

Thursday 29th July 2010

Today we are highlighting awards.....



Cycling in Edinburgh is fun, notwithstanding the hills, the cobbles and the roadworks. Many of us are out there on two wheels either as a form of daily transport or as a form of exercise. There are some very good initiatives to encourage cycling too. [Cycling Scotland](#) have started a Cycle Friendly Employer Award which is given to any employees who might encourage their employees who cycle to work. Given that employers lose money if their employees are ill, it pays off in less days lost to illness and a more positive outlook if their employees are healthy and fit, according to Cycling Scotland. The University of Edinburgh and The City of Edinburgh Council are two of the organisations which have already been given the award. [Four schools](#) in the City of Edinburgh area have also been awarded Cycle Friendly status and six in Midlothian. There is also money available to help. Up to £2000 is available to organisations starting up the scheme for their employees.

The National Business Awards have just announced their finalists. The awards will be presented at Grosvenor House in London on 9 November 2010. There are three Edinburgh firms among the finalists:-

[Bright Purple Resourcing](#) is a finalist in the category of The Business Link Growth Strategy of the Year

Dougal Sharp, [The Innis & Gunn Brewing Company](#) is a finalist in the category of Entrepreneur of the Year

[Aquamarine Power Limited](#) is a finalist in the category of The Health Work and Well-being award for small business.

And we have award winning green spaces. The City of Edinburgh Council has accepted eight Green Flag awards for their care of parks in the city, now the proud recipients of more Green Flags than any other local authority. [The Scotsman](#) has more on this story...

Awards are a big part of the Festival which is about to get under way in the next week or so. The Fosters Comedy Awards 2010 have been running for an unbelievable 30 years. There is no information yet about the panellists who will decide on the winners, but you can keep up to date with what they are up to on Twitter, Facebook and on their [website](#).

[The Guardian Theatre Blog](#) meanwhile gives us the lowdown on Stewart Lee's outburst against the Foster sponsored search for a comedy god...

The Funny Women Awards which seek out the newest female talent will be handed out on the 23rd and 24th of August here at The Assembly Rooms in Edinburgh.

And [The Guardian Local](#) mentioned yesterday the award won by Peter's Yard at Quartermile.

Council Staff Go Green

Eco-friendly staff at the City of Edinburgh Council are due to celebrate their commitment to reducing their carbon footprint by launching a pledge tree at the Council headquarters on Thursday 29 July.

Jenny Dawe, Council Leader and Brendan Dick, Director of BT Scotland will mark the success of the Carbon Club pilot launched earlier this year by adding their environmental

pledges to the tree in Waverley Court. The initiative will allow staff across the Council to suggest new ways to save energy at work, with the most original idea winning a prize.

Council Leader Jenny Dawe, said: "We are committed to reducing Edinburgh's carbon footprint to zero by 2050 and I am delighted to see that our staff are making positive steps in this direction. The launch of the pledge tree will not only remind people of their responsibility to the environment, but also hopefully encourage new and exciting ways to cut both waste and costs."

✖ Brendan Dick, director of BT Scotland, said: "We are very pleased to support the carbon club initiative at The City of Edinburgh Council by sponsoring the pledge tree. It is a highly visible reminder to people to think about the environment in their day to day lives and take simple steps to reduce their impact. Our research clearly shows that good environmental practises in the workplace are often replicated at home – whether it's unplugging your phone charger, switching off electrical equipment, recycling materials or thinking about how you travel. BT employees have made more than 14,500 pledges to take action on the environment, and we hope this new initiative will encourage even more people to make a positive commitment."

In January of this year, the City of Edinburgh Council was the first local authority in the UK to launch the Carbon Club pilot in partnership with BT. Eleven different clubs were set up to tackle environmental and climate change issues, raising staff awareness of unnecessary waste in the workplace. The more successful clubs managed to cut corporate taxi use, introduce paperless meetings and encourage staff to add 'Avoid Printing' signs at the end of every email. Over 500 pledges from members have been received since last November; a clear sign that staff are committed to greener living.

The pledge tree will be in residence at Waverley Court for two

weeks from the 29 July and staff will be encouraged to pledge innovative ideas on saving energy at work.

Scottish Low Carbon Investment Conference

This is taking place in Edinburgh on 28-29 September 2010. It is supported by The Scottish Government and Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce is participating in the delivery.

First Minister Alex Salmond said:-“Scotland is uniquely positioned to exploit the opportunity presented by the global commitment to renewable energy and low carbon technology. We have some of the best natural resources in the world for harnessing clean, green energy from our wave, water and wind potential and we have a history of technology innovation and engineering expertise that is second to none. The recent period of turmoil in the world financial markets has not dimmed investors ambitions to identify and support profitable low carbon projects and technologies. Nor has it dented Scotland’s determination to claim its place at the forefront of this marketplace, armed with our considerable opportunity and resource. Our unique project brings opportunity and finance together, because only then will potential become reality.”

The Scottish Low Carbon Investment Conference will bring together the project and innovation communities with investors from banks, fund managers and venture capital companies to realise Scotland’s potential for a world-leading contribution to clean energy and carbon reduction.

The conference will facilitate financial solutions and

investment, and of course will highlight and promote Scotland's strengths – our opportunities for investment, skills, resources, research and technical expertise – on an international scale.

✘ Ron Hewitt, Chief Executive of Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, said: “The conference will be something very different from anything else that is happening.

“It will bring projects and investors together, via a staged process of online capture of information, matching opportunities and encouraging solutions. We will work with those involved in the sector and with the financial community to identify and debate the risks and rewards, opportunities and challenges within the renewables arena.

The two day event takes place at Edinburgh International Conference Centre on September 28-29. A dedicated website has been established at <http://www.slciconference.com>. Work is ongoing to identify low carbon projects in Scotland, clustering them together to maximise their attractiveness as investment opportunities where appropriate. Those involved in projects can provide details through the website.

The website is also compiling information on investors and investment activity in the sector, and will seek to “match-make” through the online data capture and through a series of events in the lead up to, and during, the conference.

The organisers have secured a list of international speakers which is due to be announced in the next few weeks, and hundreds of delegates from around the world are expected to attend. Scottish Government Ministers will be amongst those attending and speaking.

Leading international businessmen and financiers, energy sector leaders, and international politicians will also be in attendance at an event which is likely to become amongst the most important in the field in the world.

Scotland has set Europe's most ambitious carbon reduction targets, and is planning to invest £140 billion on projects and developments that will realise its carbon reduction programme. With around a quarter of both Europe's tidal and offshore wind capacity, and 10% of its potential in wave power as well as significant opportunities in hydro-power, onshore wind and biomass the Scottish Government aims to ensure that Scotland has a truly world-leading renewable energy sector.

New airport extension opened

The [STV website](#) is showing a wee film of the Finance Secretary opening the new extension to the airport...so that's who it was doing the opening ceremony...

Lothian Buses out and about

✖ Between 19 & 30 July Lothian Buses mobile shop is at Seton Sands Holiday Park. They offer mobile ticketing and information as well as free wifi!

You can pick up leaflets about all their services at the shop. Open between 9 and 2 each day.

New app for the iPhone is now available – an app to tell you where your bus is! Listen to Grant Stott talking about it on YouTube.

Freedom of Information – more or less?

The scope of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act is the focus of a Scottish Government consultation that is beginning today. The legislation already extends to over a hundred public bodies.

The consultation seeks views on whether the existing legislation should be widened to cover a greater range of bodies who deliver public services in Scotland.

Organisations under consideration are contractors who build and/or maintain schools, hospitals and roads; private prison operators; leisure, sport and cultural trusts set up by local authorities; Glasgow Housing Association and the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland.

✘ Minister for Parliamentary Business Bruce Crawford said:

“The Scottish Government is committed to the principles that underpin Freedom of Information (FOI) legislation. These principles of openness and transparency are essential parts of open democratic government, nowhere more so than in following the expenditure of public money.

