



the BLACK

Linlithgow's Community Magazine

ISSUE 54 NOVEMBER 2017 £1.00



bitch

The Christmas Issue 2017

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**LINLITHGOW
TOWN CENTRE BID**

Linlithgow FESTIVE SHOPPING NIGHT 2017



**The Tree of Light,
Community Support 5**



**Twinning Association
Come & Join Us 9**



**LYPP
Open Day 24**

THINK
CHRISTMAS
THINK
LINLITHGOW

The Arts, New Hopetoun Gardens, Linlithgow Advent Fayre, Torchlight Procession,
Town Centre BID, Mill Road BID, Scottish Youth Parliament, Book Review...



FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE OUR WEBSITE

www.linlithgowcommunitymagazine.co.uk

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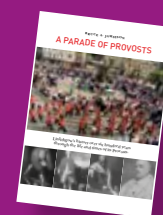
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Contact the Black Bitch

For editorial and to advertise: on.a.lead@gmail.com
Editor: David Tait, 07767 713024



WIN A BOTTLE OF JURA MALT



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A COPY OF
A PARADE
OF PROVOSTS

Q. WHAT IS THE DATE OF THE LINLITHGOW
FESTIVE SHOPPING NIGHT 2017

GOOD LUCK WITH OUR COMPETITION.

Email the editor at: on.a.lead@gmail.com.
Well done **James Harris, 85 Riccarton Road**, October Competition.



Linlithgow & Linlithgow Bridge Community Council

Linlithgow & Linlithgow Bridge Community Council is an elected body with the responsibility for ascertaining, communicating and coordinating the views of the community and taking action to promote the interests of the community. It is a statutory consultee for town planning matters. It aims to work with and support other groups in Linlithgow to address a wide range of issues, including:

- Health services and health centre provision
- Transport, including high street traffic, bus services and rail services.
- Employment and business, including retail and the industrial estates.
- Tourism, including attractions, events and accommodation.
- Housing and social housing.
- Social and care provision.
- Recreation, sport and community centres.
- Youth facilities and groups.
- Events, such as the Marches, Advent Fair and Remembrance Day parade.
- Policing and crime reduction.
- Development and planning, with a statutory right to comment on planning applications.

We welcome new members to join the Community Council, as elected or associate members, and take an active part in ensuring our community is well represented and that voluntary activity is supported.

www.llbcc.org.uk

The Linlithgow Community Magazine (aka The Black Bitch) is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO): SCO42542

Find us on Facebook, Follow us on Twitter. The paper we are using is FSC approved.
Images: A big thank you to all our photographers who support the magazine throughout the year.

Black Bitch magazine design & production: www.cghcreative.co.uk



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www.linlithgow.com/pride_passion.htm

WHAT'S ON - NOV/DEC.

***Note:** These event will run consecutively over several weeks or have weekly sessions confirmed. Check website for further details.

NOV

Thu 16 Sambalistic, 7:30pm - 9:45pm, Linlithgow Academy*

Sat 18 Arts Guild RCS Voices concert, 7:30pm - 10:00pm, St. Michael's Parish Church

Sun 19 Blackness Winter Warmer, Guided walk, 1pm - 2.30pm, Blackness Castle FREE

Folk Session, 2:00pm at the Black Bitch Tavern*

Thu 23 Linlithgow Keep Fit Club, 7:00pm - 9:00pm, Linlithgow Academy - Small gym*

Sat 25 LSO: Winter Concert, 7:30pm, St Michael's Parish Church

Linlithgow Advent Fayre, from 10:00am across the Town, **see page 14**

Tue 28 Community Council, 7:30pm - 9:00pm, Burgh Halls

DEC

Sat 2 Christmas Coffee Morning and Craft Fayre, 10:00am - 12:30pm, Cross House

Rotary Club of Linlithgow and Bo'ness, Glasgow Phoenix Choir Christmas Concert, 7:30pm, St Michael's Parish Church

Mon 4 5Rhythms dance drop in class, 10:00pm - 11:30pm, MacKinnon Hall

Wed 6 Blackness SWI, 7:15pm Blackness Community Hall

Sat 9 Arts Guild BBC Young Musician, Jess Gillam, Saxophone, 7:30pm - 10:00pm, Linlithgow Academy

Wed 13 nutriclub - nutrition based weight loss class, 9.30am, Longcroft Hall

Sun 17 Winter Warmer, Guided walk, 1pm - 3.00pm, Meet at Linlithgow Palace

Folk Session, 2:00pm at the Black Bitch Tavern*

LINLITHGOW RAMBLERS WALKING CALENDAR



With so many exciting walks pencilled in across the monthly calendar why not check out www.linlithgow.info for details on the type of walk, duration and your meeting point.

