

The Dangers of Ship-to-Ship transfers

by Robin Harper MSP

✘ I was not born or educated in Edinburgh, but have lived here for over forty years, and have had the honour and pleasure of representing Edinburgh and the wider Lothians region in the Scottish Parliament since I was elected in its first term over a decade ago.

Over the past decade, I have enjoyed unprecedented access to the city and its people, and have been delighted and surprised in equal measure. Edinburgh is my adopted and naturalised home and I cannot envisage ever leaving here in the future.

I love living and working in Edinburgh; its small scale, its rugged beauty, its spectacular architecture, its turbulent history, its wonderful green spaces, and its cosmopolitan people have together won me over and captured my heart.

I am as much now part of Edinburgh as Edinburgh is part of me, and I enjoy a fantastic relationship with the place that has been my home, my work and my most important interest for so long.

This is why I have sought to protect Edinburgh from the worst examples of the often well-intentioned schemes that are regularly foisted upon it by inconsiderate developers, selfish big business or blinkered local politicians.

For example, in recent years, I have worked with local residents and community campaigns to stop inappropriate developments in Haymarket and the Old Town, and I have thrown my weight behind campaigns to save important community assets such as Meadowbank Stadium and the Hillend Ski Centre.

Unfortunately, yet another threat to the city is looming over the horizon. Controls that were approved by the last UK Government, which put an end to plans for ship-to-ship oil transfers in the Firth of Forth are under threat from Tory and LibDem MPs in the UK Parliament.

These hard won controls were the result of a long campaign that was supported by local communities on the Firth of Forth coastline and the environmental movement as a whole. They were prompted by fears of a disastrous oil spill in the Firth, which is a Special Area of Conservation and provides a livelihood for the communities that surround it through tourism, fishing and outdoor pursuits. The shipping industry is fiercely lobbying the new UK Government to backtrack on the controls that were put in place, and a significant group of 'ConDem' MPs have been convinced. Interestingly, none of them are Scottish and all of them live in and represent the south-west of England.

The need for regulation of the oil industry has been starkly highlighted recently by the disaster in the Gulf of Mexico. I am determined to make sure that a similar kind of tragedy does not happen in the Firth of Forth.

Oil transfers should be confined to licensed ports where the proper safety measures are fully in place. They should not be allowed in open water, where the potential for accidents and pollution is increased many-fold and they should not be allowed in an area that is so important both ecologically but also economically.

Oil from the Torrey Canyon disaster off the Welsh coast is still adversely affecting wildlife some forty years later. We cannot afford to risk the Firth of Forth in this way.

The regulations to restrict ship-to-ship oil transfers are essential if we are to meet our international legal obligations to protect the environment. Now, just as those

regulations are finally delivered, it is disturbing to see LibDem and Tory MPs in Westminster encouraging ministers to backtrack, especially when the disaster in the Gulf of Mexico shows how high the price can be when corners are cut by the oil industry.

Funding announced for museums and galleries

Details of the latest cash awards for Recognised Collections have been announced by Museums Galleries Scotland. Seven Scottish museums whose collections are of National Significance will directly benefit from funding amounting to more than £200,000.

Funding of over £21,000 will allow for innovative research by the University of Edinburgh into its fantastic collection of historic musical instruments. Using a computer-linked pantograph, a technical-drawing tool, the museum can now produce detailed computer images of its historic keyboard instruments without risk of damage to the artefacts.

The award makes the University the first museum outside the US to conduct this type of research into the design and construction of early keyboards.

Funding will also go to the Royal College of Surgeons to create an archive capturing details of the lives and experiences of fellows of the college on film for the first time.

Managed by Museums Galleries Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Government, the Recognition Scheme ensures Scotland's

most important collections are identified, cared for, protected and promoted to wider audiences.

Culture Minister Fiona Hyslop, said:

“Right across Scotland, museums and galleries play a tremendously important role in supporting tourism, the economy and local communities. The Recognition Scheme rightly ensures there are additional resources available for some of the most important collections in Scotland. These nationally significant collections are of great value to the people of Scotland and to the millions of visitors we welcome from around the world every year.”

Joanne Orr, CEO of Museums Galleries Scotland, said:

“The 36 Recognised Collections of National Significance are open for people to visit all over Scotland. The stories they tell are so important to the past, present and future of the nation. Money we make available to them ensures they can care for their collections and find new and exciting ways to deliver the visitor experience.”

John Scally, Director of University Collections said:

“The University of Edinburgh’s musical collections have reaped the benefits of their Recognition status, not least in the special funding made available on a competitive basis. This award allows us to carry out innovative research conducted for the first time in Scotland which will ultimately widen access to the collection.”

Museums Galleries Scotland represent, through membership, over 350 museums and galleries across Scotland, which welcomes 25 million visitors and provides £800 million in value to the Scottish economy.

To date, 36 collections have been Recognised as being of national significance to Scotland. All are eligible to apply

for Recognition funding from Museums Galleries Scotland.

Projects awarded Recognition funding support from Museums Galleries Scotland in this round are:

* Aberdeen City Council – £39,754

Documenting and cataloguing collections is time consuming very important work. The funding will allow Aberdeen City Council to employ two documentation assistants to carry out essential work in cataloguing of the Recognised Collections. The assistants will be updating records and uploading images. The assistants will work on the collections over a period of 12 months.

* Auchindrain Trust – £40,000

Funding will allow Auchindrain Trust to further progress the business and organisational development of Auchindrain. The business and organisational development work focuses on achieving long term sustainability for the Recognised Collection.

* Dumfries & Galloway Council – £40,000

Funding will allow Dumfries and Galloway Council to undertake a project that will augment the security at a number of their museum sites.

* North Lanarkshire Council – £39,948

The cash will fund a project that will increase public access and enjoyment of the North collection through the provision of new display cases, new methods of interpretation and community engagement projects within Motherwell Heritage Centre.

* Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh – £26,202

Funding will allow the Royal College of Surgeons to further an innovative project to establish a filmed oral history archive. The archive will capture on film details on the lives and experiences of Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons. The finished films will be used in a permanent display within the pathology museum helping visitors to interpret the Recognised Collection.

* Scottish Football Association Museum Trust – £39,064

This is the first project by the Scottish Football Museum to receive Recognition funding since their collection was awarded Recognition status in 2009. The funding will enhance interpretation of historically important objects within the collection. It will also help to improve the wider display of collections from specific eras through the use, where possible, of period photography, film and audio.

