

# SNP condemn Blair government

SNP Home Affairs spokesperson, Pete Wishart MP, has described the testimony to the Chilcot inquiry by the former head of MI5, Eliza Manningham-Buller, as a damning indictment of the Blair administration.

In her testimony Lady Manningham-Buller told the inquiry how she had warned about what sensible – but mostly frightened to speak out – senior Whitehall officials believed in 2003: that the invasion of Iraq would increase the terrorist threat to the UK.

Mr Wishart said:

“As former head of MI5, Eliza Manningham-Buller’s testimony comes as a damning indictment of the Blair administration, and will leave the former prime minister feeling queasy.

“This testimony explodes Labour’s claim that the Iraq War did not increase the terrorist threat to the UK.

“In light of Lady Manningham-Buller’s evidence, and that of the former Attorney General, it would seem incredible if Tony Blair was not now recalled to account for his actions.

“There are mounting questions for Tony Blair, and the cabinet colleagues who supported him, over why the former Attorney General changed his mind on the justification for the invasion, when his previous legal advice, and private letters to Tony Blair said that war without a security council resolution would be illegal. What led to this u-turn without any new evidence to justify it.

“Tony Blair’s last appearance raised more questions than it answered and I would hope, with considerations of the general election now passed, that he will be totally straight with people on what was going on in Downing Street – this is a

time for total candour on the worse foreign policy decision in recent history.”

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## **Recession less severe in Scotland?**

New figures from the UK Government show the recession in Scotland was less severe than across the rest of the UK.

Scotland also spent less time in recession in 2008 and 2009 than the UK as a whole.

These figures were welcomed by the SNP who warned that the recovery from recession could be seriously undermined by the Tory – Lib Dem cuts introduced to pay off Labour’s debts.

Continuing the work of the Scottish Government to create and protect jobs, provide training places and invest in public infrastructure is a key part of ensuring economic growth a spokesperson for Finance Secretary John Swinney said:

“Scotland went into recession a quarter later than the United Kingdom economy, and the rate of decline over the whole period was marginally less north of the Border than it was across the UK. While Scotland’s recession may have been very slightly shallower than the UK as a whole on these revised figures, clearly there is always a lagging effect in the economy, and we face significant challenges in building a strong and sustained recovery.

“Key sectors held up better in Scotland – such as in the production, hospitality and transport sectors – while given the nature of the recession, financial and business services were more adversely affected north of the Border.

“Overall, our Economic Recovery Plan is supporting some 15,000 jobs in Scotland, and we have supported key successes which

will deliver long-term as well as short-term benefit – such as SSE’s Centre of Engineering Excellence for Renewable Energy in Glasgow – which last week signed a strategic agreement with Mitsubishi, expected to create up to 1,000 new jobs over five years. Our investment in a new generation of council houses is important both in supporting employment and meeting social need, and we have exceeded our target and delivered over 20,200 modern apprenticeship places.

“These are all important interventions – but in order to deal with the macro-economic situation that Scotland faces along with other nations across the world, by definition Scotland needs the same macro-economic powers as these other nations have.

“It is clearer than ever that the Scottish Government and Parliament need economic and financial powers as the only alternative path to an unprecedented budget consolidation process imposed by Westminster, so that we have the necessary tools to boost growth and revenues in the Scottish economy, and invest in quality public services.

“That is the nature and urgency of the debate in Scotland – and why the centre of gravity in Scottish politics continues to shift towards independence.

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## **Edinburgh Airport charges**

MP for Edinburgh West Mike Crockart has tabled a motion to parliament calling for Edinburgh Airport to reconsider its drop-off charges at the airport.

The text of the motion is :

That this House regrets the decision by BAA to introduce a £1 drop-off charge at Edinburgh Airport; notes that BAA have

failed to consult widely with customers ahead of its introduction; further notes that for a large percentage of customers, including the elderly, those with children and those who travel early in the morning or late at night, taking public transport to the airport is not a viable option, and urges Edinburgh Airport to stop the drop-off charge.

Speaking in Westminster, Mike said:

“BAA is acting far too hastily in implementing these charges without any consultation or input from the public.”

“The proposed charges would have a disproportionate effect on the elderly and those with children as it is often much more difficult for them to take the current public transport links and they will struggle most with the proposed free bus link from the new free drop-off area.

“Ideally the airport should wait and see the effect that full transport links to the airport, currently under development including the tram and its connection to the national rail network, will have on the number of customers being dropped off by car.

“I once again urge BAA to reconsider the drop off charges which I feel are unfair to a significant number of passengers and will do little to solve the current problem.”

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## **Driving Hours Directive**

Fears that this may damage Scottish agriculture surface.

George Lyon, Liberal Democrat MEP for Scotland, has warned against the extension of the European working time directive with fears increasing that the UK Government will be forced to extend the regulation to cover self-employed drivers.

The European Commission, recognising the dangers of including

self-employed drivers in the Directive, sought to exclude them from the working time rules. This proposal was struck down by the European Parliament by a small margin.

Until now the UK Government has resisted implementation of the rules but it is now feared it will be left with no choice but to extend a mandatory 48-hour week to cover the self-employed. Such a move could have a devastating impact on the haulage industry, including the Scottish agricultural sector with animal transports required to comply with another layer of bureaucracy.

Mr Lyon has written to the European Transport Commissioner asking him to urgently reconsider the issue.

Commenting, Mr Lyon said:

“I do not believe that self-employed lorry drivers need to be protected from themselves. In striking down the Commission’s common sense exclusion of self-employed drivers from the Directive the European Parliament has set a dangerous precedent. It was quite clear this issue is being driven by ideology and not common sense.

“There is not a shred of evidence to suggest that limiting working hours improves road safety. It will add another layer of bureaucracy and additional costs to the road haulage industry which is all ready overburdened by regulation, excessive fuel costs and the effects of the recession.

“It would not only cover actual driving time but any associated activities which means that thousands of one man businesses who haul livestock straw and fertilisers could be caught out by this impractical piece of bureaucracy.

“It is my fear that these proposals set us on a very slippery slope towards working time legislation for all self-employed workers.

“I have written to the Commissioner urging him to bring their proposals to exclude self-employed drivers before Parliament again to try and reverse the decision before the UK and other Governments are forced to implement these very damaging plans.”

Scott Walker, NFU Scotland Policy Director, commented:

“This development is potentially worrying for the many Scottish farmers who depend on being able to transport farming goods such as livestock, feed and straw on a flexible basis. Some do this in order to supplement their income, while for others it is a necessity if no local haulage firm exists.

“These farmers may also be providing a vital service for neighbouring businesses and, in teaming up with fellow farmers to transport goods, are making sensible use of their vehicles and driving hours.”

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## **Obesity and Pregnancy**

Liberal Democrat health spokesperson Ross Finnie MSP is urging the Scottish Government to make sure that pregnant mothers are given support to lose weight, after raising concerns about the numbers of pregnant women who are obese.