Linlithgow Film Society



Mon 27 Nov 7.30pm, **I Daniel Blake**

Mon 11 Dec 7.30pm, **La La Land**

Mon 15 Jan 7.30pm, **Split**

Mon 22 Jan 7.30pm **Trainspotting 2**

Location: Linlithgow Academy Theatre.

LINLITHGOW KEEP FIT

Meets every Thursday from 7pm - 9pm in the gym at the rear of the Academy. **Contact Brian Gallacher: 07984 930235**



LSO Winter Concert

Saturday 25th November 7.30pm

Linlithgow String Orchestra's Winter Concert at St Michael's Parish Church. Pieces by: Purcell, Warlock, Tchaikovsky, Albinoni, Parry, Schubert and Corelli. **Entry by donation.**

Proceeds from the concert will go to Linlithgow Heritage Trust's New Museum Project.

Tue 28 Nov & Tue 19 December
Community Council
7:30pm - 9:00pm
Burgh Halls

For more details and more events visit the **what's on** page at www.linlithgow.info

WEDDINGS • EVENTS • PORTRAITS

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Folk Fae Lithgae

SEONAIID SCOTT

After fourteen years, Seonaid Scott is finally back living in Linlithgow.

A five year stint in Markinch was followed by a nine year stay in Bo'ness, but with husband Graham and young daughters Ruth and Hannah, she has recently made the short hop over the Flints to a house in Baillielands. With her various family and community commitments in Linlithgow, however, she tells me "I've never really been away"! Seonaid first came to the town when she was two and attended the local schools.

At the torchlight procession along the High Street on Saturday November 25th, Seonaid will take her place in the ranks of Linlithgow Reed Band, an organisation she first joined as a fifteen year old in 1995.

Seonaid was learning to play the clarinet at school and had followed the Reed Band at the Marches that year. She was then persuaded by her friend, **Laura Cutler**, to join her in the band and the following week, the two girls played together at the Bo'ness Fair. Recently re-elected as the band's

Vice-President, Seonaid also organises the beginners' and training sections, whose various groups meet in the Longcroft Hall on a Sunday between 4.30 and 7pm. She works closely with the conductor, **Lex McDowell**, and is particularly proud of the number of adult "re-starters" who have been persuaded to come back to playing music again. She told me:

"I fancied taking up a second instrument and as I had never played brass, I got a French horn for my twenty-first birthday. It lay in the loft for years, but when the Longcroft Hall sessions started, I was able to start from scratch. We have had several other examples of existing players taking up a new instrument, as well as new recruits returning to one they played in the past. Several of these "re-starters" have now graduated to the main band and, together with youngsters coming through from the Training Band, this has resulted in us currently having the greatest playing strength in our history."

As well as her involvement with the Reed Band, Seonaid is also active in the Highland and Scottish Country dance scene throughout Scotland and

the north of England. An experienced dance teacher, she travels with groups to international dance festivals all over Europe and helps to organise similar events here at home. She is a volunteer helper at the "Scotch Hop" events in Linlithgow Palace in July and August and this year was one of the team of stewards.

Seonaid's Dad, **Ian Gent**, comes from five generations of railwaymen and she shares his great interest in the Scottish Railways Preservation Society's steam railway at Bo'ness. Amongst other responsibilities, she helps with SRPS Railtours, which is Britain's longest-established operator of scenic railway excursions.

In the run-up to Christmas, Seonaid's activities will include playing at the Reed Band concert on December 10th and entertaining shoppers in local supermarkets on various dates. Wearing her SRPS hat, she will be welcoming visitors to the steam railway for the popular "Santa Special" steam excursions.

Murdoch Kennedy



LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

As our population ages, there is an increase in those living with a diagnosis of dementia and chronic age-related illness with all its attendant costs to social and care services. Without the appropriate professional and voluntary support, it would be harder for these people to live at home where possible.

Organisations such as Linlithgow Link and Linlithgow Day Care Centre provide a valuable facility in offering an opportunity for social interaction within a dependable environment. Amongst other services, Linlithgow Link hosts a monthly Caring Café and even a Burns Supper for those living with Alzheimer's and for their carers. The Linlithgow Day Care Centre offers a safe place to which those with infirmity of body or mind can be brought to mix and perhaps, if they wish, perform meaningful tasks to keep their minds and bodies active.