* University of Edinburgh – £21,456

This project will revolutionise access to the University of Edinburgh's Collection of Historic Musical Instruments by enabling the University to undertake research into the entire collection of early keyboard instruments. The funding will support the appointment of a Keyboards Research Assistant who will document the instruments using innovative technical drawing equipment, a pantograph, also purchased through this project. The University will be the first museum outside the States to use a pantograph to conduct valuable research in to the design and construction of early keyboards in this way.

New Queen's Counsel announced

Her Majesty The Queen has been pleased to approve the appointment of seven new Queen's Counsel, on the recommendation of First Minister Alex Salmond.

The new appointees are: Andrew Lawson Brown, Robert Bruce Weir, Shona Jessica Alexandra Margaret Haldane, David Andrew Campbell Young, Roderick William Dunlop, and Indranil Julian Ghosh all of whom are members of the Faculty of Advocates; and Lindy Ann Patterson who is a Solicitor Advocate.

Those appointed were nominated by the Rt Hon Lord Hamilton, the Lord Justice General. With the agreement of Lord Hamilton,

John Neilson QPM acted as an observer of the process and provided the First Minister with a separate report on his findings.

The rank of Queen's Counsel is generally reserved for those who have distinguished themselves in practice in the Supreme Courts. Advocates and Solicitors with Rights of Audience in the Supreme Courts are eligible to apply to the Lord Justice General, Scotland's senior judge. Before making recommendations, the Lord Justice General consults other judges, the Lord Advocate, the Dean of the Faculty of Advocates and the President of the Law Society of Scotland.

Government introduce chronic medication service

People with long term conditions are to be given 'care plans' by their pharmacist to help them manage their ill-health better, it was announced today.

Through an integrated patient record sharing system between GPs and pharmacists, the Chronic Medication Service, once fully implemented, will:

- * Use pharmacists skills more effectively
- * Allow patients to register with their pharmacist, building up a relationship and receiving personalised care
- * Ensure that patients receive the right medication at the right time – improving patient safety and medicine wastage
- * Allow GPs to issue serial prescriptions lasting up to 24 or 48 weeks

Health Secretary Nicola Sturgeon said:

“The Chronic Medication Service will transform the role of pharmacists, making better use of their skills and expertise as they work alongside GPs to provide quality care for the millions of Scots who use our pharmacies the most.

“As well as improving patient care, this service will also help to reduce drug wastage. In these tough financial times it is important to be as efficient as possible. Thanks to this new system, patients will receive a new five star service within existing budgets.”

Over 80 million prescriptions are dispensed each year. Around two-thirds are given for long term conditions.

A long-term condition is a health problem that is likely to last longer than a year and needs ongoing medical care, like high blood pressure or diabetes.

The new community pharmacy contract is designed to meet the needs of the Scottish people. It builds on the principles outlined in Better Health Better Care by improving access to NHS services and promoting collaborative working between community pharmacists and GPs to further improve patient care. It comprises of four core services:

- * Acute Medication Service (AMS)
- * Minor Ailment Service (MAS)
- * Public Health Service (PHS)
- * Chronic Medication Service (CMS)

CMS is being implemented from May-December 2010 – community pharmacy contractors are each registering up to 50 patients during this period. Fees to community pharmacies for providing CMS will be provided from within the existing Community Pharmacy Global Sum.

Fees to community pharmacies for providing CMS will be provided from within current budgets so there are no additional costs

Development work for CMS has also been carried out within existing budgets. The estimated cost to deliver ePharmacy, including processing community pharmacy payments, is £5.2 million per year. As CMS will use existing infrastructure it is not possible to isolate a cost for CMS.

What's on This Week? – 30th August

On 6th September Blackwells Bookshop 53-62 South Bridge are holding a Book Quiz at 6pm.

James Robertson will be reading from and signing copies of his new book 'And The Land Lay Still' at Waterstones Edinburgh West End on 2 September at 6.30 p.m. More details [here](#).

David Purdie and Hugh Dodd are talking about golf at The National Library of Scotland on 2 September at 19.00. They promise to lay bare the lies of the links..... No tickets required.

Join storyteller Bea Ferguson on 4th September for a half day beginners' workshop introducing the skills involved in sharing stories, songs and rhymes with 3-6 year olds at [The Storytelling Centre](#) 43-45 High Street. Workshop from 10am to 1pm.

Again at The Storytelling Centre on 5th September there is what is promised to be an inspiring day of workshop tasters, talks and discussions, and storytelling for anyone interested in using storytelling within their work or community. Find out more about the [Centre's](#) work in education, health and wellbeing, heritage and environment and share your own ideas

for storytelling in your area. Also open to new and prospective members. From 12 noon to 5pm. Book in advance and you can have your lunch too.

From Friday 03 to Sunday 05 September 2010 up to 1,000 of the World's best elite and age group duathletes will descend on Edinburgh's Holyrood Park for the [2010 GE Edinburgh ITU Duathlon World Championships](#). They will compete for six World Championship titles, twenty-seven age group gold medals and a total prize fund of 75,000 Euros.

The 2010 GE Edinburgh ITU Duathlon World Championships is the most prestigious duathlon competition ever to be staged in the UK and offers the perfect opportunity for Edinburgh residents, visitors to the city and running, cycling and multisport enthusiasts to watch the best duathletes in the world demonstrate their incredible levels of endurance and tactical ability.

'Start in St Andrew Square' will take place from Saturday 4 – Monday 6 September. Essential Edinburgh and Scottish Business in the Community highlight sustainable living.

On Saturday 4th September. A visit to a typical Victorian walled garden in [the Grange](#). To the original box-hedged layout have been added new plantings in beds, against walls and in pots. The present owners have collected an interesting variety of plants and trees inspired by decades of garden visiting. Coffee and biscuits provided.

The Bank of Scotland Fireworks take to the skies over Edinburgh Castle on Sunday 5 September. If you are not keen to go to Princes Street itself then you can go to [Inverleith Park](#) where you will get a great view from the family viewing area.

No Excuses Networking is holding an after works event on 3rd September. No details till nearer the time but general information [here](#).

Lynne McNicoll is going to raise £150,000 for charity this month. You could help her by donating or attending some of her fundraisers! More information [here](#).

Business Breakfast and AGM of The Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce on 1st September at the EICC. You can book your place [here](#).

You might just have time to register for the [Ladies Driving Challenge](#) on 12th September 2010. Carol Smillie says it's the ultimate girls' day out. You will have the chance to drive one or two of the following vehicles including: fire engines, double decker buses, police vehicles, artic Lorries, 7 person conference bike and a massive excavator!

Remember the [Farmers' Market](#) this Saturday from 9am till 2pm on Castle Terrace.