“At this stage the Scottish Government has not reached firm conclusions on which bodies it might be appropriate to extend coverage to.

“Creating additional regulatory or financial requirements must be appropriate and proportionate, especially given the global economic downturn which has put some sectors of the economy under particular strain.

“A key part of the consultation will be our examination of any possible costs associated with any extension of coverage. The Government is committed to increasing sustainable economic growth and will only introduce legislation that is measured and proportionate.”

The consultation process will run for 14 weeks, from today until 2 November.

The organisations to be consulted on extending the FOI Act are:

- * Trusts and bodies established by local authorities with responsibility for providing leisure, sport and cultural services. Many local authorities have outsourced these important functions to such trusts and bodies. An unintended consequence is that the public lose their rights to access information about those services from the local authority itself. These organisations deliver services of major public benefit, and receive significant public money

- * Private prison operators running Addiewell and Kilmarlock prisons, and with the private contractor providing prisoner escort services. These organisations provide services normally provided centrally by Government, and coverage would put them on the same footing as their public sector equivalents

- * Glasgow Housing Association. Glasgow Housing Association is unique in its scale and public profile and the level of interest that it attracts. In principle the Government therefore considers that there are strong grounds for its coverage

- * Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland. The Association is the collective organisation of senior police from the eight forces across Scotland. It oversees and coordinates the direction and development of the Scottish police services. Its members are all public servants and it receives significant public funding

- * Private contractors who build and/or maintain schools and hospitals, and those who operate and maintain trunk roads

across Scotland. These are key areas of public service which are often delivered under private contract. These contractors form a large and diverse group and we will have to consider the appropriateness of coverage in detail, which may well be on a case by case basis

The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 encourages the development of a more open culture across the public sector by providing a statutory right of access to information held by some 10,000 Scottish public authorities.

The coverage of the Act can be extended to bodies which appear to the Scottish Ministers to be exercising functions of a public nature and to contractors who provide services that are a function of a public authority. This is done by an order made under powers in section 5 of the Act. Before making any such order Scottish Ministers must consult with the proposed bodies themselves, or their representatives. The power to extend coverage under section 5 has not yet been used.

Wednesday 28th July 2010

Here's a bit of a telling story from [The Caledonian Mercury](#) that out of \$101 billion invested in oil exploration by BP, only \$1.8 billion was invested in alternative energy. Is that where Tony Hayward went wrong.....no where he is going wrong is holding BP to the letter of the employment contract that they entered into with him. He is entitled to a sizeable pension of half his recent salary. Fred Goodwin the erstwhile CEO of The Royal Bank of Scotland had to relinquish some of his entitlement when he became the hate figure that he did. Of course he lives (or is it lived?) in Edinburgh. And it seems that Tony Hayward is being banished to Russia....so perhaps it

doesn't matter too much....

Another oil-related story. Edinburgh-based Cairn Energy has just announced a six-fold rise in net profits in its India based operation, Cairn India Limited. Cairn Energy plc has a 62.37% holding in Cairn India Limited which was listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange in January 2007. This announcement comes hot on the heels of permission being granted to Cairn to commence exploratory off-shore drilling on the west coast of Greenland.



Finally today we would refer you to the weekly list of planning applications made to the City Council which you can access here.

[Weekly list of planning applications](#)

The Reporter would commend you to read any that are in your immediate area. This is democracy in action too. If you want to make any alterations to your house or commercial premises then there is due process to be gone through. As well as planning permission there may be a requirement for listed building consent in some cases. It is also a good barometer of what the city is really doing. If there are lots of commercial applications then it is a sign of a lively economy and investment. If not, then there tend to be more applications for home improvements and extensions. A little simplistic we grant you – but interesting reading! So you will see for example that there is a plan for a new dental clinic on Morrison Street and a new internet cafe on Frederick Street...but one of the most notable applications is the one to refurbish The Assembly Rooms – with lifts and commercial letting spaces on the ground floor. And then there are flats to be developed at 118 Princes Street...and the monthly food market in Brighton Park Portobello...

Recipe of the week

This week it is not exactly summertime weather. Sitting here in central Edinburgh on a rather dreich Wednesday morning, it seems that it is time to make a scone or a pancake, rather than eat summery foods like superfood salads.

✖ So here is a really easy recipe for cheese scones....which is really just what we feel like having with our elevenses...

150g or 6oz self-raising flour

1/2 tsp salt

pepper and mustard

25g or 1oz margarine or butter

75g or 3oz grated cheese

1 egg

30ml or 2tbsp milk

Put the oven on – and wear an apron! Mix the flour with all the seasonings and then rub in the margarine – best done with your fingertips raising your hands out of the bowl to get some air in – but you can do this part in the food processor too. Stir in the cheese with a knife, leaving some for the tops of the scones. Mix to a soft dough with the egg and milk – be aware you may not need all of it. Then put some flour on the worktop and tip the dough onto it. Roll out the dough to about half an inch thick.

You can either cut into triangles or using a pastry cutter make into nice scone shapes. Brush the tops with a little of

the egg and milk mixture and then place on a non-stick baking tray greased with a little margarine and sprinkle the cheese carefully on the tops.

Really hot oven needed! 220C or 425F for about 12 minutes.

Cafe Citron at ESPC

ESPC and their new roommate, Cafe Citron, are working together to offer visitors to the ESPC showroom or anyone visiting the city centre a new choice.

ESPC, with its prime George Street address, and Cafe Citron, who already run two highly successful coffee shops in Edinburgh, are looking to bring a local flavour to Edinburgh city centre cafe culture.

Neil Harrison, ESPC Marketing Manager, explains further, “Over the course of this year we have been looking to find a partner who can provide refreshments to the 3,000 people who visit our showroom each week and draw new visitors in. We believe that in Cafe Citron we have a business that knows what the people of Edinburgh are looking for. The “coffee pod” they have created means we can offer great hot and cold drinks with a very fine selection of cakes and pastries alongside the homes currently on the market. When we ask visitors what would make their property search in the showroom even more enjoyable, the most common answer was somewhere to get a tea or coffee.

If looking for your next property is not your cup of tea (or coffee) at the moment, the showroom does offer plenty of seating, including fabulous sofas from Ligne Roset in the Premier Lounge, to allow you to take the weight off your feet and sample the delights Café Citron has to offer. The cakes

and pastries are sourced locally to ensure the freshest and highest quality.

So whether you are in the market for a property, wandering along George Street or looking for somewhere with free Wi-Fi access (we offer that too in the showroom), please pop into 85 George Street and see what our new roommate has to offer.

ESPC is the vehicle for selling flbn property a year in Edinburgh and the immediate area. You can have a look at their website by clicking [here](#).

Compostable coffee cup

Vegware, the UK's only completely compostable food packaging firm, has launched the world's first compostable double-wall coffee cup. The Edinburgh manufacturer claims it is, 'the greenest insulated hot cup on the market'. It is the first insulated cup ever to be made entirely from low-carbon compostable materials. It is made locally out of EU materials, reducing shipping miles.



[Vegware](#) is offering full-colour custom printing for orders of 5,000, a tenth of the industry's standard minimum. The firm's MD, Joe Frankel, says, branding is a powerful tool. This is an exciting development, as it brings the branded cup within reach for any size operator. Local manufacture brings printing lead times from ten down to three weeks.

The cup is made of a high-recycled-content paper outer and an inner of sustainably-sourced paper. The two layers are bonded together with a compostable resin and lined with GM-free cornstarch. The high quality, full colour prints use water-based or vegetable inks. Within the commercial composting

system, it can be composted in 6-12 weeks, turning into compost or biogas and topsoil.