The League of Friends of **St Michael's Hospital** mainly exists to give relief to those in need by reason of age, ill health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage. It is also seeking to create a Garden of Remembrance at the hospital to give comfort to patients and hospital visitors. Carers of West Lothian provide support, information and a voice for carers. One of the ways the charitable organisation helps is by providing training to carers to help them cope with stress, feelings of guilt and changing relationships.

Linlithgow is blessed with a strong community spirit as demonstrated by the Marches, Children's Gala Day, Burgh Beautiful, and a host of public-spirited voluntary organisations in the town. It is appropriate, therefore, that the Rotary Club of Linlithgow Grange raises funds at Christmas time that will aid the organisations and carers that help those to live at home where it's appropriate.

Last Christmas, **Linlithgow Grange Rotary Club** launched a new fund-raising initiative called Linlithgow's Rotary Tree of Light which was warmly supported by the townspeople. It raised money for the organisations that helped those living with dementia and Alzheimer's by using a dedicated tree outside the library as a beacon of light and hope to those whose circumstances seem to them to be dark

and bleak. It did so by providing a focus for remembrance and, in turn, help those whose memories have been impaired by chronic brain disease. The tree was dressed in blue and white lights as a symbol of its special nature. Linlithgow Grange Rotary invited donations from the public who had lost someone near and dear but wanted to celebrate the good memories, particularly at Christmas, by having a dedication to their loved one placed on a Remembrance Roll in the adjacent library window.

Not only did this raise a valuable amount that benefited Linlithgow Day Care Centre, Carers of West Lothian and Maple Villa, all of which provide support for those living with, or caring for those with, dementia, it also offered a catharsis for the donors, too, at what for many is an emotionally sensitive time of the year.

This year, donations made to the Tree of Light will be given to Linlithgow Link and the League of Friends of St Michael's Hospital as well as, again, the Linlithgow Day Care Centre and Carers of West Lothian.

Thanks to the support of benefactors **Robert Bennie & Sons, RGM Solicitors, Stewart Electrical** and the generosity of other sponsors who have underwritten the running costs, the Rotary Club of Linlithgow Grange can promise that every penny of every pound donated goes to the nominated charities.

Donor envelopes and forms can be collected from a number of premises in Linlithgow. Once completed, the form and donation can be left at the Line Gallery, 238 High Street, A Wee Mindin', 48 High Street, and RGM Solicitors, 19-21 High Street. The dedication will appear in the library window shortly thereafter as well as on a dedicated website, www.linlithgowtreeofflight.org.uk from which you can also download the donor form as well as get further details.



More information can be obtained from Gordon Young
Email: gordon.young538@gmail.com;
or Mobile: 077 066 32300





Cyrenians OPAL comes to Linlithgow! Older people, Active Lives

A new social group for those aged over 60 has started up at Longcroft Hall in Linlithgow. Following on from the success of their Nibble & Natter group in Bathgate, Cyrenians OPAL service have started a new group in Linlithgow this month. Cyrenians OPAL (Older People, Active Lives) service aims to maintain or increase older people's independence and well-being across the West Lothian Council area. As well as one-to-one befriending and telephone support, they deliver a variety of regular local groups in the West Lothian area providing a welcoming and relaxed way of getting to know people locally in a friendly setting, sharing hobbies and interests.

The new Nibble & Natter group will be a relaxed environment for people to come together and socialise, make new friends and enjoy a cup of tea and some light refreshments. The group in Bathgate likes to have a short quiz as part of their meeting, as well as occasional entertainment and other activities.

In another one of our groups in Whitburn, two attendees discovered that they were cousins and hadn't seen each other since they were very young, as both of their fathers had died many

years past. It's incredible what you can discover when you get to know those who live around you in your community.

.....
The Linlithgow Nibble & Natter group started on Thursday 2nd November 2pm-4pm at Longcroft Hall, Philip Avenue and will run every two weeks from this date.
.....

The group will be shaped by those who attend it, starting off by sharing stories about their lives and their local knowledge, and including quizzes or other games depending on what the group want. The purpose of bringing people together in this environment is really to form social bonds and share some company for a couple of hours.