Answers to parliamentary questions lodged by Mr Finnie show that for the first time hospitals will record pregnant women's BMIs as standard. At present, no such record exists, but the Preventing Overweight and Obesity in Scotland: A Route Map Towards Healthy Weight, published in February 2010, admits that increasing levels of maternal obesity is a growing concern.

Commenting, Mr Finnie said:

“Maternal obesity across the UK is a serious concern to medical professionals, with some reports estimating that a fifth of pregnant women in the UK are obese. There is the further complication that obesity can lead to type two diabetes which can be difficult to control in pregnant mothers. We don't have an accurate picture in Scotland because the Government is only just starting to record the BMI of

pregnant women.

“Obesity is a growing problem for Scotland, particularly our children. With the latest statistics showing that 1 in 5 Primary One children are overweight, childhood obesity is a ticking timebomb.

“Evidence shows that the children who are born to obese mothers are more at risk of serious health problems like heart defects and excess insulin in the blood.

“These health problems can follow children into adult life and there is an increased risk that they will themselves go on to become obese. But pregnant women who are obese are themselves at extra risk of maternal death and other significant complications.

“It’s a telling sign about the seriousness of maternal obesity that the Scottish Government has to spend £19 million pounds on maternal and infant nutrition.

“Maternal obesity is clearly a big issue. Scottish Ministers need to work with Health Boards to make sure that support is there for pregnant women to help them lose weight, but also extra care is available for their children to minimise the health risks and help them develop healthier attitudes to food and exercise.

“If the Scottish Government doesn’t tackle obesity now, then the good progress made on fighting killer diseases like cancer and strokes may be undermined.”

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# Councillors for the City of Edinburgh

Do you know who your councillors are?

Well, if you don't, then here is a link to [the list of the 58](#) men and women who represent the people of Edinburgh.

There are 17 LibDem councillors representing 15 of the wards. You can access the list of LibDem councillors [here](#).

Only some of them have websites or blogs....shouldn't they all have them?

[Cameron Rose](#) has a particularly well kept blog which you can access here. He updates almost daily with news of real interest.

Councillor Paul Edie has a blog which you can access [here](#).



It is a good looking blog with lots of views on a wide range of subjects – and a great page with cocktail recipes! Today he is talking about the Forth Bridge and suggests it really should be declared a World Heritage Site, despite what Network Rail think.

This is an ongoing article and will be updated as we find more councillors and websites....watch this space.

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# MSPs

We have already given you a list of MSPs in the Edinburgh area [elsewhere on this site](#) but we are conducting an investigation into the online presence of our politicians from council level upwards and here is what we have discovered so far...

[Kenny McAskill](#) is a man with enough on his plate but he seems to be one of the few MSPs who actually update his website during the summer months. He has a good summary of what is happening at Newcraighall and the planning application which has been lodged there for a housing development by Cadell 2 LLP – a surname well known to those living in Linlithgow and Bo'ness as Cadell is (or technically was) the feudal superior there. There will be a further public open day in August. He also voices his opposition to the [Biomass plant](#) proposed for Leith Docks.

[David McLetchie's site](#) was last updated in June 2010 but he does have some interesting things to say about his opposition to the changes to Right to Buy legislation. McLetchie is the Conservative MSP for Edinburgh Pentlands. This is the legal right introduced by the Tories under Thatcher which allowed council tenants to buy their homes at reduced prices. This led to two different results – one is that the council housing stock has been much reduced. The other is that the purchasers were able to profit from their years as council tenants, since they were free to sell the home three years after buying it, and keep any profit for themselves to invest in a new property. Characteristically, the level of profit was about 50% so it was always a good move for a council tenant to buy their own home if they could. The SNP now want to bring an end to this right.

[Mike Pringle MSP](#) for Edinburgh South last updated his site on 14th June when he commented on the closure of St Margaret's School in Newington. This private girls' school went into

liquidation after over a century of education. Perhaps a victim of the recession, the school itself had in the past taken over the former girls schools St Denis and Cranley as well as St Hilary's. The private schools in Edinburgh educate a large proportion of children. Part of the ethos of girls schools like St Margarets is to educate girls to be independent and confident. Testament to that ethos – one of St Margaret's old girls is Katie Logan who runs [Rainbow Cupcakes](#) with her sister Susie. They donate 5% of their profits to cancer charities.

[Margaret Smith MSP's website](#) was updated on 2 July when she explained her opposition to the drop off charges being introduced by Edinburgh Airport which we highlighted in our earlier article.

Not really sure exactly how recently his website was updated but [Gavin Brown MSP](#) for Edinburgh South has been very vocal in his opposition to the proposed parking fees at the airport and he started a petition on 2nd July called [Stop the Drop-Off Rip-Off](#) which 2748 people have now signed.

[George Foulkes](#) is the old man of Scottish politics and is Labour MSP representing the Lothians. His latest question to Shona Robison Minister for Public Health and Sport asked what services the Scottish Executive had requested for the First Minister on his trip to Delhi for the Commonwealth Games – the verbose answer from Ms Robison is .....“None.” Surely this is not really sufficient as a parliamentary written answer?? Asking the supplementary question as to who will host Mr Salmond when he gets there the answer is rather longer... They will be guests of the Commonwealth Games Federation – because there will be several of them going as hosts of the next games....we have to wonder who “they” are...?

[Robin Harper MSP](#) seems to have a redundant website...There are a few photos but no real meat there...What is happening with the site? We have asked and will let you know!

Fiona Hyslop is MSP for Lothians but her website does not seem to be active... We have asked why and will get back to you!

Independent MSP Margo McDonald has been very busy introducing her End of Life bill. Sadly she is suffering from illness, but this does not seem to hold her back from a busy schedule. Her website is great! She has excerpts from her Evening News column where she most recently wrote about the trams in June. You can see this [here](#).



[Dr Ian McKee MSP](#) for the Lothians is a former GP and has been an MSP since 2007. His is a great website. It is bang up to date. His latest article was filed on 29th July 2010 and deals with the NHS reorganisation south of the border. (Health is a devolved area in Scotland and thus the responsibility of Holyrood.)

[Shirley-Anne Somerville](#) is SNP MSP for the Lothians and her website is just fab. She is a member of the Transport Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. She has made many speeches however over a wide range of issues and you can access these speeches [here](#). She also asked an important question earlier in the year about the financing of the [trams project](#).

Sarah Boyack Labour MSP for Edinburgh Central has a monthly newsletter. The latest one can be accessed here.

She has a good website with a regularly updated video diary at <http://www.sarahboyack.net>

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# Community Councils

The City of Edinburgh area has 43 community councils. There are 46 areas so some vacancies still exist.

The minutes for all the community councils should be available from the City Council web page which you can access [here](#).

Unfortunately they are not up to date in every case.

We highlight for example the Marchmont & Sciennes Community Council where the last minutes lodged on the City Council site are dated November 2009. We know they have had meetings since then – so why don't they tell us about it in the same place as every other council?

The great majority have a website. We list the addresses for you below.

[The New Town and Broughton Community Council website](#) looks lovely. But it gives no information about the date and time of the next meeting, nor does it tell you exactly what has been discussed. In fact clicking on some of the links just takes you back to the home page.....