Frankel added:-“Scotland loves takeaway coffee, but also wants to be eco-friendly. Our new cup is as green as they come it’s made locally, so we’re reducing cup miles. Since it’s compostable, it needn’t go to landfill. Instead, it can be organically recycled together with food waste. Vegware has set up a UK-wide composting collection service in readiness for April 2011, when the Landfill Directive dictates that landfill will cost more than organics recycling.”

Vegware has won a series of awards this year including its key duo, Joe Frankel and Dominic Marjoram, being named ‘Sustainable Development Champions’ in the prestigious Scottish Green List Awards. Vegware also won ‘Best Disposable’ in the Caterer and Hotelkeeper Excellence award for inventing the world’s first compostable hot cup lid.

Social Envy Launch Party

Edinburgh’s Prestigious membership card is launching, bringing you discounts at some of the finer things Edinburgh has to offer, from fashion boutiques to fine dining.



Come along and enjoy a champagne reception and meet some of your fellow Social Envy Members and find out where you can start enjoying your benefits

Entry to the event is £20 and this guarantees your membership card which usually cost £25 a year, so you have already saved yourself £5!

Later on in the evening the doors will open to Below the Stairs where you can save £5 on entry before 11pm, another great saving on your card within the first day!

RSVP to info@socialenvy.co.uk to secure your place on the guest list

Emotionally savvy?

Words like “emotional intelligence” can trigger an immediate avoidance response! What are our options for how to clearly, authentically and safely discuss and assess the topic of human emotions in the workplace? If we ignore them, we fail to acknowledge a fundamental part of ourselves and the people who work for us.

In this one day workshop, presenter, Mary Neilson, explains the critical impact of emotional competence at work for all people in leadership roles, or aspiring leaders. Neuroscientists have recently discovered that nourishing relationships with people we work with have a beneficial impact on our health, while toxic ones can act like slow poison in our bodies.

This research is significant and organisations ignore it at their peril. Learn how to develop an emotionally intelligent organisation and become an employer and provider of choice now and in the future.

More information from www.talentforbusiness.co.uk or Tel: 0141 646 2749

Free event at The Fringe

We are not proposing to do any real reviewing of The Fringe Festival. We are simply too thick on the ground. And anyway there are loads of other sites doing all that for you.

But if something comes along which takes our fancy then we may mention it to you....

Here is a free event. It starts on 2 August and goes on till 5 September. There are tours at various times of the day:- 9.30, 11.00 13.00 and 15.00. The tour meets at Starbucks on the Royal Mile EH1 1QS. And it is a walking tour of The Old Town pointing out some of the main sights.

Website of the Week #1

This is our website of the week. Here you are – how to find your councillor, MSP, MEP or your local MP.



This is the easiest thing. Put in your postcode and there they are, and all you have to do is click on the name and you are sending them an email! Whoo-hoo a great site that really works.

We rather like it – but you might have guessed that....

Trains and boats and planes

✘ Actually buses and bus lanes to be honest. We thought it just sounds a bit racier. But buses are a significant and useful part of our city's public transport system and to help them run to time, bus lanes are very important.

The matter of cameras on buses was raised, not for security but to enforce the patrolling of bus lanes. This is the arrangement they have in London, but it is not what we will get here in Edinburgh.

There are to be 5 cameras over 10 sites in certain locations to patrol the correct use of the bus lanes. In other words 5 rotating cameras.

The resultant traffic offence is to be decriminalised, and so if you are caught driving your car in a bus lane you will get something akin to a fixed penalty parking ticket. The sites for the cameras were agreed with Lothian Buses, according to the routes where their buses are most often impeded by rogue drivers. It was explained that buses travelling through Jock's Lodge could be delayed by 3 minutes, but this can add up to as much as half an hour over several junctions on one journey. So more street furniture on our already crowded thoroughfares.

As a fairly random aside, we started wondering this.... If the Airlink bus can be fitted with free wifi, then could the other Lothian Buses also have wifi? What a great thing it would be. The Reporter could spend all day going round the city on buses using a £3 day ticket.

How much does it cost to equip one bus with wifi? We shall ask!

City of Edinburgh Council 27 July 2010

The Edinburgh Reporter was at the executive committee meeting of the Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee at the City Chambers this morning.

There was a full public gallery today in light of the fact that there were three deputations to be heard. A deputation is a small group of local people who want to put forward a case for (or indeed, one has to presume, against) a measure about to be voted upon by the committee. They are allowed ten minutes within which to put their case.

The first deputation was very slick indeed. This was the **Moray Feus Residents Association** who were putting forward their case that pollution levels in **Great Stuart Street** are now so bad that instead of being the 4th cleanest street in Edinburgh when it was measured 10 years ago, it is now the 2nd most polluted street in the city. The reason for the increased pollution is the closure of Shandwick Place which means that the traffic has to find alternative routes. One of the most obvious is the diversion by way of Randolph Crescent and Great Stuart Street.



The problem was neatly encapsulated by Ashley Lloyd who represented the Association, along with his powerpoint presentation making it easy for those of us in the public gallery to follow the various graphs and figures which he used. The issue of pollution is that these are residential streets which have a W formation (with gullies and gutters at the sides) and this formation encourages the heavier polluted air to hang about, even after dark. This means that the residents are exposed to pollution 24/7 whereas the more

commercial streets are only exposed to such pollutants intermittently. The problem is compounded by the heavy air falling into basement areas where people are asleep. One of the little nuggets of information which The Reporter caught onto was that there is apparently a continuous monitoring station on Queen Street...we will have to look out for that! Also the baseline is estimated from India Street which was closed during a round of traffic measures and where both the noise and air are reckoned to be of acceptable quality.

According to the study there were 80% of days during February which had higher levels of carbon monoxide at night. The other problem is of noise and in fact as a result of the diversion some streets are noisier than Princes Street is during the day.

tie have estimated that about 600 vehicles an hour are dispersed as a result of this road closure, so it is easy to see where the noise and air pollution is coming from. The Association would like the council to look carefully at the closure of the street and to look at traffic management alternatives to reverse the existing damage.

Several councillors quite correctly congratulated Mr Lloyd on his clear and articulate presentation. He made a powerful case for the permanent opening of the street again. (It is open at the moment on a temporary basis – but then that has to do with the trams...) He was asked if any of the pollution could perhaps have come from central heating in houses, but emphatically denied this as all venting from central heating has to go to the back of these listed buildings.

The Council passed the motion without amendment. The motion was as follows:-

8.9 Shandwick Place – Motion by Councillor Dundas

Committee commends the recent decision to suspend the temporary traffic management arrangements related to the tram

works on many streets around the West End of the city.

Notes that diversions still apply to Shandwick Place; and that the residents of the nearby residential streets of Randolph Crescent, Great Stuart Street, Ainslie Place and St Colme Street continue to experience increased traffic on their streets as a result of this closure.

Calls for a report in one cycle (for the next meeting of the Committee on 21 September 2010) on the potential costs and benefits of reopening Shandwick Place to general traffic until such time as on-street tram works in the area are recommenced; the report should also include the associated costs of reinstating the traffic management arrangements required when work does recommence.

So there will be a report on the permanent measure to be taken in relation to Shandwick Place at the next meeting – scheduled to be a long one given that the trams debate will be back on the agenda then too.

The next deputation was equally clear and concise. Two ministers from **Murrayfield**, Rev Brown and Rev Kirkbride, were in attendance to explain that the church had in recent years refurbished the community centre attached to the church in **Ormidale Terrace**. This accommodates a dementia group, called the Murrayfield Club, on three days during the week when about 30 people attend. 10 of these places are council places. The City of Edinburgh Council have recently entered into a contract with the Murrayfield Parish for the provision of the daycare facility by the church. The problem is that there are now parking restrictions as far out from the city centre as Wester Coates. This means that commuters have started parking on Murrayfield Avenue and Ormidale Terrace during the day, and taking the bus to the city centre.

