



September 2015

A warm welcome awaits in Edinburgh



No one could fail to be moved by the tragic stories that have emerged over recent weeks as a result of people trying to flee the conflict in Syria.

The Prime Minister has announced the UK's intention to accept 20,000 additional refugees over the next five years which followed the First Minister's earlier announcement of Scotland resettling 1,000 refugees in the coming year.

Working with statutory and voluntary sector partners, the Council will play its part by applying to resettle 100 refugees this year and, we hope, more in the future. You can play yours by supporting our disaster and emergency partner [Mercy Corps](#) in their ongoing work in Syria and Europe.

On the right track

I was delighted to be one of the guests to travel on the train for the official launch of the Borders Railway this week. The event was the culmination of many years of partnership work with colleagues in Midlothian and the Scottish Borders along with Transport Scotland, the Scottish Government and Scottish Enterprise.

The new rail link will be a welcome addition to the tourism offering of the region, will help grow the economies of areas along the route, while also greatly improving the connectivity for commuters coming in and out of Edinburgh.

With a last train leaving Edinburgh just before midnight, it will be a great opportunity for those outwith the city to enjoy our pubs, restaurants and attractions.

A wheely great event

Being a keen cyclist I was delighted that some of the world's most celebrated sportsmen on two wheels set off from Holyrood Park for the fourth stage of the Tour of Britain on Tuesday.

It was a fitting and spectacular backdrop as the stage took in some of the capital's most famous landmarks such as Holyrood Palace, the Royal Mile and Edinburgh Castle.

Cycling is on the increase in the city and having the tour here with such icons of the sport as Sir Bradley Wiggins and Mark Cavendish will only encourage more people to get on their bike!

New Councillors elected

Congratulations to Lewis Ritchie and Marion Donaldson who have become the city's two newest Councillors having been elected last night following the Leith Walk by-election. They will have their first Council meeting on 17 September representing the needs and opinions of the ward's residents.

While it was no doubt a momentous occasion for them both, the by-election was also a historic event for the city. For the first time two Councillors were elected at a by-election under Single Transferable Vote (STV), allowing voters to list as many candidates as they want in order of preference.

I now look forward to working closely with Lewis and Marion to deal with matters both city-wide and on a more local level. Leith Walk is a vibrant and diverse ward, with an exciting future, and I am certain they will both serve it well.

City Region deal bid submitted

It's very encouraging that we have now submitted our bid for a £1bn Edinburgh and South East of Scotland City Region deal to the Westminster and Scottish governments.

This is our first major milestone and we worked closely with our partners, East Lothian, Fife, Midlothian, Scottish Borders and West Lothian councils to develop a proposal which will accelerate growth in the region.

Our recent business breakfast was a great success and to date almost 100 businesses have registered their support. I look forward to bringing more detail forward as we aim to have a deal in place for early 2016.

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