And the [Portobello Organic Market](#) at Brighton Park, Brighton Place

Saturday 04 Sep 10.00 am – 2.00 pm

Sea eagles reintroduced to Scotland

Nineteen white-tailed sea eagles, gifted to Scotland as part of a reintroduction programme, have been released into the wild from a secret location in Fife.

The magnificent birds of prey, the UK's largest, arrived from Norway in June for the fourth year of the East Scotland Sea

Eagle reintroduction project, a partnership scheme between RSPB Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage and Forestry Commission Scotland.

Since their arrival, the birds have been reared in specially built aviaries until they were old enough to fledge. They will now join Scotland's growing white-tailed eagle population and help restore this species to parts of their former range in the east of Scotland. This project is also contributing to wider conservation efforts across Europe for sea eagles.

The 'flying barn door', once a regular sight in Scotland's skies, was driven to extinction by game preservers and collectors in the Victorian era, with the last individual bird killed in 1916. It only returned to the UK following a successful reintroduction to the West of Scotland, on the Island of Rum in 1975.

Claire Smith, RSPB Scotland East Coast Sea Eagle Project Officer, said: "A diet of pike, haddock and roe deer has helped make sure these birds are fit and ready for life in the wild. Each bird has been fitted with a radio and wing tags so both project staff and the public can follow their progress. Already we receive many calls from the public thrilled to have seen a sea eagle on the east coast. For 2010 we've chosen yellow wing tags with black letters and numbers, and as usual any sightings can be reported to us via email on eastscotlandseaeagles@rspb.org.uk. Since the start of the east coast project in 2007, the survival of the released birds has been good. We now expect that in the next few years some of our older birds will begin to set up territory on the east coast of Scotland and, one day produce chicks of their own."

Susan Davies, SNH's director of policy and advice, said: " In this International Year of Biodiversity it is particularly good to see the efforts to restore the sea eagle population across Scotland continue. These new recruits will help ensure that this impressive bird's future, as an important part of

Scotland's biodiversity, is secured. As more people choose to stay at home for holidays, and as wildlife watching becomes ever more popular, our sea eagles help provide a local attraction that contributes to the local economy."

Charlie Taylor, Forestry Commission Scotland's district manager in Tayside added:"White-tailed eagles are magnificent birds and once seen they are never forgotten. The reintroduction programmes are very important and have been a success story so far. Hopefully, in time, everyone will be able to enjoy watching these birds on the east coast of Scotland."

Charity Cycle



Julia McGlashan is
photographed with her
daughter Cameron

This story is a break with tradition! It is not truly an Edinburgh story but it is an inspiring story about one charity fundraiser. (And one of the Reporter's great friends so you see it it's not what you know....)

We wonder if there are any of you out there in Edinburgh who plan to go on the cycling trip to Vietnam in November? If so get in touch and we will be happy to tell Edinburgh all about your story and why you are raising money for charity!

Or if you are doing anything else for charity then get in touch too – we plan a new section about charities.

Intrepid Aberdeen mum, Julia McGlashan is set to undertake a mammoth adventure in November, 2010, where she will cycle 400km from Vietnam to Cambodia in aid of the ARCHIE Foundation. Julia has already carried out a series of exciting fundraising events for the challenge since February 2010.

Human Resources Consultant Julia commented, "Last summer my daughter Cameron (8) was very ill and spent time in the Royal Aberdeen Childrens Hospital (RACH). After a few weeks they discovered that Cameron had Osteomyelitis in her arm, which is an infection in the bone. Following an operation and 10 days of intravenous antibiotics, Cameron made a great recovery."

Julia added, "Everybody Cameron and I came into contact with at Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital was absolutely fantastic and as a thank you, I have decided to do a Charity cycle from Vietnam to Cambodia in November this year. All money raised will go to the ARCHIE Foundation, which is the official charity for the Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital."

The challenging cycle route, which is to take six days, will start from Vietnamese Saigon, now Ho Chi Minh City, through the rice paddies and waterways of the beautiful Mekong Delta into Cambodia. She will travel through breathtaking rural landscapes, dotted with ruins of ancient civilisations and small towns where Buddhist temples nestle amongst French colonial buildings and ramshackle houses.

Julia commented, "It's the heat and humidity that makes the challenge so tough. No matter how hard I train in Aberdeenshire, nothing will prepare me for the heat! I have never done anything like this before and I feel a mix of fear and excitement!"

She added "There are over 20 people doing the cycle but there isn't anyone else from Aberdeen and I don't know any of the other cyclists – my biggest motivator in my training is that I don't want to be the person at the back that everyone is waiting for, so that drives me to do a 60/70 mile cycle every weekend, and a few shorter cycles during the week."

Julia kick started her fundraising by asking for personal sponsorship from friends and family. The response from this was great and has continued to come through since she started fundraising in February 2010.

She mentioned, "People have been so generous – not just

friends and family but also people who I have met who want to support my effort for ARCHIE.

It was my Dad's 80th Birthday at the end of January, and instead of presents my Dad asked for the guests at his birthday celebrations to contribute to ARCHIE, which raised over £450. This took my fundraising over my initial target of £3,000 so I doubled my target to £6,000 and began planning some other events!"

At the end of May, 2010 a dedicated group of friends joined her in a charity pub-crawl around Aberdeen. They raised over £1,000 and had a great night out too!

The summer has been fairly quiet but Julia has been busy planning the next wave of fundraising events.

At the end of August Julia will be opening her house up as a restaurant where she will provide guests with a 3 course dinner and they will contribute what they think is a suitable amount to her fundraising.

She said, "I will provide the food and guests bring their own wine so 100% of their donations will go to the ARCHIE Foundation. So far I have 4 nights booked which includes, friends, work colleagues and classmates from Matwork Pilates, and course my daughter Cameron will be chief waitress on these nights!"

The Grand Finale to her fundraising is in early November when she will host a Ladies Swishing Party at her house where friends donate never or seldom worn clothes for sale.

Tickets will cost £10 but guests will be provided with a lunch and a mini beauty treatment courtesy of a beautician supplied by the B's Knees in Oldmeldrum.

Julia commented, "I didn't have a bike when I signed up for the charity cycle but one of my friends Helen Turner has given me her bike for the duration of my training. Although I have invested in a gel seat and a gel cover to make those long cycles just a little less painful!"

Peter Hutchison, ARCHIE Community Fundraising Manager commented, "What an extraordinary challenge by an extraordinary person. Julia has shown fantastic devotion to the ARCHIE Foundation by her series of fundraising events, and it sounds like she has had a lot of fun at the same time."

Should you wish to sponsor Julia, please visit her Justgiving page, www.justgiving.com/Julia-McGlashan24

Happy Hour – with coffee!