As there is no provision for disabled or other parking right outside the church, the cars and buses dropping off people attending the club have to double park. “It’s an accident

waiting to happen,” said Rev Brown. In fact there have already been several near-accidents. So the proposal is to have either a single yellow which would allow for dropping off of disabled people, or a white box restricting access to those in real need of it. A petition has been signed in recent days by 200 parishioners. 30 residents had objected to the proposal, although it was not clear who they were or why they objected. Then the chair of the Murrayfield Club Rev Kirkbride played the ace card. If there could be nothing done about the parking then the Kirk Session will have to consider the future of the Murrayfield Club in September. In other words the problem of dealing with 30 people with dementia would then become the responsibility of the council in some other guise. Bravo! The problem has existed for about 20 months without resolution. Suddenly there is a time constraint imposed. After all said Rev Kirkbride:-“It is not a huge ask.”

We believe that it was agreed to have a report on this within 6 months and that the council was urged to look into the overarching matter of restricted parking on Ormidale Terrace and surrounding streets. We only say that we think this is the case as some of the councillors and officers present at the meeting were guilty of forgetting to switch on their microphones, making it difficult to follow all proceedings.

The third deputation was from **Duddingston Village Conservation Society**. The problem here is road rage in the historic village owing to the narrow roads and the traffic using the village as a main thoroughfare from Holyrood Park. Although the villagers don't want the route closed all together they put forward a good case for the road to be controlled in some way so that there are no more head-ons resulting in shouting, bad tempers and possibly fisticuffs. But their case was put very delicately and they were invited to restate some of it by Councillor Aitken who said:-“You may have understated some of the traffic issues.” The problem was then elucidated by explaining that there is a school nearby and actual physical

assaults have taken place between drivers!

According to Malcolm Windsor and Roger Mercer of the Society, part of the issue relates to Historic Scotland and the Police not engaging sufficiently for a resolution to be found. It seemed that these two bodies were a bit scared of either getting involved or taking any definitive steps. So the Council was invited to give some back-up to the villagers.

One solution of putting double yellow lines down Old Church Lane was discounted at an earlier date as it might simply mean that the street would become a racetrack. Instead it was thought a little preferable to have parked cars acting as a kind of chicane. The Police seem to be reluctant to enforce the speed restrictions in the village and it was said that there have not been any convictions for speeding among those driving through Duddingston. It was then said that this is not simply a village problem and that it forms a part of the larger issue of East Edinburgh and the traffic strategy for the whole area.

One sensible question raised was that of the emergency services and whether they had been contacted about any possible dangers owing to the bottlenecks here. It seemed that they might not have been.

The following motion was passed:-

Duddingston Village – Traffic – Motion by Councillor Ewan Aitken

The following motion by Councillor Ewan Aitken was remitted by the Council on 27 May 2010:

‘Council notes: the considerable traffic issues in Duddingston Village caused by the use of Old Church Lane and the low road through Holyrood Park as a de facto arterial route for the city;

the fact that this route is totally unsuited to play this role in the Edinburgh traffic network;

*that discussions on these issues go back over 20 years ;
that Council officers had been able to make some small
adjustments through, for example, signage and road adaptation
but have not had the authority to make significant strategic
input into the discussions;
that all these discussions have concluded that this issue
needs to be set in the context of a wider, strategic
discussion on arterial routes in the city.*

Council agrees:

*to call for a report on the consequences of changing Old
Church Lane and the Holyrood Park low road from a de facto
arterial route into the city;
that this report needs direct input from Director level in
the relevant departments in partnership with the Police and
Historic Scotland. This input should involve residents
meeting with the relevant directors."*

One of the other important matters raised at this meeting was the issue of a surface crossing on Calder Road where there is an existing underpass already offering a safer alternative. The committee was told however that the local residents are reluctant to use the underpass owing to the levels of crime which occur there. There have been 26 muggings in a 12 month period. It seems that the painting of the underpass, lighting and CCTV cameras had not deterred any of this.

What amazed The Reporter was the cost of installing a crossing on the road surface. Without any work done to the underpass to render it redundant, the cost of installing the mechanised crossing was calmly estimated at £150,000. We are speechless. But the cost of the feasibility study into providing such a crossing was an equally staggering £30,000. One of the cost-conscious councillors questioned the need for that, particularly as the Neighbourhood Partnership was calling for the surface crossing, so presumably an expensive study might come to the same conclusion. There are about 800 plus

pedestrians – presumably that might be daily but it was not clarified.

One of the other points discussed about the underpass was really very good indeed. Councillor Mowat asked if there was any evidence of any other council dealing with such an underpass in an innovative way to deter criminals, and still allow the majority of residents safe use of the facility. There is apparently some similar situation in London where the police and council have combined to make it a safer environment. So someone from the council is to be immediately despatched to London to find out exactly what...

Much of the rest of the business was agreed on the nod and dealt with very swiftly. Ship to ship oil transfers in the Forth for example:- The council must make their strong objections to this known to the UK government.

The Allotments Strategy was welcomed. The committee recognised that it may not actually manage to meet the demand for allotments even though 50 plots a year may be formed over the next few years. Councillor Mowat asked if the possibility of renting private land to form allotments had been investigated, and it seemed it had not, and the committee agreed that it should be more proactive in this regard.

Sustainable transport – taxi trips for officers and members have been reducing although there is still a sizeable number of trips taken. We are encouraged to note that the council staff usage of buses and public transport has gone up by 8% – but apparently not cycle usage, which has reduced. Have they never heard of the tax-efficient Bike to Work scheme? We wrote about it [here](#).

The meeting was over by quarter to one. The Agenda for the meeting and eventually the minutes and any reports are all available on the City Council website [here](#). The next meeting on 21st September promises to be rather longer and perhaps a

little more lively....trams, trams and more trams....oh and something called domestic air travel protocol....

What's on this Week – 26 July 2010



You can take your dog to Inverleith Park on Arboretum Road this morning for a free health check by the PDSA or to Sighthill Park on Thursday 29th July. You will receive a free healthcheck for your dog (dogs only for health & safety reasons) from an experienced PDSA veterinary nurse. PetChecks cover diet and nutrition, including body shape awareness; weight; dental care; coat condition and general fitness. You can also come along and ask the nurse any general pet-related questions. Please remember though, only dogs can receive a healthcheck. Telephone 0800 917 2509

Author Alasdair Gray who wrote 'Lanark' in the 1980s will be reading from his books at the Central Library on 29 July 2010 at 6.30pm. The event is free but booking is essential. Email readerdevelopment@edinburgh.gov.uk or phone 0131 242 8100.

As the Royal Observatory is closed for repairs to the telescope domes at the moment they are on the road with their mobile Starlab Planetarium which will call at Leith Library on 29th July 2010. Show from 10.30 till 4. Suitable for ages 4-12.

At the Botanics you can see a [multimedia exhibition](#) about fungi from 31 July. The exhibition runs till November. There are also activities arranged in conjunction with the National

Galleries of Scotland who are putting on an Impressionist Gardens exhibition at the National Gallery complex at The Mound..

The City Art Centre at 2 Market Street Edinburgh is reopening on 31 July after repairs and upgrading. There are many [activities and events](#) planned for the summer into autumn.

For those of you who stay home there is a great competition run by Encyclopedia Britannica which you can enter from now till 15th August for children up to the age of 18 – and the prizes are iPods and a Macbook Pro! You can go to the competition website on the City of Edinburgh Council Your Library page by clicking [here](#).

Tuesday 27th July 2010

News around Edinburgh, for Edinburgh and about Edinburgh.



But we make no apology for starting with Lockerbie again. This is a very important issue. It was a horrific disaster which affected the people of Scotland as well as people from all over the world, and, importantly, Americans who were travelling home for Christmas.