[Stockbridge & Inverleith CC](#) has a website too which has a good user friendly look to it, but the news is a couple of months old in many cases, and does not tell us when or where they will next meet.

This is the list of community councils with their website addresses. So check them out for yourself – what do you think?

## Community Council Websites

Balerno [www.balerno-communitycouncil.org.uk](http://www.balerno-communitycouncil.org.uk)

Craiglockhart [www.craiglockhart.org](http://www.craiglockhart.org)

Craighleith/Blackhall [www.craighleithblackhall.info](http://www.craighleithblackhall.info)

Craigmillar [www.newcraigmillarcc.btik.com](http://www.newcraigmillarcc.btik.com)

Currie [www.currie-scc.gov.uk](http://www.currie-scc.gov.uk)  
Drylaw/Telford [www.dtcc.btik.com](http://www.dtcc.btik.com)  
Drum Brae [www.thelocalchannel.co.uk/drumbrae](http://www.thelocalchannel.co.uk/drumbrae)  
Firrhill [www.firrhillcommunitycouncil.btik.com](http://www.firrhillcommunitycouncil.btik.com)  
Fairmilehead [www.fairmileheadcc.org.uk](http://www.fairmileheadcc.org.uk)  
Grange/Prestonfield  
[www.grangeprestonfieldcc.org.uk/wordpress](http://www.grangeprestonfieldcc.org.uk/wordpress)  
Hutchison/Chesser [www.themoat.org.uk](http://www.themoat.org.uk)  
Kirkliston [www.kirklistoncc.btik.com](http://www.kirklistoncc.btik.com)  
Leith Harbour & Newhaven [www.lhncc.btik.com](http://www.lhncc.btik.com)  
Leith Central [www.leithcentralcc.co.uk](http://www.leithcentralcc.co.uk)  
Leith Links [www.leithlinkscc.org.uk](http://www.leithlinkscc.org.uk)  
Liberton & District [www.libertondcc.wordpress.com](http://www.libertondcc.wordpress.com)  
Longstone [www.community-council.org.uk/Longstone](http://www.community-council.org.uk/Longstone)  
Marchmont & Sciennes [www.marchmontandsciennes.blogspot.com](http://www.marchmontandsciennes.blogspot.com)  
Merchiston [www.merchistoncc.org.uk](http://www.merchistoncc.org.uk)  
Morningside [www.morningside.org.uk](http://www.morningside.org.uk)  
Murrayfield [www.murrayfieldcc.org.uk](http://www.murrayfieldcc.org.uk)  
Muirhouse/Salvesen [www.muirhouse.wordpress.com](http://www.muirhouse.wordpress.com)  
New Town/Broughton [www.ntbcc.org.uk](http://www.ntbcc.org.uk)  
Old Town [www.edinburgholdtowncc.org.uk](http://www.edinburgholdtowncc.org.uk)  
Queensferry & District [www.queensferrycommunitycouncil.org](http://www.queensferrycommunitycouncil.org)  
Sighthill, Broomhouse &  
Parkhead [www.sbpcc.co.uk](http://www.sbpcc.co.uk)  
Southside [www.edinscc.org](http://www.edinscc.org)  
Stenhouse, Saughton  
Mains & Whitson [www.stenhousecc.org.uk](http://www.stenhousecc.org.uk)  
Stockbridge/Inverleith  
[www.stockbridgeandinverleithcc.org.uk](http://www.stockbridgeandinverleithcc.org.uk)  
Tollcross [www.tollcross.org/tcc](http://www.tollcross.org/tcc)  
Trinity [www.trinitycommunitycouncil.btik.com](http://www.trinitycommunitycouncil.btik.com)  
West  
End  
[www.thelocalchannel.co.uk/WestEnd-Edinburgh/home.aspx](http://www.thelocalchannel.co.uk/WestEnd-Edinburgh/home.aspx)

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# Traverse Theatre – Beaming to the UK

The Traverse Theatre, Scotland's home of new writing, will this August broadcast five new short plays from its season of breakfast theatre live into cinemas across the UK. The Traverse has teamed up with Hibrow Productions to present a major development of this award-winning season. In a first for Scottish Theatre, leading theatre and film directors will collaborate to bring these plays by the UK and Ireland's top writers to audiences across the UK.

Specially commissioned scripts by Marina Carr (By the Bog of Cats, Marble), David Eldridge (Market Boy, Under The Blue Sky, Festen), Linda McLean (Any Given Day, strangers, babies), Simon Stephens (Punk Rock, Pornography) and Enda Walsh (Hunger, The Walworth Farce) will each have just one day of rehearsal before script-in-hand performances at the Traverse during this year's breakfast theatre season, Impossible Things Before Breakfast. A one-off, back-to-back performance of all five plays will take place on 23 August. This Traverse Live! event will be filmed by Hibrow directors using High Definition cameras and beamed live to Picturehouse and other participating cinemas, giving audiences outside the Traverse a uniquely visceral connection with the actors and the scripts.

Theatre directors Dominic Hill, Vicky Featherstone, Zinnie Harris and Stewart Laing will be joined in the rehearsal room by film directors Ben Gutteridge, Ian Knox, Lewis Georgeson and Tom Whitworth, who will work together to translate the Traverse studio rehearsal experience into a High Definition cinematic event.

Speaking about Traverse Live!, Traverse Artistic Director Dominic Hill says, "This exciting project celebrates the fact that people are accessing theatre in new ways, and also demystifies the process of bringing a script to life. We are capturing the essence of what we do at the Traverse, and are delighted to bring the work of these five exceptional writers to a much wider audience through the live broadcast on 23 August. Traverse Live! will be like a big window behind the scenes, concentrating on the actor and the script. It will give people across the UK the chance to connect with the Traverse studio experience, and discover something brand new at the Festival."

The 2010 breakfast theatre season, Impossible Things Before Breakfast, kicks off with Simon Stephen's darkly magical road trip, T5, directed by Dominic Hill. This is followed by Marina Carr's Quartet, a tale of a man's relationship with his wife, his mistress and his lover over thirty years, directed by National Theatre of Scotland Artistic Director, Vicky Featherstone, who will also direct Enda Walsh's My Friend Duplicity. Linda McLean's This is Water envisages interrogations of eighteen people as they pass through a hut on the side of a hill, and is directed by Stewart Laing. David Eldridge's strange short play about the fragility of existence, All Is Vanity, is directed by Zinnie Harris, concluding the season at the Traverse Festival.

### Impossible Things Before Breakfast

A season of five breakfast plays at the Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh

Dates & Times: Wednesday 18 – Sunday 29 August (9.00am)

Tickets: £12 (includes coffee and a breakfast roll)

Booking: [www.traverse.co.uk](http://www.traverse.co.uk) / 0131 228 1404

### Traverse Live!

A one-off performance of all five plays, filmed before a live audience at the Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh

Date & Time: Monday 23 August 7.00pm (3hr)

Tickets: £12

Booking: [www.traverse.co.uk](http://www.traverse.co.uk) / 0131 228 1404

At Picturehouse Cinemas

Date & Time: Monday 23 August 7.00pm (3hr)

Tickets: £10 (£9 Picturehouse members)

Booking and participating venues [www.picturehouses.co.uk](http://www.picturehouses.co.uk)

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## Bikes in London

They are calling it Barclays Bike Hire.....and now some apps developers are trying to design the best app. You can read about it in the [London Evening Standard](#).