Talking about one of the groups, a client said *"I'm feeling much less lonely. Before I was stuck in the house but getting out has made me feel much better. When I went to the group I was really nervous but everyone was really friendly. It's a good laugh. I have a reason to get up and go out."* Highlighting the value of this kind of social activity, Groups Co-ordinator for OPAL Richard Fish said *"It's wonderful to see the difference it makes to the people who attend our groups. Some tell us that the group is a focal point for their week and*

make sure to attend every session. It's well documented how good for you socialising is – with items in the news regularly about the positive impact it has on your mental and physical health to be able to get out and meet your neighbours in an increasingly disconnected world. We are delighted to be able to offer this kind of service to people over the age of 60 in West Lothian."

OPAL has some volunteer drivers who can help people get to the group so get in touch if you're not sure how you'll get there, but they are always looking for more volunteers! If you can help either at the group or with getting people to the group then they'd love to hear from you. Mileage and expenses are reimbursed.

If you'd like to attend this group, or any of our other groups in the West Lothian area, you can either just show up on the day or you can get in touch with Cyrenians OPAL for any more information on 01506 815815 or opal@cyrenians.scot. The service is available to anyone over 60 and there is a charge of £1 with running costs. You will be made to feel very welcome!

Richard Fish

Groups Co-ordinator for OPAL



GALA QUEEN RUBY WILL LIGHT UP THE TOWN

Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Gala Day Queen, Ruby Cardie, will carry out the official switching on of the Christmas tree and festive lights at 6pm on Saturday November 25th, after the torchlight procession along the High Street, where she will ride in a horse-drawn carriage with Santa Claus.

Ruby was crowned Queen in glorious sunshine on Saturday June 17th and her duties so far have included sailing along in a barge to open the annual Fun Day at the Canal Centre in August.

.....

This year's Gala Day was one of the hottest in living memory and having had more than their fair share of organising wet weather arrangements in recent years, the committee were very pleased to have the happy problem of how to cope with high temperatures.

Kate Lynch was recently elected as Chair of the committee and preparations are now well underway for 2018. Finance is key to running the Gala Day and an ambitious programme of regular fundraising events has been put together. This has already included a Glam Rock Ladies Night and a family Hallowe'en disco.

In terms of the organisation of the Gala Day, the next big event is the draw for the retinue, where the Queen and all the various other characters are selected. Kate is keen for people to know exactly how the draw works.

She told me:

"The Gala Day can be a bit of a mystery to people, so we want to let them know what the process is, so that they feel a bit more informed. The draw takes place on February 1st and in order to be eligible, all children must live in the catchment area for a non-denominational school in Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge, which means Springfield, Low Port, Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge schools. We also accept applications from children who live in the catchment area but do not attend those schools and that includes pupils at St Joseph's and children who are home or privately educated."

In recent weeks, Kate and her colleagues have been contacting all the local Primary schools, as she explained:

"We have written to all the schools in the town, asking for a list of names of eligible children. These names are automatically included in the draw if they are in P1 or P4. However, they are given the opportunity to opt out if they wish. P7 children who are eligible must opt in to the process. P7 girls can choose to be put forward for any female role or for Bower Girl only. P7 boys can opt for any male role, or for Guard only."

The Queen and Chief Lady-in-waiting are the main roles and they are always drawn first. Then the P1 roles are selected, which nowadays also include 20 boys for Junior Guards, as well as the traditional Fairies and Trainbearers for the girls. Those who were Fairies in P1 are removed from the draw for Flower Girls when they reach P4, but as only 40 Flower Girls are selected, you are not automatically picked to be a Flower Girl if you were not a Fairy.

"Once all the positions have been drawn", said Kate, "we write to each child, inviting them to take part and to confirm their acceptance. All children and parents will then come along to the parents' night on Wednesday March 14th, where the children will be partnered up and parents will be given information and have the opportunity to ask questions."

Kate is very happy to answer any queries and can be contacted via the Gala Day email address. linlithgowgala@hotmail.co.uk

Murdoch Kennedy





'SYP believes that there should be a compulsory 20mph speed limit in and around school grounds including main roads leading into schools'

'SYP believes that concessionary or free transport should be provided for young and young adult carers in Scotland'

ALICE FERGUSON'S SCOTTISH YOUTH PARLIAMENT NEWS ROUNDUP...

MEMBER OF THE
SCOTTISH YOUTH
PARLIAMENT FOR
THE LINLITHGOW
CONSTITUENCY

Hi, my name is Alice Ferguson and earlier this year, I was elected as a Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament for the Linlithgow constituency. This year I celebrated my 15th birthday, meaning I am in fourth year of secondary school at Linlithgow Academy. I got involved in SYP through the school council; from there I attended many meetings with members of the council in preparation for the March 2017 election. I am pleased to have this opportunity to write for *The Black Bitch* and to explain how I hope to engage young people in my constituency during my term (two years) as a MSYP.