But the jurisdiction in the prosecution of the man responsible for the bombing (and one can only suggest that there might have been more than one) was referred to the Scottish justice system as a result of the locus of the crime. It was Scottish judges who convicted Abdelbaset Al-Megrahi and thus the Scottish Justice Minister, Kenny McAskill, who dealt with his release on compassionate grounds. It makes for interesting

reading then to read the correspondence which First Minister Alex Salmond has sent to Senator Robert Menendez who is chairing the Senate Committee on 29th July to which Scottish representation was invited. You can read the letter by going to the Scottish Government website [here](#).

Sunday papers apparently released correspondence between the US and Scottish Governments, reports of US negotiations over the Lockerbie bomber and campaign donations to the US senators involved in the inquiry from BP organizations.

In response SNP MSP Christine Grahame repeated her call for the US Government to allow the release of documents and for the Senate investigation to call the right witnesses:

“As a newspaper appears to have obtained this document it is ridiculous that the public and the US Senate Committee are unable to see it.

“At the very least the US Government must release its correspondence with the Scottish Government to its own Senate committee and lift the embargo on Scottish Government publication. Senator Menendez has asked for this document and the Obama administration must give permission for it to be released. The families of victims on both sides of the Atlantic deserve to know the full position of the US Government on this issue.

“If this senate inquiry is to be taken seriously it must ask the right questions of the right people and along with revisiting its failure to formally invite Tony Blair and his former adviser, now UK ambassador to the US, Sir Nigel Sheinwald, they should ask the US government to set out what discussions it had with Libya over Mr Megrahi and if US officials were in contact or even accompanied UK officials in discussions around the deal in the desert.”

[BBC online](#) now report that the correspondence has been released but it becomes clear from it that the US supported

the release of the prisoner on compassionate grounds to an address within Scotland, fearing the welcome he would receive on return to his home country. The papers on the Scottish government website clearly demonstrate that such an option was discounted by the Scottish Justice secretary.

Hitting a rather surprising note is one George Foulkes. His website states that "George Foulkes MSP has urged that the enquiry into the release of the Lockerbie bomber be reopened. In light of the increasing speculation, on both sides of the Atlantic, that BP was involved in the decision to release Al-Megrahi, George Foulkes believes it is essential that there is a thorough re-examination of the detail surrounding his release. In his letter to Bill Aitken, Convener of the Justice Committee, he asserted '*an inquiry is necessary due to the ill-informed speculation in the London media and US Congress*'." Actually we believe the information is already available on the Scottish Government website. You can access that [here](#).

The Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee meets today at the City Chambers. One of the matters on the agenda is the reopening of Shandwick Place. [The Scotsman](#) reports that New Town residents from Great Stuart Street and surrounding streets have complained of increased CO2 levels due to the closure of the main route to Princes Street.

Meanwhile [Deadline](#) has the story of the court case being heard at Edinburgh Sheriff Court yesterday of a fight over the release of the Lockerbie bomber between an American tourist and a hotel owner who broke a glass over his head.

A man is being treated in hospital for burns to his hands and feet following a fire at his home in Edinburgh.

The alarm was raised at 3.50am after a report of a house alight in East Barton Gardens.

The 28-year-old man managed to escape the fire at his two-storey semi-detached house but he sustained burns and smoke inhalation.

He was taken to Edinburgh Royal Infirmary for medical treatment.

Ten firefighters, four using breathing apparatus, tackled the blaze in the bedroom on the first floor of the house for an hour-and-a-half. The bedroom was badly fire damaged with the rest of the first floor badly smoke damaged.

The Cabinet of the Scottish Government is meeting in Dornoch today for the second day running. Although the parliament itself is in recess the cabinet continues to meet and the itinerant summer holiday style cabinet meetings allow for local visits by government ministers at the same time. They will meet in Stirling, on the Isle of Bute and in Kilmaronock during August and September. Apart from the formal cabinet meeting there will be public meetings with opportunities for Q and A sessions and a focus on Scotland's year of Food and Drink and the promotion of Scotland's products.

A drugs courier caught in March 2010 on Ferry Road with £144,000 of cocaine was sentenced at The High Court yesterday for four and a half years. [The BBC online](#) reports.

SNP councillor Tom Buchanan has accused critics of the Edinburgh airport chief executive Gordon Dewar of personally attacking Mr Dewar rather than concentrating on the issue of increased aviation taxes. [The Scotsman](#) carries the story.

[BBC online](#) tell us that BBC Scotland is commissioning two new dramas one to be set in Edinburgh and one in Glasgow.

Tory Councillor for Southside & Newington, [Cameron Rose](#), explains the rationale behind the fencing erected in the city to allow for festival posters to be put up there rather than on buildings.

The Golden Spurtle awarded financial support

No this does not refer to the [Broughton publication](#) but a porridge championship! New funding for a series of events in the Highlands to mark the year-long celebration of Scotland's iconic produce has been announced.

As part of the national drive to promote Scotland as a land of food and drink, additional funding of £25,000 has been awarded to events in the Highlands. This funding, which is in addition to financial support already being provided to a wide range of events across the Highlands, will support activity showcasing the finest Scottish cuisine and encouraging greater use of local and seasonal produce.

The events aim to build on the success of Homecoming 2009, which generated an additional £53.7 million in tourism revenue for Scotland's economy and helped secure 372,000 more visits to Scotland than in 2008. As a legacy of Homecoming Scotland 2009, Scotland's Year of Food and Drink (May 2010-May 2011) is the first in a series of focus years highlighting some of Scotland's great assets. The year will help support two of Scotland's key sectors – tourism and food and drink.

Speaking at a reception to recognise local food champions at the Clashmore Village Hall in Dornoch last night (Monday) which was hosted by the Cabinet, First Minister Alex Salmond said:

“The Year of Food and Drink is a fitting opportunity to celebrate the work of our wonderful local food and drink producers. The events in the Highlands that have been chosen to receive funding can help enhance Scotland's reputation as a

land of food and drink.

“The food and drink sector is key to our economic recovery. Visitors to Scotland spend one pound in every five on food and drink-related activity and we produce some of the finest produce in the world. As one of Scotland’s most distinct attributes, food and drink has played, and continues to play, a strong role in shaping our cultural identity and heritage.

“We have a busy programme on the horizon to keep up momentum and help the industry-led Scotland Food & Drink meet its target of growing the value of the sector to £12.5 billion by 2017.”

Speaking about the food and drink reception, Rural Affairs Secretary Richard Lochhead said:

“This reception is recognition of the hard work, preparation and passion that lies behind the wonderful produce on offer in this part of Scotland. It was inspiring to meet some of our local food champions.

“This is a true reminder of the richness of what Dornoch and Sutherland has to offer the visitor and tourist – including superb produce, widely available in shops and at the Dornoch Farmer’s Market – and breathtaking scenery. The ingredients are all there to cook-up a food and drink revolution – and the Highlands has a key role to play in delivering that.

“Scottish food and drink exports increased by 10 per cent in value up to the end of March this year, however that doesn’t begin to tell the full story behind the success story of our national larder. At the moment tourism contributes £737 million towards the value of food and drink in Scotland – our ambitious target is to raise that to £900 million by 2017.”

Malcolm Sutherland, Event & Race Director, Baxters Loch Ness Marathon & Festival of Running.

“We are delighted to be associated with Scotland’s Year of Food and Drink, and we look forward to showcasing the best of Scottish and Highland produce at the forthcoming event in October. This will be an exciting new attraction at this year’s Festival of Running, and we are pleased to work with EventScotland to raise the profile of Scotland’s food and drink to our runners and spectators from Scotland, the UK and overseas.”

David Broadfoot of Cawdor Castle added:

“Cawdor Castle is one of the most iconic venues in the Highlands and proudly maintains its orchard and kitchen gardens under organic principles. Living Food has grown year-on-year since 2006 and we’re confident of delivering an unforgettable event in 2010 as part of Scotland’s year of Food and Drink.”