Launches on 30 July 2010 in London – why oh why can we not have this here in Edinburgh please? Pretty please?

You can find out how it works in London [here](#).

You can find out how it works in Dublin [here](#)

You can find out how it works in Paris [here](#)

We strive to be an international city in Edinburgh. But notwithstanding the claims that Scotland has the most far-reaching climate legislation in the world, if we do not have a short hire bike scheme then we are missing out on a major opportunity to send some short distance passengers by the most environmentally friendly transport there is – apart from walking that is!

Here's a Dublin bike just to keep you going meantime!



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# Friday 23 July 2010

So here we are at the end of another week. Scotland is firmly in the focus of the world's media and our First Minister is deftly coping with the attention. He has told the world that Scotland's Ministers will not be travelling to the US for the Senate hearing next week to discuss the release of the Lockerbie Bomber. Although [The Caledonian Mercury](#) thinks they are missing a golden opportunity by not going..

The erstwhile Home Secretary, Jack Straw, took all day to consider his invitation before rejecting it too. Meanwhile, one George Galloway was telling everybody who would listen that the Scottish Ministers should jump at the chance of defending their decision before a US Senate hearing – look at how well he did when he was accused of taking bribes from Saddam Hussein.

In case you missed it here it is in some of its glory.

We leave you to make your own minds up about this.

However we are sure that there cannot be too many people who would disagree with us when we tell you that mindless vandals have been at work in the Water of Leith. Two of Antony Gormley's figures have been pushed over so that they are now under the water. OOPS Sorry! Not mindless vandals Phew! The weather is the culprit here. The huge rains of recent days have couped the figures into the river. According to the [BBC](#) there was a month's rainfall in just a matter of hours so it is not really surprising is it? Well of course we have to turn to [The Broughton Spurtle](#) for the real story – it was all in the design....

Cameron Rose tells us of real vandalism to The Innocent Railway tunnel on his [blog](#). The padlock on the gate was apparently broken which would have allowed cars access through here. The Reporter would be very scared indeed to meet an oncoming car in the Tunnel! It is a favoured place of many city cyclists and is usually a very safe environment. What a pity then that a few spoil it for the many.

Finally for today – is this [The Scotsman's](#) attempt at a local roundup of news? Or just a mixture of press releases thrown together.... We are very thin on the ground here at The Reporter and attribute our unashamed use of press releases to that very fact. But do The Scotsman need to do that too? Anyway the shop they are talking about first has a very nice dress in the window. Here it is!



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## Cineworld on Saturday

We have decided to concentrate on the Fountainpark cinema this weekend. The beauty of it is that you can drive there, get the bus or indeed it is an easyish 15 minute walk. There are advance showings of two films this weekend:- The Karate Kid (PG) starring Will Smith's young son Jaden, an up and coming star, is on at various times on Saturday from 11.00a.m. onwards and The A-Team (12a) shows from 12.40 onwards. The Karate Kid gets 69% from Rotten Tomatoes and The A-Team a very miserly 48%. You have to think that this is marks out of a hundred so far....they are bound to get more than that once the box office has really opened here in the UK. After all The A-Team stars Liam Neeson...heart throb that he is for all the mothers going to see it along with their children!



Toy Story 3 is just great. The Reporter waited till yesterday evening to go and see it and boy is it worth the wait...or is it? Was it just another tale of the toys trying to figure out how to deal with the world which is much bigger than them – all the tricks to get out of the house and then the daycare centre? Or is it more than that? The Reporter thinks it is more. It would be very easy to say it is just another epic journey. But the real thing about it is that the toys have emotions, just like the children do when they become young adults like Andy setting off to college. So there he is at 17 on the threshold of becoming an adult and he thinks enough about life to realise that his toys will be better off somewhere else.... Yes a bit of a tearjerker – but you can hide behind the 3-D specs for that! And Rotten Tomatoes gives it a massive 99% – what more do you want?? Hefty prices though at Cineworld Fountainpark. The cost of an adult ticket for the movie with 3-D specs is now £21 for 2! Taking into account the pangs of hunger which can only ever be assuaged by popcorn and Coke that means a hefty £28 for two people to go to the cinema...

Anyway, you have to think that it is worth it when you see the long list of people involved in the movie at the end. Oh, and there is a wee short film called Day and Night which is another animated film from Pixar and is very sweet indeed. That is shown before Toy Story 3.

But the bargain of Saturday has to be the £1 showing at 10.00am of Nanny McPhee and The Big Bang, or Percy Jackson and The Lightning Thief at 10.15am or The Princess and The Frog at 10.00am. Billed as fun games and a movie this has to be the cinema bargain of the week!

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# Recipe of the Week – Boiled Ham

Yes really. Just plain old boiled ham.

Buy one of the half moon shaped pieces of ham in any supermarket. Typically it will cost about £4 at the moment although occasionally Sainsburys offer them at the bargain basement price of 3 for £10.

Place in large pot. Cover with cold water.

Chop two onions into eighths. Peel and roughly chop about 5 medium sized carrots and place in the pot with a tablespoon of peppercorns and three good handfuls of yellow split peas. Bring to boil and simmer for an hour to an hour and a half.



Take the ham out and leave to cool before slicing for your sandwiches.

Use either a liquidiser or a handblender to blend the soup to a smooth creamy texture.

Yum! Also good value – soup for four (possibly twice) and ham for either a meal with potatoes and cauliflower cheese or on sandwiches with mustard...

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# Thursday 22nd July

Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service were hindered in their work last night by vandalism. They were called out to fight a fire at a derelict school in Muirhouse during which they found their firehoses damaged and a fire officer's car had the tyres slashed.

A boy has now been charged in connection with the blaze according to the [BBC online](#), although it is not clear whether the charge is connected to the fire itself or the vandalism.

Local MSP Margaret Smith said:-“This is absolutely outrageous. Just as it is unacceptable to attack emergency service personnel who are risking their lives to save others, deliberately vandalising life-saving equipment is not on.

“Boredom is not an excuse for this type of behaviour. It is right that an investigation is launched, but this should include a wider examination of why a minority of young people think it's ok to attack emergency service personnel or their equipment. We need to drum it home that this reckless behaviour can cost lives and will not be tolerated.

“The Scottish Parliament has passed laws making it an aggravated offence to attack emergency personnel. We need to work out why the message isn't getting through to this minority of young people, despite widespread revulsion about this kind of behaviour.”

Peter Tobin did not show up for his appeal hearing in Edinburgh today, claiming illness. Two of his victims were Vicky Hamilton and Dinah McNicol, although it is feared there may be more. Police are searching gardens and basements at some of his previous addresses. The fathers of the two young girls whose bodies have been found were in court to hear the basis of his appeal against sentence and [The Press Agency](#) reports their reaction.