An Edinburgh man has been shortlisted in a nation-wide competition to find the world's best coffee barista – and is inviting locals to help raise cash for charity by sampling his coffee creations.

Liam Reid, who works at Costa Coffee in Edinburgh's Fort Kinnaird, has reached the regional finals of Costa's Barista of the Year contest, which will take place in Edinburgh on 8 September.

The 18-year old will battle against 7 other Costa baristas from Scotland and the North of England to see who can produce the perfect cup of hand-made coffee. Each contestant will present their own signature drink, which is judged on its taste, presentation and innovation – and to mark his success, Liam is inviting locals to sample his creation to raise funds for charity.

Liam said:- "I've been working at Costa for about eight months now and wanted to enter Barista of the Year to put my new skills to the test. It's fantastic to be shortlisted and have my hard-work and passion for great coffee recognised."

Costa Coffee will be holding a coffee "Happy Hour" from 5.30pm on Tuesday 31 August at Edinburgh's Straiton Park store, giving customers the chance to drop in and try Liam's signature drink – a 'Winter Warmer' orange and cinnamon cortissimo topped with cream and dark chocolate shavings – for free. Donations will be collected at the sampling for The Costa Foundation, which improves the welfare of coffee-growing communities in countries such as Colombia, Guatemala, Uganda, Ethiopia and Costa Rica.

The Barista of the Year final takes place on 21 October 2010 at the Costa Roastery in Lambeth, London where the company was founded in 1971 by the Costa brothers.

Ten finalists from around the world will be tested once again on their ability to produce a technically perfect cup of hand-made coffee and their knowledge and understanding of the industry. They are also judged on their overall performance, flair and passion for great coffee. They will also have to excite the judges, lead by the Costa Master of Coffee, Gennaro Pelliccia by creating their own unique signature drink.

Last year's winning drink, created by Gabor Kamondi from the Costa store in Dorking, England was Pick Mint, a blend of Costa's signature espresso with mint, inspired by his love of the famous chocolates, After Eights.

Big Beach Busk

Portobello Promenade

Saturday 28 Aug 12.00 pm -> 22.00 pm

The Big Beach Busk. Porty Prom runs for about a mile along Edinburgh's sea front. A mile long stretch of excellent beach with a couple of great pubs (the Dalriada and Espy are both good music venues) and the Beach House coffee shop. By my reckoning 80 buskers at 20m intervals would give us an uninterrupted mile of music.



Photo courtesy of Edinburgh
Inspiring Capital

Starting at noon, Saturday August the 28th – with no plans for

stopping. We can take to the beach when it gets dark and get a bonfire going.

If you're a musician, mime, juggler, statue or robot sign up and get down to the beach. All performers, all day and all good fun.

According to the organisers:-“There is no intention of this becoming a heavily organised festival event. This is fun. No rules. No conditions. Just a massive bunch of musicians and performer having good times on a great stretch of beach.”

See [Facebook](#) group for more details.

Photography competition

Do you feel inspired by the beauty of the Pentland Hills? If so, you should enter the biennial Pentland Inspirations Art and Photographic competition.

This is a competition aimed at encouraging visitors to the Pentland Hills Regional Park to capture the natural beauty of the area as either a painting, drawing or photograph.

The Pentland Hills have been a source of inspiration for many people over the centuries including Sir Walter Scott and Robert Louis Stevenson who used Pentland places and characters in their work. The Hills are still providing inspiration today, as shown by the success of the competition in 2008 with 21 paintings and 141 photographs entered. The Inspirational exhibition formed from the competition will tour for five months throughout Edinburgh, the Lothians, Borders and South Lanarkshire.

Everyone who enters will receive a voucher entitling them to 10% off up to three picture frames from Mount Parnassus Picture Framing at Mid Kinleith, Currie.

Prizes have been kindly donated by Cicerone Press who publish guides for walkers, trekkers, mountaineers, climbers and cyclists.

The entry needs to be an image taken within or of the Pentland Hills, either in the Pentland Hills Regional Park or the south Pentlands.

If you would like to enter then you can download an entry form and the rules from www.pentlandhills.org. The closing date for submitting an entry is 22 October 2010.

Fire in Newtongrange

Around 30 firefighters battled a blaze at a derelict building in Newtongrange overnight on 26 August.

The alarm was raised at 12.45am with a report of a building alight on Morris Road. Fire crews found the single storey building well alight on arrival.

The fire was finally extinguished using firefighters wearing breathing apparatus and a line of hose just before 3.30am.

A spokeswoman for Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service said: "Fire investigation at the scene has now established that the cause of the fire was deliberate ignition. If anyone has information about this we would urge them to contact the police. Fireraising is a very serious matter which puts property and the safety of the public and the fire crews called out to deal with these fires at risk."

Weekend Gaming In Edinburgh

If you happen to be passing [Festival Square](#) then don't miss out on the various games you can try out there. Sony are showing off their latest PS3 additions: 3D gaming and the Playstation Move. If you have played anything on the Nintendo Wii you will be familiar with Sony's Move controller as they work somewhat similarly. Sadly the 3D didn't wow me as much as I had hoped. Whether this is to do with already wearing glasses before putting on the 3D specs I am not sure. However I found it about as successful as the 3D movies that are out (something else that has yet to impress me) it does have the added bonus of being able to see the screen fine without wearing the glasses.

Nintendo's setup has more of an arcade feel and is more about showing off games than technology. Sadly there is no sign of the 3DS or some of the latest announced games, however you can get your hands on Metroid: Other M a week before it is released alongside some of their latest and greatest games: Super Mario Galaxy 2, Sin and Punishment and Dragon Quest IX among several others.

So, whether you're interested in gameplay or the latest technology, there is something to see. Both companies are showing off their wares all weekend, so take a look!

Kitchen fire

A 64-year old woman was taken to Edinburgh Royal Infirmary on Wednesday afternoon after a kitchen fire.


Crews were called to a house in Glenallan Loan, Edinburgh, just after 5.30pm. A pan of food had gone on fire and the female occupier needed to be treated with oxygen for smoke inhalation.

She was taken by ambulance to hospital for a check up.

A spokeswoman for Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service said: "Cooking is the single biggest cause of house fires in Scotland. Take care when preparing food. If you have a fire in your home, get out of the house and call us out. Remember a working smoke alarm will also give you early warning of fire and if you live in our area you can book a free home safety visit and have a smoke alarm fitted by us by calling 0800 169 0320."

Brian Taylor's Big Debate

Do you love a good debate, or have big questions to ask?