This month has been extremely busy, but extremely exciting! For a start, I met with Swedish delegates at the SYP Offices in Edinburgh. Myself and two other West Lothian MSYPs were chosen to go along to discuss the work of SYP with Swedish delegates, who hope to adapt the concept in Sweden. It was a great opportunity to show off the amazing work SYP does, and to emphasise the influence it has on Scottish society.

The following day, the **West Lothian MSYPs** and I presented to the full West Lothian Council about SYP and how they

can support our role. The feedback from the Councillors was excellent.

However, the highlight of the month was SYP's 64th sitting at the Scottish Parliament. The sitting took place on Friday 27th and Saturday 28th of October. MSYPs from all over the country came together, and we discussed and debated members' motions in the Holyrood debating chamber. The proceedings were chaired by both **Amy Lee Fraioli**, the chair of SYP, and **Ken Macintosh**, the Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament. I voted on behalf of Linlithgow constituents after consulting with them prior to the sitting. Motions passed included 'SYP believes that there should be a compulsory 20mph speed limit in and around school grounds including main roads leading into schools', and 'SYP believes that concessionary or free transport should be provided for young and young adult carers in Scotland'.

We took part in workshops with UNICEF, and workshops focusing on the new SYP campaign '**Right Here, Right Now**' which promotes young people's rights and aims to influence the UNCRC rights of children to be fully incorporated into Scots law.

We listened to the amazing **Bruce Adamson**, the Children Commissioner, give a brilliant speech. We met in our subject Committees and even held joint sessions with the Scottish Parliament Committees! My Committee, Health and Wellbeing, hopes to submit a motion at the next sitting, identifying important

issues as the need for more LGBT+ education in PSE, the need for more support for mental health, as well as suicide prevention. MSYPs took part in consultation workshops such as **Monica Lennon MSYP's** '**End Period Poverty**' campaign, consent and healthy relationships, and immigration.

We heard from the National Voluntary Organisations represented at SYP such as **Scouts Scotland**, **LGBT Youth Scotland**, and **Carers Trust**. Overall it was great weekend meeting with MSYPs and influential figures. That SYP64 was held at Scotland's democratic heart demonstrates the importance of the Youth Parliament.

If you are aged 12-25, I encourage you to speak to me! Whether that be through social media or face-to-face, I will listen to what you have to say and fight for your issues at the Scottish Youth Parliament. I also encourage the community to promote SYP embark on this amazing journey that my constituents and I are partaking in.

Alice Ferguson MSYP



Website -
<https://aliceruby.wixsite.com/msyp>

Instagram - @alicefergusonsyp

Twitter - @aliceMSYP

Facebook - @aliceSYP



LINLITHGOW TWINNERS SAY “COME AND JOIN US!”



Linlithgow Twinning Association members are keen for more people to get involved in the long-established links with the French town of Guyancourt.

Linlithgow has had formal twinning links with Guyancourt, which is near Paris and close to the Chateau of Versailles, since 1989 and ever since then, groups from each country have taken turns to make annual visits at Easter to their overseas friends, with nearly 70 visiting Scotland this year. The Twinning Association is aware, however, that lots of people in the town probably don't know that the twinning exists, so the members are trying to spread the word and raise the profile.

The aim of twinning is to promote understanding and forge bonds of friendship between towns in different countries. It started in Europe after the Second World War. The idea was simple: repair damaged relationships by pairing towns that had suffered during the war. People from the towns were encouraged to meet and experience each other's cultures first hand. The idea was then developed further to include all different kinds of communities.

Neil MacDonald and his wife Grace have been involved in the Linlithgow twinning since 2002 and have seen the benefits, as he explained:

“It can be a very rewarding thing to do, to go and spend time in another country, living with people, sharing

meals with them and understanding what their life is like and the challenges they face. It's fascinating and it's all about understanding”

“We first went to Guyancourt with a group from the Folk Festival and next Easter, we will be going again with many others to spend the four days from 30th March until 4th April as guests in the homes of local families, participating in a range of visits, musical sessions, dining, dancing and social interaction, which are all designed to strengthen the personal friendships.”

Neil told me that, as far as possible, visitors are placed with families of similar ages and interests;

“In 2002, we were placed in the care of a musical couple who have been stalwarts since the very start. We have struck up such a strong friendship that we have attended each other's family celebrations, shared a week at the Lorient musical festival, sung together at Linlithgow Folk Festival and spent holidays in our respective countries outwith the main twinning weekend.”