The Food and Drink Year events being supported in the Highlands during summer/autumn 2010 are:

Blas Festival: September 3-12 , across the Highlands Blas Festival is an annual 10-day programme of events which celebrates the culture of traditional music and Gaelic in the Highlands. Staged in some of Scotland’s most spectacular and iconic landscapes, the festival showcases the very best of Highlands music and culture whilst creating and widening opportunities for young musicians and communities to play with and learn from leading Gaelic artists whose music and performances underpin Highlands culture. £3,000 will be provided for the Promoter Food Challenge to improve the visitor experience and quality of produce on offer.

The Royal National Mòd: October 8-16 , Thurso & Wick The Royal National Mòd is a nine-day festival of events which celebrate Gaelic linguistic and cultural heritage and provides a platform for people of all ages to perform across a range of competitive disciplines including music and song, highland

dancing, instrumental, drama, sport and literature. For the first time food and drink will feature allowing Caithness food producers to showcase their produce thanks to funding of £6,000.

Living Food at Cawdor Castle: September 25. Around £6,000 will go towards supporting a day-long celebration of organic and local produce set in the grounds of one of Scotland's most iconic buildings, Cawdor Castle. In addition to the high quality food on offer at over 50 stalls, the event features food and drink education and information sessions, live music as well as food demonstration from Michelin- starred chefs.

Baxters Loch Ness Marathon & Festival of Running: October 3. The Baxters Loch Ness Marathon & Festival of Running is the largest participatory sporting event in the north of Scotland, and the third largest marathon in the UK. Held along the shores of the world famous loch, the 2009 event saw a record field of 7800 runners. This year £5,000 will go towards an arena that will showcase the best of Highland produce to the local community, participants and spectators from the rest of the UK and overseas. Tastings, demonstrations, promotion and selling of produce will all take place with a focus on quality, provenance and health.

Golden Spurtle World Porridge Making Championship 2010: October 10 . Held annually in the Highland village of Carrbridge, the event is organised with the support of the local community and receives widespread local, regional, national and international media coverage. £4,000 will be used to help local businesses promote their produce by increasing capacity for producers. A fringe programme to be staged in the week proceeding the championship will include whisky tasting and a local food and drink trail.

Scotland's Year of Food and Drink is a Scottish Government initiative being delivered by EventScotland and VisitScotland, supported by Scotland Food & Drink. The year has a core budget

of £500,000 and will end with The Food and Drink Excellence Awards in May 2011.

In its first ever worldwide study, the International Culinary Tourism Association researched food and drink at locations around the world in 2010 and described Scotland as one of the most 'unique, memorable and interesting places' for food and drink on the planet.

Green Space #1 – St Andrew Square

We are very fortunate in the capital to have easy access to many areas of greenery, both manicured parks and more rugged areas like the Pentlands. We are going to take them one by one.



Today we are in the award-winning St Andrew Square which was only recently opened up to the public. Now it has a Coffee Republic cafe with wifi (free with your order for 45 minutes) although even the staff here have yet to realise the true source of their wages.... A good place for dropping in whilst shopping, this is a lovely space on a dry sunny day to sit on the grass, read a book or eat lunch. In the middle of the square stands the 41 metre high Melville Monument, atop of which Henry Dundas, former First Lord of the Admiralty and a man of considerable political power, surveys the square. He was a member of the Faculty of Advocates and MP and was unofficially known as the uncrowned King of Scotland.

This green space already existed, but was opened up to the

public as a result of a partnership between The City of Edinburgh Council and Scottish Enterprise in April 2008. Just over £2.5m was invested in forming new walkways and low walls which provide a place to sit. Before that this green area was only visible through the railings. The Edinburgh World Heritage Trust contributed to the renovation of Henry Dundas's monument with the installation of uplighters to give him a new night-time profile.



Around the edges of the square there are office buildings, department stores Jenners and Harvey Nichols, bars, restaurants and Sainsburys. The Royal Bank of Scotland former HQ is here, although now replaced by the world HQ out at Gogar by the airport. The bank building on the east side of the square is set back from the normal building line and has an in/out driveway with fancy gates and railings in front of it.

The square was built in the 18th century in accordance with James Craig's design. Initially a residential area it is now mainly in commercial use, but the green area in the middle is mainly for leisure and recharging your batteries.

Edinburgh Spotlight has an ongoing feature about some of the other green spaces in the city if you click [here](#).

```
[googleMap name="St Andrew Square" description="Garden" width="400" height="400" directions_from="true"]St Andrew Square Garden Edinburgh[/googleMap]
```

Monday 26th July 2010

[STV](#) continue the airtime and column inches devoted to The Lockerbie Bomber. Apparently the US government wanted him released all the time – according to this report of an interview with First Minister Alex Salmond, in which The First Minister calls for all files to be released. Kenny McAskill is on [Youtube by way of ITN](#) telling us why he won't be going to the US.

When the Royal Infirmary was in the centre of town, it was an institution. Now it is a faceless white building on the edge of town in a location that some residents only have a vague idea of. Well that's all in the past now. The hospital moved out and the developers moved in to Lauriston Place leaving behind only the wonderful Eye Pavilion, the Dental Hospital and the Blood Transfusion Service lingering behind. There was a great vision for the old buildings on the northern edge of the Meadows and some innovation for the spaces in between. The building work started over five years ago. Then there was a recession. Banks went bust, as did some notable building companies in Scotland like Applecross, which was responsible for some large housing developments in the capital.

So in light of the recession is it any wonder that the [Quartermile](#) development on the site of the former hospital is only a quarter finished? Well [The Scotsman](#) seems to think it disgraceful in some way. Perhaps they would have preferred the development company to go into earthshattering liquidation, allowing for more lurid headlines. They finish their article by saying that there are many commercial units lying empty – but there are of course a few which are occupied – including Sainsburys and Starbucks and some big firms of lawyers in the office blocks. Not inconsiderable tenants really.....so where's the problem with the developer Gladedale taking its time to complete the important development? Does it not make commercial sense? What do you think?

And a bit more on the Gormley statues in the Water of Leith here on [STV](#). And you can see the [video](#) when the figures were installed only a month ago in June 2010.

Edinburgh Wave Developer teams up with BAE Systems

BAE Systems has joined forces with wave energy developer Aquamarine Power as part of a £450,000 project to deliver cheaper, more reliable sources of clean energy for homes across the UK and beyond.

The Technology Strategy Board awarded the grant, match-funded by the partners, to support a 2.5 year research, development and demonstration project to enable large-scale commercial production of Aquamarine Power's Oyster wave energy converter. The innovative device – a buoyant hinged flap – attaches to the seabed and moves backwards and forwards in the nearshore waves, pumping high pressure water onshore to drive a hydro-electric turbine, which then generates electricity for the National Grid.

Under the partnership, engineers at BAE Systems usually involved in the design, repair and maintenance of complex naval systems, will work with Aquamarine Power to develop an intelligent diagnostic system and remote ballasting mechanism. Together, these innovations will drive down maintenance costs and help to maximise energy production, paving the way for this ground-breaking technology to be rolled out on a commercial scale to establish Oyster clean energy farms around the world.

Kevin McLeod, Engineering Director at BAE Systems' Surface

Ships division, said: "This is a great opportunity for us to apply skills developed in naval design and the management of large scale complex maritime engineering programmes to support the emerging marine energy industry.

"In working with Aquamarine Power as a partner, we are helping to pioneer commercial clean energy solutions that will help the UK meet its ambitious climate change targets."

"The Oyster system works well," says Aquamarine Power Chief Executive, Martin McAdam. "Our next step is to drive down the cost of electricity generated from wave power through improvements in Oyster reliability and reduced maintenance costs.

"BAE Systems is a fantastic company with extensive experience in marine systems performance modelling and analysis. Our companies are very different in size, but we share a passion for engineering excellence and a belief in the global potential of wave energy. We are grateful to the Technology Strategy Board for providing the grant funding which has enabled this collaboration to take place."