 Brian Taylor's Big Debate – a weekly BBC Radio Scotland radio show will be broadcast live from The Hub, Royal Mile on Friday 27th August 2010 at 12.15p.m.

Chaired by BBC Scotland's Political Correspondent Raymond Buchanan, focussing on the week's biggest news stories.

The programme broadcasts with a panel in front of an audience, and takes a similar format to the BBC's Question Time.

You are invited to come along and participate in the debate, as part of the audience for news, views and discussion. You should arrive 11:30 for 11:45 (the broadcast is from 12:15

The panel will consist of four people:

Richard Holloway Former Bishop of Edinburgh and Doctor of
Stirling University

Joan Burnie Journalist at the Daily Record

QUESTIONS

Here are some recent examples of programme questions:

– Is Curriculum for Excellence a good deal for our children and teachers?

– Is it right that MPs should not be allowed to employ members of their families?

Construction work on the first new council homes for a generation in the Capital is set to begin following the

appointment of a developer.

Edinburgh-based firm The Cruden Group will now begin building 215 homes on the site of the three former high rises in Gracemount.

At least half of the development will be affordable housing with the first phase seeing 99 homes being built – a mixture of one/two/three bedroom flats and colony style apartments. Sixty seven will be for social rent, 20 mid rent and the rest shared equity. The second phase will consist of 116 homes (70 flats and 46 houses including eight shared equity flats).

The first affordable properties are expected to be available towards the end of next year.

The announcement is the latest major step forward in the Council's exciting 21st Century Homes programme which aims to build 1,300 mixed tenure homes for sale and rent across the Capital over the next eight years.

It will also see the beginning of up to £150 million of Council-led investment in the regeneration of the Gracemount, North Sighthill and Pennywell & Muirhouse areas of the city.

Housing leader, Councillor Paul Edie, welcomed the appointment of The Cruden Group to the development.

He said: "I'm confident they will deliver modern homes fit for the 21st Century that will set the standard for other councils across Scotland to follow. These new council properties will be the first to be built in Edinburgh for a generation and it is an exciting time for residents.

"The 21st Century Homes programme is a vital element of our ongoing long term regeneration plans for the Capital and also demonstrates our commitment to tackling the desperate need for more affordable homes in Edinburgh.

"Recent investment from the Scottish Government is very

welcome as shown by the £1.675m which we secured for the Gracemount development. However we still have some way to go to filling the enormous gap in affordable housing which is why we are working closely with them to explore new and innovative ways of building more.”

Steven Simpson, Managing Director of Cruden Homes (East) Ltd, said: “The Cruden Group is delighted to have been appointed as the developer for the 21st Century Homes programme in Gracemount.

“Working in tandem with City of Edinburgh Council during this pioneering project, we are looking forward to applying our regeneration experience to alleviate an acute shortage of good quality modern affordable housing in Edinburgh during a time of unprecedented lending constraints and economic uncertainty.

“Throughout the construction of 215 homes over the next four years, this exciting programme will not only provide a secure, sustainable and socially inclusive environment for future generations, but will also generate much needed employment and training opportunities that will be delivered through our successful and established community benefits programme.”

Photography at The Zoo

✖ A free exhibition featuring 30 spectacular images of Scotland’s wild places and animals, taken by Scotland’s people, takes place from 18 to 30 August at the Edinburgh Zoo Gallery as part of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

The photos are the top images from this spring’s Nature Photography Competition, run as part of Scottish Biodiversity Week in May and co-ordinated by Scottish Natural Heritage

(SNH). The photo exhibition will also tour key venues in Scotland during autumn and winter 2010 and throughout 2011.

The fourth annual competition asked for pictures showcasing animals, plants or landscapes across Scotland. This year's theme was emotions. The contest aimed to find out more about what nature and biodiversity mean to people in Scotland. Examples of biodiversity are all around us – from earthworms to golden eagles, from the smallest blade of grass to the tallest tree, and from the flowers in the window box in a Scottish city to the vast Cairngorm plateau. The organisers hope that people who live in Scotland will go and see the exhibition but it will also be a good introduction for Festival visitors from further afield to nature in Scotland.

Scottish Biodiversity Week organiser, Zeshan Akhter, said:

“People are becoming more and more removed from nature, so we wanted to know what it means to them when they are able to get out and capture some of the natural beauty around them. To me, this exhibition shows that we are still strongly connected – and feel so many emotions – when we're out enjoying the stunning beauty of the countryside. I think these images may mean even more to us nowadays, as they remind us why nature and biodiversity are so important to us still, despite many of us feeling more and more disconnected from nature.



“Whether it's that special place we love to go or the time we had a chance glimpse of a wild animal, these moments remind us that we live within nature, not separate from it.”

Offenders put to work

✖ A new pilot project, which will see teams of low level offenders on community service being sent out to fix fallen cemetery headstones, was launched in Edinburgh today.

Under the initiative, gravestones will be repaired and fallen headstones will be returned to their original upright positions in a major clean-up operation by offenders who are being sent out to repay their debt to the community.

The pilot project will take place at Liberton Cemetery and is being organised by the City of Edinburgh Council's Bereavement and Public Health Service and Criminal Justice Social Work Service.

Paying tribute to the project, Justice Secretary Kenny MacAskill said:- "Cemeteries should be a place of quiet reflection, a place to pay your respects and to remember loved ones lost.

"Unfortunately, the scene at many cemeteries in Edinburgh, and more widely across Scotland, is one of fallen and broken headstones. That is unacceptable. It's a bugbear of many communities up and down the country, and this project will see action being taken to rectify it.

"The council and church workers do their best, but finding the resources and labour required to carry out these repairs is often a real struggle for many.

"We want to get these offenders out doing some hard work, carrying out tough manual labour to repay their dues to the community they've harmed, whilst delivering improvements which the community will benefit from.

"This is exactly the kind of initiative we want to see more of. City of Edinburgh Council are to be congratulated, but

this is a common problem for many communities across Scotland and I'm sure other local authorities may look at this and want to follow suit. These teams of community service workers can be utilised in many ways by Scotland's councils, and could also be used to clean graffiti from headstones or clear overgrown vegetation for example.

"We've seen low level offenders out clearing paths of snow and ice during last year's bad weather, we've seen them out renovating elderly care homes and we've seen them helping to clean up streets of litter. We'll now see them being put to more good use, bringing our cemeteries back to the standard people expect and this is a worthwhile project.

"The statistics are clear and show that short term prison sentences do not work for low level offenders. Three quarters of those given a short term prison term go on to reoffend within two years of getting out, whereas three out of five given a community based sentence do not. Community based sentences are proven to work, they actually stop offenders committing crime again in the future and we're increasingly seeing the benefits to be gained for the community by getting these offenders out doing some hard work rather than sitting for a couple of weeks in a prison cell."