An Edinburgh man, Anthony Demarco, was jailed today by Lady Smith for five years in connection with a £1m fraud which resulted in his own father being shot outside the casino at Maybury... [Deadline](#) has the story which is very complicated. Insurance fraud, threat to life, gambling...all a very sorry tale indeed.

[Deadline](#) also have the story of the rescue in the Forth which took place today. The lifeboat from Kinghorn was scrambled along with a helicopter to save passengers on board a motor yacht on a trip from Dunbar to Inchkeith. No-one was injured.

Coathanger crucifixion. Yes you read that right. 3000 coathangers used to form a 9feet high figure of Christ. It was mounted outside St Giles today briefly. [The Scotsman](#) has the photo. You can't see it any more as it has gone back to the studio where it is being kept safely until it finds a permanent home.

The [HR magazine](#) has the story about research from Edinburgh Napier University which discloses the alarming fact that when jobseeking it is not what you know but who you know. Well I never. Mighty me. Imagine that. How long did that take?

[Free Office Search](#) has the story that more businesses are seeking premises in the first six months of this year compared to last. They quote figures from surveyors CBRE. Similar story in [The Scotsman](#).

Finally a question is posed on a [Guardian blog](#) from one of the readers who lives in a tenement flat in Edinburgh..... What's the most eco-friendly way to dry my laundry indoors? Leo who is one of the authors of the blog is going to answer this question on Friday. We can't wait. What do you think??

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# Poetry everywhere



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## Tuesday 20th July 2010

Edinburgh finds itself bathed in sun again after some very wet days recently. Here's the round up of what the latest news stories in Edinburgh are...



To help you decide which of the hundreds of shows you are going to see at The Fringe this year you will need to get on [EdTwinge](#). This is a twitter service expressed every hour with real time reviews of shows. They give each show a ranking according to the crowd-sourced reviews. And of course you can also do a 140 character review of whatever you have seen yourself.

[The Caledonian Mercury](#) has a very interesting article explaining the work done at Edinburgh University's Centre for Immunity Infection and Evolution to discover a new way to fight viruses or infection.

Sheila Gilmore MP wants your help. She is the Labour representative for Edinburgh East and wants to ask her constituents to tell her which of the leadership candidates she should vote for. Does this perhaps mean that she cannot decide for herself? Or is there simply no telling the candidates apart? Ms Gilmore had backed Diane Abbot but will not necessarily vote for her in the leadership race. [The Scotsman](#) reports.

Straiton Park and Ride has become home to gypsy travellers this week effectively evicting Lothian Buses following attacks on buses. The travellers are here to attend the Christian

Festival of Spirituality and Peace at Granton which is on from July 25th. [The Scotsman](#) has a report.

[The Scotsman](#) also carries the obituary of one of the better known business people in the city, insurance broker Bill Reid. He was a very colourful character indeed – and known to The Reporter as someone who lived every day to the full.

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## Wednesday 21 July 2010

News from here and there about here!

Justice Minister Kenny McAskill is under fire again for the decision to release Al Megrahi on compassionate grounds. The Prime Minister David Cameron has called the decision “very bad”, effectively defusing the situation he was facing in Washington by simply agreeing with the US government – agreeing to release further documents but not giving way to the US government’s demand for an inquiry. We wrote about the Lockerbie bomber here. [The Daily Record](#) tells the story that David Cameron thought the bomber should have died in jail.

First Minister, Alex Salmond, speaking on Newsnight, said that he did not regret the decision. He admitted that there was a profound disagreement between the UK government and the SNP led Scottish Government. He conducted a very robust and eloquent defence of the Scottish Government’s decision.

He continued :-“As to the medical evidence – the report upon which McAskill made his decision has already been published. Mr Megrahi has terminal cancer and will die.”

“We followed due process to the letter. Other prisoners have been released on compassionate grounds and exceeded the time they were estimated to survive.”

“Nobody doubts Dr Andrew Fraser’s integrity. (the doctor who issued the report about Megrahi’s health)

“Megrahi’s progressive health is reported on monthly. It is sent to East Renfrewshire Council and the Scottish Government.

We published every single piece of information last year except for two – correspondence with the UK and the US government. So the Scottish government only need the agreement of the UK and US governments to allow the documents to be released.”

Newsnight Scotland led with this story too, expanding on it with some historic footage from 11 months ago when Megrahi went home to Libya to a hero’s welcome.

Magnus Linklater, Editor of The Times in Scotland, speaking on Newsnight Scotland stated that people would be puzzled that the Scottish Government were opposed to Prisoner Transfer Agreement but were keen to release Megrahi on compassionate grounds which did not seem in any way logical. Linklater also thinks the Scottish Government may have underestimated the effect of the prisoner’s release, and that an important part of Scottish justice was missed by the Lockerbie bomber dropping his appeal against conviction which might have brought out the truth of the affair.

Sir Kenneth Calman has been appointed the Chairman of the National Trust for Scotland, and is apparently going to give it a good “redd out” according to [The Telegraph](#).

Calman, best known for the commission bearing his name which focussed on devolution and Holyrood’s tax raising powers, must know that the NTS is a bit of a poisoned chalice. The organisation has already had to impose self-inflicted cuts such as selling its important HQ building in Charlotte Square and [shutting the visitor centre at Ben Lawers](#) amongst other important assets, owing to its dire financial position. You can find out which properties are open in Edinburgh and the

Lothians by clicking [here](#). The results of the Strategic Review under the Rt Hon George Reid will be published at the end of July following his lengthy consultation and “robust and independent” review of the charity.

Network Rail do not want The Forth Bridge awarded world heritage status, saying that it would impose additional burdens on them, according to [BBC online](#).

BA cabin crew have rejected the latest pay offer so all you travellers should all be ready for more strikes before Christmas according to [BBC online](#). Given that the train is now a very downmarket, dirty and slow option for travel to London this is rather depressing for Scottish business people who have to travel to London on a regular basis.

By way of Greener Leith a rather odd report to [FixMyStreet](#) about a peculiar noise in the street.....

Edinburgh Rat Run in pictures on [BBC online](#).

Forth Energy boss says the first planning application is to be lodged next month for the first of four biomass plants to be built in Edinburgh, Dundee, Rosyth and Grangemouth. This story is in [The Scotsman](#).

[Edinburgh Spotlight](#) tells us about a new shop opening on Candlemaker Row and review [Gorgie City Farm](#).

Start up Cafe list all the meet-ups on [this page](#) on their website.

And for some light relief – although we do not in any way endorse the cruelty of this stunt..... Ladies and Gentlemen we bring you the [Flying Donkey](#)

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# New Chairman at NTS

Sir Kenneth Calman is appointed Chairman of the National Trust for Scotland.

His appointment, which must be formally ratified at a meeting of the Trust's Council next month, will commence after the Trust's Annual General Meeting in September. He will succeed Dick Balharry who took on the role on an interim basis in January 2010.