The twinning with Guyancourt is open to anyone living in Linlithgow and surrounding areas and individuals, couples and families are welcome to participate. All that is required is an interest in France and the French way of life. The ability to speak a little French can be useful, but is not essential, as most French twinnings



speaking some English.

One of the key principles of the twinning relationship is that, in order to experience another culture at first hand, Scots stay with host families in Guyancourt and then host French guests in their own homes in Linlithgow. This can be a bit daunting at first, but many rewarding and long-standing relationships have resulted from these exchanges.

Away from the main Easter weekend, the Twinning Association would like to expand the appeal and broaden the appeal by encouraging more groups to link up with their French counterparts and organise reciprocal visits at any time of the year, as Linlithgow Rugby Club has done since the very early days.

Further information about the twinning with Guyancourt can be found on the website linlithgowtwinning.wordpress.com

Murdoch Kennedy

THE ARTS | "STOP AND SMELL THE ROSES"



I think I have just about mentioned every local "Arts" organisation in my articles, so if you feel you've not had coverage please get in touch with me at patswan@virginmedia.com. This time I am highlighting a group who love to stop and smell the roses.

Linlithgow Floral Art Club



One of the oldest clubs in the town, Linlithgow Floral Art Club, celebrated its Emerald Anniversary - 55 years of Flower arranging in Linlithgow - in 2016. It currently has around 90 very active and friendly members who meet on the third Wednesday of the month from September to May, usually at Linlithgow Rose Social Club.

Do you enjoy flowers? Would you like to learn more about flower arranging? Or would you just like to have a night out with friends watching others demonstrate their skills in producing beautiful floral arrangements? The meetings don't require you to participate, just sit and enjoy an hour's demonstration by a qualified Floral Art demonstrator, enjoy refreshments afterwards and have the opportunity to win one of the floral displays in the raffle. You will also be able to purchase floral art equipment from the sales table, to hear about events in other Clubs and sign up for a practical class if you wish. During the year there are competitions, for those who wish to be more actively involved.

Linlithgow Floral Art Club is affiliated to the National Association of Flower Arrangement Societies (NAFAS) and the Scottish Association of Flower Arrangement Societies (SAFAS). Their respective magazines, the Flower Arranger and The Floral Roundabout, are available to purchase through the Club. The Club is funded through member subscriptions (£22 for annual membership, £5 for visitors), plus a grant from West Lothian Council Voluntary Arts.

The Club tries to contribute to the wider community. Some readers may have benefitted from Lonely Bouquet Day when members leave flowers to be picked up in various prominent parts of the town.

This year's charity Christmas Show will be held in Linlithgow Academy on Wednesday

6 December when the subject of the demonstration by Coral Gardiner from Bath, will be "Festive Highlights". This is always a very popular event in the town - tickets, available from Club members, or at the door on the night, include a glass of wine or soft drink (members £7, visitors £12). There is always great excitement to see who will win the numerous beautiful Christmas arrangements which are always produced!

For further information contact Barbara Buddie on 842807 or Anne Matthews on 842939.

Linlithgow and District Art Group (formerly Low Port Art Group) meets most Tuesday evenings in one of the art rooms at Linlithgow Academy. Generally members work on their own painting projects, but they do aim to have a tutor for four weeks twice a year. Their most recent exhibition was in the Burgh Halls in May 2017. There are vacancies for new members to join this friendly group and anyone who is interested should contact Margaret on 845805 or Valerie on 842454.

Purely Patchwork This shop has been on the High Street for longer than most, and has a loyal clientele who indulge their creative skills by attending workshops or just purchasing goodies to feed their love of textile related activities. A couple of classes are running shortly which are suitable for all skill levels, so why not treat yourself to a "me" day before the rush of Christmas. Contact Purely Patchwork on 846200.



Midnight Garden - £30 with Ann Campbell - Saturday 18th November, 10am to 4pm

This is a mixed media class involving paints, fabric weaving, stitching and embellishment and you will make a wall hanging. Paints will be used to colour the background of the flowers before stitching. Bring some pictures of flowers to use as a base for flower designs and these flowers can be further embellished with beads and sequins at home.

Christmas Gifts - £30 with Pat Stone - Sunday 3rd December, 10am to 4pm

If you need some last minute gifts for Christmas or just want a day out sewing this class might suit you. You will be making a Christmas stocking, a cosmetic (or all purpose) pouch and a handy fabric bag that can be filled with goodies. The class includes

patterns and full instructions for making all three gift items and you should hopefully get one or two finished on the day.