Councillor Paul Edie, Community Safety Leader at the City of Edinburgh Council, said:

"Our team have been working hard to develop this exciting and important scheme within the local community, and they should be applauded. There are a number of gravestones in need of repair and this is a fantastic initiative to get low level offenders out to work, improving their skills whilst helping to improve the local community. Not only will this project make a real difference to the burial ground but the offenders will also be paying back the local community in a positive and constructive way."

Alan McKinney, a local resident, said:

“I am delighted that the City of Edinburgh Council has taken up this idea and its officials are to be congratulated for their constructive development of the initial proposal. I now sincerely hope that other Scottish councils will seriously examine the proposal which I circulated to all councils in 2009.”

Open Eye – Tracey Emin

✖ Contemporary Prints by Tracey Emin, Damian Hirst, Peter Doig, Gary Hume, Ian Davenport, Bernd and Hilla Becher and Jake and Dinos Chapman are about to be put on show at The Open Eye on Abercromby Place.

Included in this show of contemporary prints are works by artists associated with the Goldsmiths College of Art in London; either tutors or students who emerged at the end of the eighties obtaining critical acclaim for their collective approach to producing sensationalist work at a time of cultural change, gesturing towards anxieties about a post-gender, post-identity or post-human future. This link marks an era in which artists have used video, film, photography, drawing, printmaking, recognisable materials and objects to express their ideas about contemporary subjects. Their approach can also be considered a form of documentation, a method by which Bernd and Hill Becher, a German artist couple whose suite of lithographs also appear in this show, produced photographic representations of industrial architecture for nearly 40 years and influenced a generation of conceptual artists and photographers. Throughout time, artists have sought to utilise new and innovative approaches to record and

narrate their response to what they believe to be a moment of 'change' in popular culture, society, environment or a way of thinking.

The show of etchings, screenprints and lithographs draws together artists commonly linked by their aim to actively engage the spectator in the experience of observing a world they have witnessed.

Amongst this collection of original prints are works by the Chapman brothers, Michael Craig Martin, Damian Hirst and others, and features a work by Turner Prize nominee Tracey Emin, titled No Substitute for your Love.

[The Open Eye Gallery](#)

Council Leader's Report

The Leader of The City of Edinburgh Council, Jenny Dawe, is charged with the responsibility of writing a report which is then published on the website. It seems there was no need for a report in July which is therefore omitted.

The [Edinburgh City Council Leader's report August 2010](#) is now available.

The Reporter has two comments about it.

The report itself is absolutely silent on the matter of the trams. Yes, we know Ms Dawe issued a special report on the trams earlier in the summer. We know that all decisions about what to do have been postponed till the council meeting in September. But the tramworks rumble on. The roads around Charlotte Square are becoming positively unusable since they have not been reinstated to any acceptable level. So could

Jenny Dawe perhaps have mentioned them even in one line if only to remind us that there has been procrastination till the autumn?

The other point is this:- if you are going to write a report then we feel that you should make sure that its terms are clear and unequivocal. So we are offering this section of Ms Dawe's report to you in the hope that some of you can tell us what it means:-

Discussions continue with colleagues from other East Coast authorities on how best to develop Scotland's pitch to investors in the renewables sector. Fife and Edinburgh have offered support to Scottish Enterprise and SDI in ensuring that the whole region has a competitive offer.

What did the Council do? Answers on a postcard please..

£500 raised for RNLI Queensferry

✖ Anne and Gordon Campion from South Queensferry have just returned from a two year adventure sailing round the world in their 38ft. Moody yacht *Equinox*.

Anne celebrated her 60th birthday recently and guests were asked not to bring presents, but if they wished to they could donate to the RNLI Queensferry Lifeboat Station and raised £500.

Anne and Gordon are pictured at Port Edgar marina where their adventure began, presenting the cash to David Steel, Chairman of RNLI Queensferry Lifeboat Station Fundraisers. (Photo

Alarm scam

Lothian and Borders Police are advising people in Edinburgh to stay vigilant after a number of reports of cold telephone callers selling alarm systems.

Recently, there have been a number of reported incidents of firms cold calling people and offering free alarm systems to householders.

The firms take a number of different approaches – sometimes there will be a call asking if the householder is involved in a neighbourhood watch scheme, if they have ever been broken into, and if they have an alarm; this is the end of the conversation. Another person then calls and arranges an appointment, and when they are out they will sometimes pressure people into buying an alarm.

In some cases they try and encourage people to take the system for free, but charge an inflated annual cost to monitor the system.

A police spokesperson said: 'Lothian and Borders Police recommend that people only deal with companies that are NSI or SSAIB approved.

'We offer advice on alarm standards and free general crime prevention advice.

'If you have been affected by 'pressure selling' or the price of a product is not competitive, then consider reporting them to Trading Standards.

'We would further advise anyone who has concerns over telephone calls relating to the sales of home security equipment to contact their local police station for advice'.

Councillor Robert Aldridge, Environmental Leader at the City of Edinburgh Council, said: 'We would urge the public to remain vigilant as unfortunately, we know that there are still unscrupulous characters out there who target vulnerable people with high pressure selling on their own doorstep.

"This is unacceptable and the Council will be working closely with the Police to deal with these bogus callers.'

Weekend assault

Lothian and Borders Police are appealing for witnesses after a man was assaulted and robbed in the capital over the weekend.

The incident happened in Yardheads, near to Cables Wynd around 9.20pm on Saturday 21st August.

The man was walking west along Cables Wynd, when two males approached and pulled him into a nearby car park. One of the suspects then presented a knife and robbed the victim of cash before both men fled the scene towards Henderson Street.

Both suspects are described as being black and in their early 20s.

The first is described as 6ft tall, thin to athletic build with braided hair and wearing a dark hooded top and dark tracksuit bottoms.

The second man is also described as being 6ft tall wearing a dark top and dark trousers.

A police spokesman said: 'Fortunately the victim was uninjured, but was left understandably shaken as a result.'

'Anyone who was in the Yardheads area around 9.20pm on Saturday and saw anything suspicious is asked to contact police immediately.'

'Similarly, anyone who recognises the description of the suspects and can assist us in locating them should also come forward.'

Flat fire

A 31-year-old man was taken to hospital with burns after a fire in a flat in the Dalry area of Edinburgh in the early hours of this morning.

Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service were called to the fire which broke out in a top floor flat in Springwell Place just before 2am.