Welcoming the appointment, the Trust's President, the Duke of Buccleuch, said:

"Sir Kenneth has a wealth of strategic and leadership experience gained throughout an impressive career. We are enormously fortunate to secure the services of someone who combines that experience with passion for our heritage and who is thus well-qualified to guide the Trust through the next steps of its journey following the conclusion of George Reid's Strategic Review."

Sir Kenneth was selected by the Trust's Nominations Committee and a Selection Panel which included the Trust's President, and representatives from its Council and Board. The Trust was assisted by a headhunting firm, Munro Consulting who helped ensure that the net for possible candidates was widely cast and that the process was objective and rigorous.

The Duke of Buccleuch added that the Trust was enormously appreciative of the interest expressed in the position by a number of very well qualified individuals. He believed this showed wide recognition of the Trust's key place in Scottish civic society and the importance placed on helping it to move forward.

The NTS published its annual financial statements earlier in the month for the year to February 2010 showing a slightly

improved picture on earlier years. You can see the statements here.

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## **National Trust – Computer Survey**

Scotland's Stories is an exciting new project the National Trust for Scotland is developing using new media to bring Scotland's heritage to a wider audience.

A total of twenty Stories will be told using a mixture of sound-recording, photography, video and special effects. Each story will be told by Trust staff and volunteers across two or more National Trust for Scotland properties.

To help the Trust make sure that the Story techniques work for a broad range of people, Interpretation, the consultancy recruited to implement the project over the next nine months, is looking to recruit a focus group of 8 volunteers who will be invited to feed back on the project as it develops. This will take place initially after the pilot phase, and then at intervals between August 2010 and March 2011.

This will be a voluntary role and unpaid, but those who contribute to the focus group will be offered free entry tickets to Trust properties on completion of the project. Applicants do not need to be National Trust for Scotland members, although members are equally welcome to apply. No travel is involved, and all that is needed is an interest in the National Trust for Scotland and an ability to use a computer.

Focus group application forms can be downloaded and submitted

# Lothian and Borders Police appeal for information

Lothian and Borders Police are appealing for witnesses after a man and a woman were seriously assaulted in a flat in Edinburgh last week.

They were attacked at an address in Craigentenny Road on Wednesday 14th July. The 39-year-old man was treated for serious stab wounds. He had escaped from the flat, and was found injured by a member of the public at 6.20pm on Craigentenny Golf Course. The 43-year-old woman suffered serious leg injuries. Detective Sergeant Mike Leask said: 'This man and woman have been the victims of a horrific assault but I would like to reassure the public this is not a random attack.' 'The man was so badly injured, he was unable to share the details of the incident until yesterday, and this is why we are making this appeal now.' 'We are asking for anyone who was in the area around Craigentenny Road about 6pm last Wednesday, and who may have seen or heard anything suspicious, to come forward.' 'This will be robustly investigated, with door to door enquiries underway in the area.'

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# Theft from cemetery

Lothian and Borders Police are investigating the theft of three items from Dean Cemetery in Edinburgh.

Sometime between 4.55pm on Friday (July 16) and 4pm on Sunday (July 18), two large metal lions and a large metal vase were stolen from the cemetery on Dean Path. The lions measure around 3.5ft long, and are around 1ft tall, the vase is about 4ft x 4ft. They were all fixed in place, but it seems the metal fittings have been cut. A police spokesperson said: 'It must have been noisy when the metal fittings were being cut, and must have attracted some attention.' 'We also believe a vehicle must have been used to transport the lions and the vase due to the size and weight of the items.' 'In light of this, we would appeal for anyone who was in the area, and who may have seen something suspicious at the cemetery over the course of the weekend, to contact police.' 'In addition, we would like to hear from anyone who may recognise or have seen these highly unusual items since they were stolen.'

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## Festival Theatre

The extension to the Festival Theatre gets some attention from the press today...

First of all [The Scotsman](#) has an article about the objections by the Cockburn Association. Secondly [Cameron Rose](#) a councillor with a real live working blog explains the background and offers the link to the planning application.

It is being decried as mediocre...

What do you think?

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## Community Clean ups

Community clean ups to help keep Edinburgh beautiful have increased significantly over the last three years. This is a case of doing it yourself if you want something done...

As a result of several initiatives including the Services for Communities 'Edinburgh' campaign – the number of community litter-picks has more than trebled over the last three years.

In 2007, over 1,200 volunteers who took part in litter picks, however this has increased dramatically to over 5,000 volunteers in 2010.

For a number of years the City of Edinburgh Council has been involved in the National Spring Campaign alongside Keep Scotland Beautiful – to encourage local residents to become involved in clean ups.

These types of activities prevent litter and fly-tipping, as well as educating people on the rubbish they throw away and the impact this can have on their local community.

Over the last three years, groups of local people, voluntary organisations and schools have all contributed to making Edinburgh a stunning capital city.

Councillor Robert Aldridge, Environmental leader at the City of Edinburgh Council, said: "This is fantastic news as community clean ups all contribute to making Edinburgh a cleaner and greener city. These activities also benefit the local community, with everyone helping to make their local neighbourhoods cleaner and more attractive.

“I would like to say a big ‘thanks’ to all the volunteers who have been giving up their free time over the years, to keep our reputation as – one of the most beautiful cities in Britain.”

Donna Niven, of Keep Scotland Beautiful, said: “We’d like to thank all the volunteers who have taken part in litter picks across Edinburgh this year. We are working towards a Zero Waste Scotland so the simple act of clearing litter taken by these volunteers will make a real difference to local communities and visitors to the city; giving people a more pleasant environment to enjoy.”

Free clean up kits can be ordered on line at [www.keepsotlandtidy.org/springclean](http://www.keepsotlandtidy.org/springclean)

To arrange a community clean up contact Lorna Farquhar, Task Force Manager, the City of Edinburgh Council on 0131 529 5821.

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## **Forth 1 Join up with Scottish Rugby**

BAUER Media Scotland has announced an exciting new partnership with Scottish Rugby ahead of this month’s final leg of the IRB Sevens World Series.

Bauer Media will become the Official Radio Partner of the Emirates Airline Edinburgh 7s being held at Murrayfield in Edinburgh next weekend (Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 May).



Radio Borders sports commentator Stuart McFarlane with former Scotland and Lions rugby stars Roy Laidlaw and John Rutherford

with Forth 1's Grant Stott

Listeners to Forth 1 have the chance to win a place in the Scotland 7s team picture and the opportunity to meet the squad at the exciting fast-paced tournament, which sees Scotland pooled against Fiji, USA and Wales.

The partnership includes promotion of the Edinburgh 7s across Bauer's entire network of Scottish stations with online content across Forth 1, Clyde 1, Tay FM, MFR, Westsound and Northsound 1. Forth 1 DJ Grant Stott will also be talking up all the action at the tournament on the last bank holiday weekend in May.

Graham Bryce, managing director of Bauer Radio Scotland, said:

"We are delighted to launch this new agreement with Scottish Rugby. We are joining together in this strong partnership to promote the game and the IRB Sevens World Series across Scotland. We will highlight the event throughout our market-leading network of stations across Scotland and provide our listeners with updates to all the action."