Aquamarine Power's innovative Oyster technology is designed to be installed at around 10 metres depth, 0.5km from shore. Aquamarine Power has already installed and tested its Oyster 1 demonstration device at the European Marine Energy Centre in Orkney, Scotland, where it generates electricity which is transmitted to the National Grid to power homes in the local area. It is estimated that a farm of 20 Oyster 2 devices will generate enough energy to power more than 12,000 homes.

Iain Gray, Chief Executive of the Technology Strategy Board, said: "By 2050 we are going to have very different energy needs than we have today and we will be getting our energy from different sources. The UK is well placed to exploit wave and tidal stream energy resources with all of the coast line that we have, and it is expected this kind of technology will

be an important part of the renewable energy mix needed in the future.

“We still need to prove which technological solutions will most successfully harness marine energy and we need to reduce the cost of the energy produced to make the technology competitive with other renewable energy solutions. So there are a range of technological challenges to address.”

BAE Systems is already involved in a number of initiatives to support the renewable energy sector. The defence company actively works with the wind farm industry to resolve issues about their disruption to radars. Its engineers designed the electrical distribution system for the largest land based wind farm in Europe at Whitelee and BAE Systems is also working with partners to develop an deepwater offshore windfarm design.

Aquamarine Power closed a £6 million funding round this year and has subsequently been awarded more than £3 million from the Scottish Government WATERS fund (Wave and Tidal Energy: Research, Development and Demonstration Support). The company is actively seeking a major investment partner and a strategic technology partner to take the Oyster device through to commercialisation.

Lockerbie

The Scottish Government has recently put up all information about Lockerbie on its website. In case you have missed it you can access it by clicking [here](#).

The supporting documentation includes the medical report upon

which the decision was made.

The release of all information in such a way is a credit to the Scottish Government and its policy of transparency and accountability. Unless there is any document found to be missing of course....

Scottish Government want control over Crown Estates...

Scottish Ministers are seeking the UK Government's support to make the Crown Estate more accountable and ensure Scotland benefits to the full from its plentiful natural resources.

In Scotland the Crown Estate – who manage the seabed up to 12 miles from shore as well as the foreshore and some on-land assets – is the responsibility of UK Government and, as such, is not accountable to Scottish Ministers.

Discussions are already underway to determine how the Crown Estate is managed in Scotland, so that local communities receive greater benefits and to ensure that the organisation adapts to the post-devolution, 21st Century era.

Rural Affairs and Environment Secretary Richard Lochhead said:

“The people of Scotland should benefit from our marine and natural resources yet, despite the arrival of devolution over a decade ago, the Crown Estate remains unaccountable to Scotland. It is time for the Crown Estate to deliver greater benefits to Scotland and our communities.

“The election of a new UK Coalition Government provides the opportunity for the Crown Estate to fully adapt to the post-

devolution era, with greater transparency and accountability for their activities north of the Border. We must ensure that Scottish communities see more benefits from the revenues generated on their doorstep.

“The fact that a UK body like the Crown Estate controls our seabed when the flow of all other marine powers are going in the opposite direction is out of step with modern and progressive political arrangements.

“A series of meetings have already begun between Scottish Government officials and their Crown Estate and UK Government counterparts to explore the options. At my most recent meeting with the Secretary of State for Scotland we agreed to hold further talks in the near future about the Crown Estate.

“Scotland’s offshore energy potential is vast and we have the opportunity to be a world leader in this area. Therefore we are continuing to work closely and constructively with the Crown Estate on our ongoing offshore renewables work. However, what is critical is that we ensure that the fruits of this good work stay in Scotland.”

Background

Research from the Offshore Valuation Group, published in May 2010, found that Scotland’s total offshore resource is estimated at 206 Gigawatts. By harnessing around a third of that resource, offshore renewables capacity could reach 68 GW by 2050, which would provide a net value in terms of electricity sales estimated at £14 billion.

More than 12,000 jobs in marine renewables could be created by 2020, which would contribute £2.5 billion to Scotland’s economy, according to a report published by the Marine Energy Group last September.

A UK Treasury Select Committee report in March 2010 recommended that a concordat or memorandum of understanding

between the Scottish Government and the Crown Estate Commissioner is needed to consolidate the working relationship and highlighted the need for the Crown Estate to greatly strengthen its management within Scotland.

The 2009 Calman Report acknowledged evidence from local authorities and others calling for the Crown Estate to be devolved to enable the Crown Estate to be made more accountable and to help ensure that its Scottish assets are managed in Scotland's interests.

Ship to ship back on the agenda

This week the Licensing Board at The City of Edinburgh Council meets on Monday, Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee meets on Tuesday, Development Management Subcommittee meets on Wednesday morning and the Personnel Appeals Committee in the afternoon and Planning Committee visits are scheduled for Thursday afternoon.

The agenda for the Transport Infrastructure and Environment Committee is very far reaching. This committee has a wide remit. Its main aim is "To determine policies for the provision of transport, infrastructure and environment services within the strategic policy framework approved by the Council or the Policy and Strategy Committee". So a huge range of items to deal with but this week's agenda includes the following items:-

Traffic in Duddingston village

Traffic reduction in Leith on The Shore.

Incentive based recycling

Access to community recycling sites by non-commercial vans

Food Waste recycling

Gull nests

Pedal for Scotland

Parking around Jewel & Esk Valley

Shandwick Place traffic measures – this seems to have opened up again to buses and taxis at least.

Ship to Ship oil transfers in the Forth – the ban on these has been put on hold by the UK government and it seems that the city council want to question that. In light of recent events in the Gulf of Mexico, although this was a drilling incident, it would seem mad for the UK government not to ban this practice.

Sustainable travel

Cleanliness of the city

National Spring Clean update

Occupational Health And Safety Enforcement

Oxgangs regeneration

The report on allotments – Cultivating Communities – the plan for 2010 to 2015.

Water of Leith Management plan

Proposal to impose waiting restrictions on Ormidale Terrace Murrayfield.

Park and Ride user survey update

Decriminalisation of parking enforcement. Variation of level of penalty charge notices.

Footway on the B924 to Dalmeny and Bellevue to be used by cyclists. Other proposals for the Old Dalkeith Road Bus Priority and Cycle routes. Traffic calming in Balerno, North Fort Street and the Coates area.

Edinburgh this weekend

The strange tale of the young man found lying in a New Town street continues. He is in Edinburgh's Royal Infirmary suffering from a head injury, but thankfully his family have now been traced. [The Daily Record](#) explains that he still does not know how he got there. He was identified from his dragon tattoo after a police appeal according to [BBC online](#).

Kenny McAskill continues to reject any invitation from the US senate to go to Washington this week, according to the [BBC](#).

Again from the sparkly new [BBC online website](#) news that the knife apparently belonging to Luke Mitchell who was convicted in 2005 for the murder of Jodi Jones, has been found about half a mile from the murder site. Mitchell has appealed against sentence and conviction unsuccessfully and is to spend at least 20 years in prison.

[The Herald](#) asks if the Edinburgh Festival in all its guises will survive the government austerity measures.

Greener Leith highlights that the Allotments Strategy is being finalised for approval by the Council this week, and it seems that there will not be any new allotments at Pilrig Park. Whether there will be any new allotments to alleviate the long

waiting list is not made clear. We highlighted the draft strategy [some time ago](#).

The City of Edinburgh Council offers 21 jobs in a variety of capacities – teachers, drivers, planning officers and handyperson. You can see the list [here](#).

A lovely story on [BBC online](#) that The Royal Family will have a Flickr account from Monday....so watch out for the holiday snaps from The Hebridean Princess.