OTHER EVENTS

The Hanneline Visnes exhibition continues at the Burgh Halls till January.

LAMP Christmas concert will be on Saturday 9 December in Linlithgow Primary School at 7.30pm.

The Linlithgow String Orchestra plays pieces by Corelli, Albinoni, Schubert, Tchaikovsky, Warlock, Purcell and Parry at their winter concert on 25 November at 7.30pm in St Michael's Parish Church. Join them after the torchlight procession and Christmas tree lights switch on. Entry is by donation with proceeds going to Linlithgow Heritage Trust's New Museum Project.

The Linlithgow Ladies Choir will perform with the men's Rugby Choir on Friday 8th December at 7.30pm in St Ninians and Craigmalen Church. Proceeds are going to the Day Care Centre so it's a worthwhile cause as well as hopefully getting you in the Christmas mood.

The Glasgow Phoenix Choir performs in St Michael's Parish Church on 2nd December at 7.30pm - contact 847999 for more info and tickets.

The Line Gallery has one of its most popular annual exhibitions running at the moment. "Postcards from the Line 2017" is showing more than 350 pieces of artwork from over 30 artists - there are no mounts or frames and nothing is bigger than A5 in size or more than £100. It's running till 21 November so the quicker you visit the more choice you will have.

Their 23rd Christmas exhibition starts on the afternoon of Saturday November 25th forming part of Linlithgow's Advent day celebrations, and they will have the mulled wine flowing and the mince pies at the ready.

I hope you have time to experience some ART over the next few weeks.

Pat Swan



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"there are always flowers for those who want to see them"

THE THIN BLUE LINE IN LINLITHGOW

**101 IS THE NEW NUMBER
TO CONTACT THE POLICE
WHEN YOUR CALL IS
LESS URGENT THAN 999.**



First of all let me introduce ourselves. We are Constable Andrew Murray and Constable Neill Drummond. We are the two community officers based at Linlithgow Police Station. Between us we have over thirty years police service. We are keen to get involved in local community issues and want to hear your views and opinions on these issues. We will be publishing an article in the magazine every issue, covering ongoing community issues which we are keen to address within the ward.

INCIDENT UPDATE

Inc No 2208 24/08/2017
Stones thrown at cars on Mains Road, Linlithgow

Following enquiries undertaken by Police a positive line of enquiry is now being followed.

Inc No 1923 20/08/2017 Vandalism
at Zio Geo West Port, Linlithgow

A suspect has been identified for this incident.

If you know who was responsible you can contact the local community officers below on 101, or in confidence via Crimestoppers on: 0800 555 111.



PARKING IN LINLITHGOW

Following on from the last article regarding the blatant flouting of parking regulations Police Scotland are disappointed to report that despite these appeals to motorists, selfish and inconsiderate parking is continuing to blight the High Street and surrounding streets.

As a result further enforcement activity is ongoing resulting in 55 parking tickets (£30 fine) being issued in the Linlithgow town centre area and a further 2 endorseable tickets for parking on zig zags (3 points on your license and £100 fine !!!) have been handed out in a 5 day period.

Due to previous warnings clearly being ignored by motorists, further rigorous parking enforcement activity is planned

over the next few weeks.

Please park legally and adhere to the parking restriction signs.

ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN SPRINGFIELD AND BARONSHILL AREA.

Following concerns from members of the public regarding a group of youths causing anti social behaviour issues in the Springfield area of Linlithgow, local community team made enquiries resulting in 4 youths being identified as responsible. This group have all been dealt with appropriately in the presence of their parents and warned regarding their future conduct.

We would like to thank members of the public who supported and assisted us in this enquiry.

ANTI-SOCIAL USE OF VEHICLES IN LINLITHGOW AREA

We are continuing to receive reports and information regarding drivers who drive carelessly and dangerously in the Linlithgow area, not only putting the lives of the themselves and passengers at risk, but also the lives of other road users and pedestrians.

It is our intention to continue to provide a local, visible presence and maintain a level of enforcement.

We would like to thank the public for their support in relation to this issue. Anyone who has concerns regarding anti social driving or use of any motor vehicle contact Police on 101.

Be warned, enforcement will continue !!!!

LINLITHGOW COMMUNITY POLICE SURGERY

Due to the positive response these surgeries have received more are currently being planned. These will be held in the Town Centre Management office, directly opposite the Library at The Vennel, Linlithgow.