Forth 1 DJ, Grant Stott, added: "It's great news that we've teamed up with Scottish Rugby and the Emirates Airline Edinburgh 7s. I'm really looking forward to the tournament and delighted that I'll be part of the action. Forth listeners should keep their ears open over the next week for a fantastic competition to meet the Scotland squad."

Event ambassador and former Scotland and British Lion, John Rutherford, said:

"Today's announcement is just the sort of promotion the game needs. It underlines Scottish Rugby's efforts to increase the accessibility of the game through a partnership which will give a big boost to one of the most exciting feasts of rugby to take place at Murrayfield – the final leg of the IRB Sevens World Series."

Scotland 7s captain, Scott Forrest, agreed:

“The summer weather makes for such a great sporting weekend. Everyone in the crowd had a great time last year at Murrayfield and really spurred us on when we took to the field for some exciting top-class rugby and close-fought games.

“That’s when the supporters can really make a massive difference – you only need to look at how the team have performed at home in the last two years to see the impact they make.

“Hopefully, with the reach of all the stations within the Bauer Media group, the crowd size and noise will be boosted even further.”

After the first six events in Dubai, South Africa, New Zealand, USA, Australia and Hong Kong, Samoa currently lead the World Series by three points from eight-time winners New Zealand. Teams will compete in the penultimate leg in Twickenham, London before the final showdown at Murrayfield.

Tickets are available to by logging onto [www.edinburgh7s.com](http://www.edinburgh7s.com) by calling the 24-hour Ticket Hotline – 0844 335 3933 or in person from the Murrayfield Ticket Centre, Gate A, Roseburn Street, Edinburgh (open 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday)

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## **National Library of Scotland finds Flickr**

The National Library of Scotland has contributed one of the biggest ever collections of photographs and images to Flickr’s ‘The Commons’ – ensuring over 2000 of its archived

images become available world-wide.

The first collections released to the website include The Last Letter of Mary Queen of Scots, photographs of tenements on the Southside of Edinburgh taken in 1929, the order for the massacre of Glencoe and World War One official photographs from the Library's Haig Collection.

Flickr is described as the best online photo management and sharing application in the world and enables the public to view, share, re-use, comment upon and tag images on their own social networking sites.

Flickr's 'The Commons' highlights the hidden photographic archives of the world's cultural and heritage organisations and encourages the public to contribute their knowledge to these collections. Currently, 44 other cultural organisations have added images to the website, including National Galleries of Scotland, the Imperial War Museum, The National Archives (UK), Brooklyn Museum, Library of Congress, the National Media Museum and US National Archives.

Gill Hamilton, Systems Librarian, National Library of Scotland, commented: "This is a fantastic resource for the general public – there's no known copyright restrictions on Flickr 'The Commons' photos – so everyone has access to use these images for non-commercial purposes. Flickr Commons is a great way for National Library of Scotland to share its photographic collections with the world and we're looking forward to adding to our Flickr Photostream throughout the coming year."

The Library plans to add more collections to Flickr throughout the year and aims to share a total of 3000 images with the public by the end of 2010. You can see the NLS Flickr Photostream by clicking [here](#).

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# World Fun Day

Takes place on July 28th in Leith. You can read all about it [here](#)

It takes place at Leith Community Centre. It is for families and consists of free activities workshops and information for them.

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# Lothian & Borders Police News

Some news from the police about incidents in the city.

## ROBBERY ON BELFORD ROAD

Police in Edinburgh are appealing for witnesses after a 16-year-old male was assaulted outside a city art gallery. The incident happened in the early hours of Monday morning, outside The Dean Gallery, in Belford Road. The victim was walking home on Queensferry Street towards Dean Bridge at around 00.15am when the suspect approached him, and tried to engage him in conversation. The victim continued walking, however the suspect followed him along Belford Road before grabbing him as he passed the gallery. He robbed the victim of his mobile phone and wallet, before making off towards the Water of Leith at Belford Road. The suspect is described as white, in his early to mid-30s, 5ft 9ins tall, with dirty blond/brown collar length hair, and wearing short-sleeved blue checked shirt with a grey vest underneath, along with light-coloured trousers, and black shoes. A police spokesman said:

'While he wasn't injured, the victim was still shaken as a result of his ordeal, and we are appealing for any information that can help us locate the suspect. 'Following his initial attempt to engage with the victim, the suspect has followed him some distance along Belford Road before attacking and robbing him. 'We know that there were a number of pedestrians in the area at the time, as well as taxis, and we want to speak to anyone who witnessed the assault, or who saw the suspect in the area. 'Following the attack, the suspect headed towards the Water of Leith at Belford Road, however it is possible that he may have stayed in the area for a short time. 'Anyone who saw him in the area after the incident, or who has any other information that can assist our inquiries, should contact police at the earliest opportunity.'

#### SERIOUS ASSAULT

Lothian and Borders Police are appealing for witnesses following a serious assault on a 24-year-old man in the Capital. The incident happened around 8.15pm yesterday in Restalrig Road, opposite the Gulf Garage. The victim has been involved in a fight with a male, and sustained a puncture wound to his chest and a cut to his forehead before the suspect fled the scene in a silver hatchback car. Officers are now following a positive line of enquiry, but are urging anyone who was in the area and witnessed the incident to come forward. A police spokesman said: "The victim's injuries are not life threatening, but we are treating this extremely seriously and are keen to speak to anyone with information that can assist with our enquiries. "Anyone who was in Restalrig Road around 8.15pm last night and saw anything suspicious is asked to contact police immediately. "Similarly, anyone who remembers seeing the silver hatchback vehicle being driven by the suspect is also asked to come forward."

#### DRUGS SEIZED

Police in Midlothian have recovered cocaine with an estimated value of £220,000 in an operation that took place on Friday 16

July. Officers stopped a vehicle on the Edinburgh City Bypass at Straiton on Friday night, and discovered 4 kilos of the drug contained in packages within the vehicle. The seizure was made under Operation Erase, an ongoing operation targeting serious organised criminality in East Lothian and Midlothian. Two men, aged 29 and 43, have been arrested and charged in connection with drugs offences, and will appear at Edinburgh Sheriff Court on Monday 19th July.

## ASSAULT AT NIGHT CLUB

Lothian and Borders Police are appealing for witnesses after a 25-year-old man was assaulted in an Edinburgh nightclub. The incident happened around 1.30am at the Stereo club on King Stable's Road. The man was in the toilets when he was assaulted by an unknown attacker and sustained injuries to his right eye and mouth. There is no description of the suspect and police are now urging anyone who may have been in the club and seen anything suspicious to come forward. A police spokesman said: 'As well as being incredibly brazen, given the amount of people in the club, this assault also appears to be completely random. 'Unfortunately we do not have a description of the suspect and so we're keen to speak to anyone who was within Stereo around 1.30am and has information that can assist with our enquiries. 'Similarly, anyone who can provide us with a description of the suspect is also asked to contact police immediately.'

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## What's on this week?