Deadline of 6 August for charity applications

Local charities could be in line for a £12m cash boost as the City of Edinburgh Council looks to transfer control of 38 trusts set up to help vulnerable people in the city. The council has traditionally been nominated as a trustee for bequests but it wants the third sector to take over so the money can be used more efficiently. The move is also expected to inject around an additional £50,000 a year into the city's voluntary work, through better use of the trusts' income and capital, as well as saving cash on administration costs.

Cllr Tim McKay said: "We want to see the money used in the best possible way and charities are better placed than the council to do that. Simply by changing how the trusts are managed, there will be benefits to charities, the Council and those people in Edinburgh who need help. In this financially difficult times, that is good news for everyone."

The trust assets range from £192 in the Douglas Brown Bequest for the 'deserving poor of Corstorphine' to the £7.5m Trinity

College Hospital Fund which provides pensions for older people. The transfer was prompted by expressions of interest from charities in being involved in the trusts and has been the subject of reports to the Council's Pensions and Trusts committee, which oversees their management.

The charities must do work in Edinburgh and it is expected that they will have an annual income of more than £75,000. The deadline for applications is 6 August. Proposals will be then considered by the committee. Charities interested should contact esmond.hamilton@edinburgh.gov.uk for more information.

Existing beneficiaries will continue to receive support.

Foster care information evening

An information session for people who are interested in foster care will take place in Edinburgh next week.

Following on from the successful Foster Care Fortnight run in partnership with Edinburgh, East Lothian, Borders and Midlothian councils – the information evening will look at what is involved in the process of fostering a child.

During the informal event, potential carers will be given the opportunity to talk about what is involved with current foster carers.

The evening takes place on Thursday 29 July between 6.30pm to 8.00pm at Springwell House, Gorgie Road, Edinburgh.

If you can't make it along but would like more information about becoming a foster carer, you can call free on 0800 158

How heavy is your luggage?

Holidaymakers are being advised to be wary of luggage weighers that can be used to help avoid excess baggage charges at airports. Trading Standards officers at the City of Edinburgh Council have tested some of the models and found big variations in accuracy, with one actually breaking during the trial.



Trading Standards officers tested six different digital and analogue models, ranging in price from £3 – £17. The most accurate was out by less than 1% but the worst was wrong by 500g when weighing a 5kg case. Variations were also noted when using different copies of the same product.

Cllr Robert Aldridge, Environment Leader, said: “These gauges don’t have to go through the same controls as weighing machines at airports or in trade. The errors can also be made much worse depending on how they are used, especially when trying to hold a heavy case and read the display at the same time. For greater peace of mind we suggest people follow our tips, but they should always give themselves some leeway.”

Top tips for avoiding excess baggage charges:

Remember that even the best gauges are only meant to be a guide so leave some room for error.

A digital scale with a ‘hold’ function may be useful if you are going to be using it on your own.

Have someone else read the scale while you hold it, or mount the gauge from a stable point.

Keep the gauge as still as possible, leaving time for it to settle.

Leave room for items, such as any toiletries, that you may have to move into your hold luggage because of gate restrictions.

Remember that some of the gauges will not have been designed for use in hot or humid conditions, so it may provide a different reading on the way home.

Leave space for presents coming back.

Trading Standards also advise asking if a vacant check-in desk at the airport can be used to weigh luggage before checking-in; this might avoid having to re-queue if bags need packed differently. However, even the airport baggage weighers can be subject to error because of their high levels of use. Trading Standards Officers advise you to check the indication reads zero before putting your baggage on. If travellers feel their baggage is not correctly weighed they should raise this with airport staff.

MEPs

There are six of these who represent people living in Scotland.

[George Lyon](#) is a farmer from Bute. This is his latest written question to the European Parliament.

“Can the Commission outline the reasons why it is not possible

for Member States to introduce new zero tax rates for designated products?

Would the Commission agree that granting such an exemption for sun screen (sun protection products) would prevent avoidable skin cancers, which would in turn save health services considerable expenditure every year?

Under these conditions, would the Commission reconsider the idea of granting powers to Member States for making such an exemption?"

[Ian Hudghton](#) is SNP MEP from Forfar... with a very very very yellow website..... He is doing very important things and is also the SNP president...so could someone tone the yellow down a bit please? His latest news is [here](#).

Former Lothian Region councillor, [David Martin](#), is Labour MEP. This means that his website is mainly red... and white thank goodness. He is Scotland's most senior MEP. Former Stockbroker's assistant and animal rights campaigner. His latest question to the European Parliament concerns freedom of religion in India:-

"The EU-India Joint Action Plan (JAP) describes India as a paradigm of 'how various religions can flourish in a plural, democratic and open society'. It is true that India boasts extraordinary religious diversity. However, India also has a tragic history of communal violence affecting religious minorities, which in recent years has included the 2002 violence against Muslims in Gujarat and the 2008 violence against Christians in Orissa, which attracted considerable concern from among EU citizens. Communal violence in India also takes the form of ongoing and less high-profile patterns of sporadic but frequent attacks on Christians and Muslims in certain states, which usually go unpunished. Communal violence is viewed by the National Commission for Minorities (NCM) as being most likely to occur when there is a sense among perpetrators that violence is justifiable and that the police

would fail to act against them, or would act in a partisan or ineffective manner.

The Indian Government is in the process of drafting legislation to prevent, control and deal with the aftermath of communal violence, and is to be congratulated for pioneering such legislation in South Asia. The Communal Violence (Prevention, Control and Rehabilitation of Victims) Bill 2009 is welcomed in principle by groups who have suffered from communal violence. However, such groups have voiced certain significant concerns with the substance of the bill, including the following: it defines communal violence too narrowly; it risks reinforcing the impunity of officials complicit in this violence; and it offers little to protect and rehabilitate witnesses and victims.

The JAP commits the EU and India to an open engagement on human rights issues. Following from the recent EU delegation visit to the site of communal violence in Orissa, will the Commission offer support to the Government of India in drafting this legislation?

Will the Commission encourage the Government of India to implement the recommendation of the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief in 2008 to the effect that the Government should consult with and take into account the views of religious minorities when drafting this legislation?"

[Struan Stevenson](#) is Tory MEP and has been since 1999. One of his recent press releases relates to rat poison which would have been largely banned by the recent EU directive against biocides. These biocides make up around 95% of rat poisons in use. The compromise now allows the poisons to be used in certain controlled ways – for example by farmers and pest controllers. Struan has a [Flickr](#) Photostream...so you can see what he has been up to.

[Catherine Stihler](#) is Labour MEP with her office in Inverkeithing. She is a career politician going straight from

University at St Andrews to becoming an MP's researcher. She is editor of Parliament magazine. Again the website is a bit red and white – but she certainly seems to be busy and her website is probably the most informative The Reporter has seen with all manner of downloads and newsletters.

Finally there is [Alyn Smith SNP MEP](#). Alyn is a very energetic MEP, and former solicitor. He is Scotland's youngest representative in Brussels and in line with that he is on [Facebook](#). He is a member of the European Parliament's agriculture committee. He advertises a job on his site. If you are a recent university graduate then you might like to go to Brussels for a three month unpaid internship? If so then [apply here](#). His last question relates to the fruit fly:-

“Imports of all live animals from countries outside the European Union are subject to the entry controls laid down in Council Directive 91/496/EC(1). This directive requires that all consignments of animals are checked on entry at an approved Border Inspection Point (BIP) to ensure that they comply with the EU's animal health and welfare rules.

The directive does not make any distinction between species of animal and applies to all animals, including insects such as *Drosophila*, which are not vectors for animal diseases. The directive does not make any exemptions for the intended use of the animals and therefore invertebrates for research purposes must be checked on entry at an approved BIP. This can often lead to delay, or the insects being destroyed, which is an inconvenience to scientists and researchers.

Can the Commission clarify whether it has any plans to review the legislation? Would the Commission consider revising the legislation in order to exclude *Drosophila* from veterinary entry checks?”