An ambulance was called for the male occupier who was suffering from burns and breathing difficulties as a result of smoke inhalation. He was taken to Edinburgh's Royal Infirmary, for treatment to his injuries.

A vet was called to deal with a number of cats in the flat which were also affected by the fire.

A spokeswoman for Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service said: "Six firefighters wearing breathing apparatus and using a hose reel extinguished the fire.

"We are keen to remind people about the importance of having a working smoke alarm in their home to give early warning of

fire. If you live in the Lothian and Borders area you can book a free home safety visit and get a smoke alarm fitted by calling 0800 169 0320.”

Kebab shop blaze

Six firefighters wearing breathing apparatus battled a fire in a kebab shop on Dalry Road on Sunday afternoon.

The alarm was raised at 5.15pm with a report of a kitchen alight in a shop at 72 Dalry Road. The fire, which it's believed started in a deep fat fryer, quickly spread into the roof space. The front of the shop and the rooms to the rear of the premises were extensively damaged. Shops on either side of the property were smoke damaged.

A Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue spokeswoman said: “The shop was well alight when fire crews arrived and there was a risk of the fire spreading into neighbouring shops. The prompt actions of firefighters meant that this was quickly tackled.

“Part of the road was closed for safety and to allow firefighters to fight the fire and prevent it from spreading further. The fire was extinguished just after 8.30pm.”

EIFF director quits

✖ Hannah McGill has quit her role at the helm of The Edinburgh International Film Festival in a surprise announcement today.

The story is reported on the [EIFF website](#) and on The Scotsman Festivals [website](#).

McGill has been artistic director of EIFF for the last four years.

Climate Camp at Gogarburn

Lothian and Borders Police confirmed that 12 people were arrested yesterday in connection with the Camp for Climate Change.

The Force committed significant resources to the RBS complex at Gogarburn, Edinburgh – where protestors had indicated they would be demonstrating – and at other areas of the city where activity took place.

Around 9.30am it was discovered that two arterial routes to Edinburgh were badly affected after a substance similar to diesel or vegetable oil was poured onto the carriageways.

City of Edinburgh Council had to use 7.5 tonnes of grit to clean the A720 at Bankhead and the west bound A8.

Lothian Buses removed its vehicles from the roads for a spell while the cleaning operation was carried out. The roads were never closed, but Police urged motorists to proceed with caution until noon when the road was clear once more.

A police spokesman said: 'This was an extremely reckless and dangerous act which could have put many members of the public at risk.

'It is a worrying trend, and a disturbing escalation in the activities of the protestors.'

Protestors were arrested after they took action in the city's Nicolson Street, as well as at Forth Ports, Gogarburn Bridge, Hunter Square and Glasgow Road.

At Nicolson Street, a 25-year-old man and two women aged 38 and 34 were arrested and charged with breach of the peace.

The five arrested and charged with breach of the peace following an incident at Forth Ports are two men aged 20 and 49, and three women aged 23, 41 and 18.

One man, aged 58, was arrested and charged with assault in relation to an incident on Gogarburn Bridge.

A 24-year-old woman was arrested and charged with vandalism in the city's Hunter Square and two men aged 31 and 33 were charged with breach of the peace in relation to an incident in Glasgow Road, Edinburgh.

Most of those arrested are expected to be released on an undertaking to appear at court at a later date.

A spokesperson for Lothian and Borders Police said: 'While the Force facilitates peaceful protest, public disorder, damage to property, or any other criminal acts will not be tolerated.

'It is obvious that the activists changed their emphasis, and we had considerable resources in place to respond in a proportionate and responsible manner.

'A significant amount of planning had been put in place for the Climate Camp so that the Force was prepared for every eventuality, and additional resources were sent to the RBS site today to support the policing operation there.

'As is common practice in such operations, the assistance of neighbouring Forces was sought. We have in the past collaborated with Forces such as Strathclyde, Central Scotland Police and Northumbria on large scale events.'

Around 500 people had been staying at the camp. During today they have been moving from their campsite to the nearby RBS land where they unfurled a banner from a bridge over the A8. They also super glued themselves to each other and locked themselves with D locks onto buildings elsewhere in the city.

They did not gain access to any RBS premises and there have been no reports of injuries.

Lothian and Borders Police have arrested and charged a total of 18 people in connection with protest activity in Edinburgh since the Camp for Climate Change was established at RBS headquarters, Gogarburn, on Thursday (August 19).

The new Guardian beatblogger Michael MacLeod kicked off with a series of photos from the climate change camp. You can view them by clicking [here](#).

Handbag Theft

Police in Midlothian are appealing for information after a woman was the victim of a handbag snatch in Dalkeith yesterday.

The incident happened around 4.45pm, in St Andrews Street.

The 61-year-old victim was about to enter her home address when she was approached by the female suspect, who grabbed her handbag from within a shopping trolley that the victim had with her at the time.

She then made off down St Andrews Street towards South Street, before turning right down an alleyway that leads to the High Street.

She is described as being in her late teens to early 20s, medium build, with red/brown hair that was tied up, and wearing a brown three-quarter length jacket.

A police spokesman said: 'We are appealing for anyone who witnessed the incident to contact police as soon as possible.

'Similarly, we want to speak to anyone who was in the area of St Andrews Street or the High Street in Dalkeith at the time the incident, who thinks they may have seen the suspect there.

'Anyone else who recognises her description, or who has any other information that can assist our inquiries, should also get in touch.'

Peat bogs in Edinburgh



(c) Scottish Wildlife Trust

Of course there are not really any peatbogs here are there? Well you're wrong – the photo is of Red Moss at Balerno, a Scottish Wildlife Trust wildlife reserve and an example of a lowland raised bog. The importance of the peatbog is to be the subject of discussion at Edinburgh University later in the year.

Dirty, smelly and a useless waste of space. That's the public image that peat bogs have acquired over the years. But top UK scientists have gathered forces to rid the so-called 'Cinderella Habitats' of this reputation, and help them to shine as modern ecosystem heroes.

Damaged peatlands are a huge source of emissions in the UK and

worldwide, but restoring them can not only bring significant carbon savings but also vital improvements to wildlife and water management.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) UK Peatland Programme's Commission of Inquiry into Peatland Restoration has drafted in leading UK scientists to undertake a thorough review of key peatland issues to help understand the multiple benefits of bogs. The first stage of the work is now complete, and the draft reviews are now available on the IUCN UK Peatland Programme's [website](#).

Dr Steve Chapman, Scientific Co-ordinator of the Programme's Commission of Inquiry into Peatland Restoration said:-
"Peatland restoration is already a high priority for governments internationally as well as in the UK. What this inquiry wants to do is achieve scientific consensus on just how vital peatlands are as carbon stores, for biodiversity and other ecosystem services, to give policy makers a clear steer as to how to benefit the most from this resource."