A round-up of events in and around Edinburgh – or where to find out more...

The List has the authoritative guide to What's On in Edinburgh

and Glasgow and you could do worse than get a copy delivered every fortnight, or go to their [website](#) to check on what you can get up to. They have the definitive Edinburgh Festival Guide too. [The Telegraph](#) has the rather exciting news that Emma Thompson is bringing a play to The Pleasance at the Edinburgh Fringe this year.

So this week in Edinburgh, some people are away on their annual hols, some are staying at home with the tourists (who seem to be mainly Spanish at the moment!) and everywhere you go there is an anticipation of the madness to come which is the Festival...now only a couple of weeks away so time you got your tickets for the Book Festival, The Fringe or the Festival proper. There are still some tickets left for The 2010 Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo on the official [website](#). This year marks the sixtieth anniversary of the event which runs from 6th to 28th August. We have an earlier article about The Tattoo [here](#).

Friday is when the [Big Tent](#) starts in Falkland, Fife. It runs from 23rd to 25th July. This is an important environmental event. Since it is not too far from Edinburgh we mention it here as it is simply worth knowing about and going along even for a short while. As a spin off from the main theme which is to discuss matters of environmental importance and impact there is some great music – notably Roseanne Cash this year!



The Edinburgh Bookshop at 219 Bruntsfield Place has a bookgroup meeting this week on Thursday, ore information [here](#).

Blackwells Bookshop 53-62 South Bridge also has a Book Group and they are meeting to discuss Vikram Seth's A Suitable Boy tonight 19th July at 6pm. Furhter details by emailing them on [events.edinburgh@blackwell.com](mailto:events.edinburgh@blackwell.com)

On 27th July The One Below hosts a UK vintage event. This is below The Rutland Hotel at 1-3 Rutland Street Edinburgh.

On Saturday we are all hoping for lovely weather when the Forge of the Wordsmiths Garden Party is on. It is being held at Trunk's Close 55 High Street Edinburgh which is the HQ of the Scottish Book Trust. Music as well as things literary – including literary cocktails...For more information email [forgeofthewordsmiths@gmail.com](mailto:forgeofthewordsmiths@gmail.com)

Free entry, complimentary drink and loads of fashion. Bring along something that you love but don't wear and swap it for something new (but old if you see what we mean...) You can reserve a place by phone on 0131 225 4326 or by email [events@luath.co.uk](mailto:events@luath.co.uk)

And you could be getting yourself prepared for a challenge on 1st August. You could abseil from one of Scotland's best known landmarks . The event is being organised by the Rotary Club of South Queensferry and supports both CHAS and Queensferry Care. Participants can choose to support one or both of these chosen charities. Experience the thrill of vertically descending 165ft from the Forth Rail Bridge, under the direction of expert instructors. There's no need for any previous experience. All they ask is that you are over 16 years of age (there is no upper age limit as long as you are in good health). A £20 deposit will secure your place and the club ask that you raise £120 for your chosen charity. To find out more please visit [www.rcsq.org.uk](http://www.rcsq.org.uk) and follow the links, or contact Amy Telford at CHAS on 0131 444 1515 or [amytelford@chas.org.uk](mailto:amytelford@chas.org.uk)

On 21 July at Ghillie Dhu there is a Writer's Bloc event, called Planet of the Apps and billed as an evening of spoken word with a technological twist. There will be a live Twitter feed during the event. You can get further information at [www.writers-bloc.org.uk](http://www.writers-bloc.org.uk)

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## Rescue at The Water of Leith

# by LBFERS

Following an incident at the weekend when firefighters had to rescue three people from the Water of Leith at the Shore in Edinburgh, fire chiefs are urging people to be aware of the dangers that open water can pose.

Three men aged 23, 32 and 39 were pulled from the water at 10.30pm on Saturday (17 July). It is believed the group had been drinking in Leith when one man jumped into the water and his two friends followed him in, possibly to rescue him. Fire crews were called to the scene and were able to get them out using a short extension ladder to assist them out of the water; they were taken to Edinburgh Royal Infirmary for a check up.

Community Safety Manager at Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service, David Lockhart said:

“Tragically every year we see people lose their lives in accidental drownings. Open water can be very dangerous for youngsters and people who may choose to go into the water after having a drink. We want people to be aware of the dangers and stay safe this summer.

“Stay out of rivers and open areas of water, they can often be deceptively calm but can hide strong currents or weeds which can pose real risks.

“Our advice is if you see someone in trouble in the water call 999 and stay out of the water. That way you can help emergency services by telling them exactly what you have seen and allow them to carry out a rescue.

“It is very easy to get into difficulty quite quickly in water and there have been cases of strong swimmers caught in fast moving currents and being unable to get themselves out of trouble.

“Whilst we can understand how easy it is for people to try and help by going into the water there are real risks involved in doing so.”

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# Monday 19th July 2010

News about Edinburgh from other sites and newspapers

[The Daily Record](#) carries the story about the rescue from the Water of Leith at the weekend.. which we also highlight [here](#).

The Commonwealth Games take place in Glasgow in 2014. In advance of that there is something called the Delhi Handover. [The Scotsman](#) tries to tell us about three sporting events which will take place in Scotland this October including the Edinburgh Commonwealth Games Handover Event...but rather fails to paint the whole picture.

So we will try our best to explain more.

The Delhi Handover is on October 14th 2010. That is when the Commonwealth Games are taking place this year in Delhi India. At the Closing Ceremony Scotland, and more particularly Glasgow, has to make a presentation of a Handover Ceremony which is to set the scene for the 2014 Games. In truth it is a flag which is handed over. It is also the first opportunity for Glasgow to make a statement to the world of the games to come four years later.

The Games are apparently watched by about a billion people across the world. Part of the Handover Ceremony will be a mass choreographed dance routine performed by a cast of 400. (This in Delhi, the home of Bollywood.....) There will be hundreds of Scottish dancers there to perform. Unfortunately you have already missed the cut-off date to be one of those dancing at the event and rehearsals are well under way.

Local councils were given the opportunity to find dancers in their respective areas and Carole Taylor, Morgan McGuire and

Laura Thomson will be representing Edinburgh.

Scottish Labour Leader Iain Gray is calling First Minister Alex Salmond to account over the sum of £34 million earmarked for disabled children...The story appeared in [Scotland on Sunday](#).

[STV](#) tells us about the 24 year old who has been stabbed on Sunday evening in Restalrig Road in Edinburgh. Police are appealing for witnesses.

And there is a lovely new [website](#) dedicated to telling the story of Heriot Row in Edinburgh. And what stories they are!

[The Caledonian Mercury](#) tells us what is actually happening with the royal yacht Bloodhound which is in Leith next to Britannia.

And the [Leith Links](#) website has a really good page explaining a lot of what you need to know about the Trams...including today's BBC coverage of Richard Jeffrey the Chief Executive of **tie** saying that political leaders must be brave and support infrastructure projects. There is still no resolution to the dispute between **tie** and the BSC consortium despite the Council meeting held on 24th June when everything was supposed to be decided.