Vice Convener of Culture and Leisure for City of Edinburgh Council and attendees on the day.

Councillor Cairns said: "Today marks the start of an exciting new chapter for the Crags Community Sports Centre and the local community here. Residents and local groups will be able to enjoy regular community access, with areas such as the

Games Hall and Studio to be used on a frequent basis by local schools, parent and toddler groups and Canongate Youth Project. I wish The Craggs Community Sports Centre all the very best in this worthwhile new venture.”

Eugene Mullan, Convener of The Craggs Community Sports Centre said: “The ‘tip-off’ marked an important day in the story of The Craggs and it was heartening to see so many people who care about the Centre’s future. We’re looking forward to working with all our partners to create a sustainable long-term enterprise at the Centre.”

Heather Macnaughton, Head of Neighbourhood Regeneration at Castle Rock Edinvar Housing Association said: “We are delighted to be working with the new Craggs Community Sport Centre. The facility lies within a neighbourhood where we have a significant amount of customers living in our affordable homes. We are keen for the local community to have access to a new range of healthy activities and increase their opportunities to meet new people. Castle Rock Edinvar will be providing the property and environmental maintenance service for the facility.

From basketball to break-dancing to roller derby, the Craggs has a range of new and exciting activities. Edinburgh residents can now get involved by attending one of the classes for kids or adults; or by joining one of the partner sports clubs.

The Centre has one of the largest games halls in Edinburgh, a dance/fitness studio, social reception area, changing facilities, kitchen, storage space, car park and an open-access outdoor kick-pitch.

Next on the event schedule for The Craggs is a Community Open Day on Saturday 21 April.

The Community Open Day will offer people the opportunity to learn about the Centre’s activities and contribute ideas for



future projects.

Information about The Craggs is available at [www.cragssports.com](http://www.cragssports.com)

10 Bowmont Place, off the Pleasance, Edinburgh, EH8 9RY

Email them on [craggs@cragssports.com](mailto:craggs@cragssports.com) or telephone them on 0131 667 3334

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# Five things you need to know today



**Horse racing today – Council assets – New faces at the Zoo – Beauty time – Firewalking**

The Reporter was out and about in East Lothian yesterday at The Museum of Flight which we highly recommend to you. Also in East Lothian there is racing at Musselburgh today!

Musselburgh Racecourse has advised that race times for both weekend meetings have changed to accommodate television coverage and the first race at East Lothian on Easter Sunday is at 2.20pm, with gates opening at 11.30am.

Easter Sunday is Musselburgh's largest family day event of the year and the £20,000 Musselburgh Gold Cup is the headline attraction, vying for attention against a host of free family entertainment and attractions, including children's favourite [Peppa Pig](#).

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## *GREENS WILL SELL OFF TRULY USELESS ASSETS*

Edinburgh Greens have pledged this week to sell off some of the council's most useless assets and continue to protect those that really matter to communities.

The Greens want the Council to conduct a comprehensive review of its 'civic assets', a list which is known to include a single numberplate worth an estimated £500,000.

[Councillor Steve Burgess](#), Green councillor for Southside / Newington ward said,

"With council funding being cut and public facilities being closed down, now is the right time to sell off the Council's truly useless assets and raise much needed funds to invest for everyone's benefit. Any Council that is hoarding a numberplate worth half a million pounds has got its priorities wrong.

"During our first period on the Council, Greens have fought hard to protect public assets that people really value, such as leisure facilities and nurseries. Any way to bring in funding to support these sorts of public services has got to be worth a serious look."

The number plate came to light in 2009 when the [Edinburgh Evening News](#) reported that the arrangement of the letter and number was illegal.

All candidates for the 2012 Council elections [are listed here for your convenience](#) with links to their individual profiles.

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By popular demand, a new clan has arrived at Edinburgh Zoo.

A much requested addition, Edinburgh Zoo is delighted to announce that meerkats are back!

Feisty social animals, there's never a quiet moment in a meerkat gang. If they're not fighting to be top "kat", meerkats are often embroiled in battles, competitions, betrayals, romances, seductions and even politics that would rival the Tudors.

Darren McGarry, Head of Animals at Edinburgh Zoo, comments:

"Edinburgh Zoo used to be home to a group of meerkats, and we've had so many requests from our visitors to bring them back, that we're delighted to oblige. Appropriately known as a clan of meerkats, we've dubbed our new family the McMeerkats! Our new clan is made up of a family group of eight males and three females.

"Fascinating creatures, there's never going to be a dull moment with these little characters around. Meerkats can have fun with almost anything and are often spotted play fighting and wrestling. There's also always one meerkat keeping a look out and acting as a sentry – ready to alert the rest of the mob to any threats. They're real team players who work together as a group, while some lookout for danger; others forage for food to feed the group.

"The meerkats have settled in well to their enclosure and have wasted no time in exploring their new home. Full of fun and personality, you could easily watch these little characters all day!"

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One for the girls this – or perhaps the more enlightened men out there who realise the value of a manicure...

Could your hands and nails do with a little TLC after the cold winter? Then head to Chamomile Sanctuary, the luxury day spa at Edinburgh's west end, where until the end of April a mini manicure is just £15 – a saving of £10.

If you're a Shellac fan then 'Shellac Tuesday' is for you! Each Tuesday during April, £19 instead of £35 for a mini manicure and £24 instead of £40 for a mini pedicure, both with Shellac. So with the arrival of all the fab new spring-coloured polishes, there's no reason not to get your nails done to match each outfit!

For further information or to book, call 0131-220 1000 or visit [www.chamomilesanctuary.com](http://www.chamomilesanctuary.com)

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And if you are feeling really brave you could get along to Princes Street Gardens and try your luck at [fire walking...](#) We did not recommend this and you will undertake it at your own risk...!

Happy Easter!