The eight draft reviews are open for public and peer consultation until 20 September. Early findings will be discussed at the 'Investing in Peatlands – the Climate Challenge' conference, at Durham University on 28 and 29 September and there will be an opportunity to feed further into the debate at an Open Inquiry event in **Edinburgh** on 3 November.

Clifton Bain, Director of the IUCN UK Peatland Programme, welcomed the publication of a new report on the climate change benefits of peatland restoration earlier in the summer.

"Peatbogs and carbon – a critical synthesis" by Richard Lindsay, reviews the impacts of current and historical use of peatlands, and the effects of restoration on greenhouse gas emissions. The report draws the conclusion that while healthy peatbogs release a certain amount of potent methane gas, the

overall impact on the climate is significantly less than that of the carbon dioxide which leaks from damaged peat.

The report was commissioned by the RSPB, and received financial support from the IUCN UK Peatland Programme, amongst others.

Download [the full report](#) "Peatbogs and carbon – a critical synthesis"

Everybody's reading The Secret Garden!

✖ The Festival Theatre is delighted to announce an exciting new Education Project to coincide with the venue's spectacular in-house Christmas production, The Secret Garden.

Organised by the theatre's Education Department, the scheme will offer every Primary 7 class in Edinburgh and the Lothians free copies of Frances Hodgson Burnett's classic novel for each of their pupils along with detailed study resources. With many schools already signed up, the project is expected to engage with almost 10,000 young people.

Emma Robertson, Education and Audience Development Officer for the Festival Theatre, said: "We are delighted to be in a position to offer such a wonderful opportunity to local schools. The Secret Garden is a magical story, so we're very much looking forward to exploring it with schools and to staging our musical version in December."

The books, published by Penguin Popular Classics, will be delivered to the participating schools by the end of August

and accompanying study materials and practical exercises linking to the Second Level Curriculum for Excellence will be available at www.secretgardenmusical.co.uk.

Using The Secret Garden novel as a source material, the project will provide opportunities for Languages and Literacy work, as well as addressing other study areas such as Health and Wellbeing, Sciences (Our Living World), Social Studies and Religious and Moral Education. In addition, children will be able to explore the Expressive Arts through The Secret Garden stage show.

Robertson added: "With such a huge reach this project has scope to assist hundreds of Scottish Primary Schools make a smooth transition into teaching the Curriculum for Excellence and play a role in helping to give thousands of children a rounded and challenging first term in their last year of primary school."

First published in 1911, Frances Hodgson Burnett's novel continues to appeal to readers of all ages and regularly appears in the Top 10 of all time favourite children's literature. It tells the tale of orphan Mary Lennox, sent to live with her uncle in his austere and foreboding property on the Yorkshire moors. Left to her own devices, Mary soon discovers her sickly cousin Colin, hidden away in a lonely corner of the house, and a secret walled garden. In bringing Colin and the garden together, can Mary help them both bloom again?

The Secret Garden musical, created by Lucy Simon and Marsha Norman and directed by Anna Linstrum, will become the latest in a line of exciting new in-house musicals produced by the Festival Theatre. The show runs for five weeks from Thursday 9 December 2010 to Saturday 8 January 2011. Then, at the invitation of Canada's most prolific theatre producer and theatre manager David Mirvish, the production will transfer to the Princess of Wales Theatre in Toronto, Canada.

Scottish Power links to Celtic Connections

Young musicians from Edinburgh & the Lothians are being given a unique opportunity to perform live at the globally renowned Celtic Connections folk festival.

Festival sponsor ScottishPower has launched its second Powerful Performance contest which encourages youngsters to celebrate their traditional musical heritage.

Last year's inaugural competition proved to be extremely popular, with talented youngsters from all over the country taking part. The judges were delighted with the response and are hoping for an enthusiastic uptake again this year.

Heather McDonald, Group Sponsorships Manager at ScottishPower, said:

"We have sponsored Celtic Connections since 2007 and last year we decided to see what home-grown talent is being nurtured in our schools and to give young people a chance to participate in the Festival.

"We were so pleased with the response to the competition, and the really high standard of entries we received, that we are delighted to launch the Powerful Performance again this year."

The initiative invites S1 – S6 youngsters across the country to submit a short recording of traditional music using instruments, vocals, or a mixture of both.

Secondary schools interested in entering ScottishPower's Powerful Performance are asked to submit one 4-5 minute recording of a melody or song, to a specially selected piece

of music.

The judging panel at Celtic Connections and ScottishPower will release a choice of five traditional tunes which the bands can choose from to record their entry.

The winning group will perform at the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall in January 2011, as part of the final Education Concert of the festival, as well as the highly competitive Danny Kyle Open Stage competition, which the winner will automatically be entered into.

Heather continued:

“Last year we received an amazing range of entries and it was difficult to narrow the seven finalists down to one. Considering that this was the inaugural year of the Powerful Performance schools competition, all the judges were pleasantly surprised by the high standards of all the schools who submitted recordings.

“The St Ninian’s High School Ceilidh Band was a worthy winner, demonstrating to the judges great musicality and musicianship.

“ScottishPower has a strong commitment to the arts in the UK through its sponsorship of Celtic Connections, as well as others. We encourage all communities, and in particular schools, to experience and enjoy the arts and we hope that schools across the country enjoy taking part in our challenge.”

Donald Shaw, Celtic Connections Artistic Director, said:

“At Celtic Connections we are dedicated to offering school pupils across Scotland the opportunity to experience Scottish cultural heritage through our education programme. The ScottishPower Powerful Performance complemented our education work at the 2010 festival perfectly, and we were proud to feature the St Ninian’s High School Ceilidh Band as part of

the festival. The competition demonstrated that there are exceptionally talented young musicians in Scotland at the moment, and the calibre of entries was truly inspiring.

“We’re delighted that ScottishPower are once again supporting the festival in 2011 and very much look forward to hosting the Powerful Performance.”

❌ Celtic Connections brings artists from around the globe to perform in Glasgow each January and previous headline acts have included The Chieftains with Ry Cooder, which was a sell-out in 2010. ScottishPower is once again sponsoring the festival in 2011, which takes place between 13th and 31st January.

To register to take part in the ScottishPower Powerful Performance, please contact Nicola MacNaughton at the BIG Partnership, on 0141 333 9585 / nicola.macnaughton@bigpartnership.co.uk.

❌ A shortlist of finalists will be decided by 8th November. The selected school group will perform at Celtic Connections on Friday 28th January 2010.