Once again the public will be invited to drop by, meet their local officers and chat through any concerns they have or highlight any areas they feel we should be giving further attention to. Alternatively if you want to discuss an issue which may require more privacy, arrangements can be made to speak with them another time at a police station or at your home address.

To find out details of future Linlithgow Community Police Surgeries please log on to West Lothian Police Facebook page or Linlithgow Facebook Page for future dates or check local press for details.

Your Views Count

**Do you have an opinion on what your local police should be targeting?
Do you want highlight areas of concern in your local community?**

If so then go online, complete the 'Your View Counts' survey, and have your say on policing in your area.

In an emergency always dial 999 - when a life is in danger, a crime is in progress or a suspect is nearby.

Remember If you want to report something anonymously call Crimestoppers 0800 555 111



You can get more advice on a range of topics on the Police Scotland website.

Alternatively you can email LinlithgowCPT@Scotland.pnn.police.uk or pop into the station and ask to speak to our Community officers, PC's Murray and Drummond.

Regards,
Your Local Community Police – Linlithgow
Website: www.scotland.police.uk
Twitter: [@policescotland](https://twitter.com/policescotland)
Facebook: www.facebook.com/policescotland





FOR ADVENT
FAYRE
THINK
LINLITHGOW



Linlithgow Advent Fayre Whence it came...

Linlithgow Advent Fayre owes its birth to the cobbles freshly set around the Cross Well in 1996. A frequent Continental traveller, I was reminded of small German market towns and I felt the cobbles cried out for mediaeval market stalls, particularly those set up pre-Christmas.

In addition, the town was going through a particularly bad patch, with more empty shops than I could ever remember, and I wanted to bring people into the town. I contacted an old acquaintance, **Ricky Wilson, then secretary of Linlithgow Community Council**, with my idea and as a result was invited to make a presentation to the Council and seek their support in bringing my plans about. No decision was taken at that meeting. However, I had also been in touch with the then **Town Centre Manager, Gillian Spiers and her assistant and subsequent successor, Andrina Dunlop**: they were hugely enthusiastic, as was my old friend and fellow Black Bitch, **Vic Wood**, at the Gazette. In the event, although the Community Council's first instinct had been to reject involvement, Ricky had persuaded them that I could deliver and two members, **Mrs Ella McVie and Mr Andrew Crawford** (the latter having been "volunteered" when he was on holiday!) joined the committee which I set up. Andrew was double value, as his wife **Doreen** was most enthusiastic and also became involved.

An invitation was issued through the Gazette for committee involvement and I wrote to everyone I could think of in the town to offer participation. At first, we met in each others' houses then we moved to the County Buildings. **Tom Kerr, Tam Smith and Eddie Malcolm, the three WLC councillors at the time**, were very supportive and contributed financially from their allocations; the police were on board from the beginning, with the then Inspector in charge being extremely enthusiastic; others on board from the start were St Peter's Church, the Line Gallery and various local charities.

My first idea had been for an Advent Weekend - on Friday night, **Bruce**

Jamieson would lead one of his famous Ghost Walks, the Fayre itself would take place on the Saturday with a concert in St Michael's in the evening, and a joint Advent Service would be held in St Michael's on the Sunday, with the lighting of the first candle on an Advent wreath, similar to a ceremony I'd witnessed in York Minster.

In the event, only Sunday didn't materialise. Bruce was oversubscribed on Friday! For the Fayre itself, I'd suggested a Victorian theme and there was quite a response. We'd borrowed Stirling's mediaeval market stalls, which Andrew and his team erected at the Cross, and those local bodies, who had been offered a fundraising opportunity by filling them with goodies, responded well. Some years previously, I had organised craft fayres and fundraising art exhibitions in the Burgh Halls as well as, with the late **Tom McGowran**, Linlithgow's Festival Week, (run in conjunction with events in Edinburgh) so I called up old contacts and mounted craft fayres in the Burgh and Masonic Halls. The day saw a decorated shop window competition and a children's Victorian fancy dress contest, the latter judged by **Mrs Tom Kerr and Mrs Tam Dalyell**, themselves both finely begowned: a school competition to design our poster: carol singing led by the Reed Band with invitations having been sent to all the local church choirs: the Scotch Hop team leading the townspeople, as they "danced in the season of Yule" up and down the Cross Brae and round the stalls: Line Gallery opening their Christmas exhibition: St Peter's open for coffee and mince pies: the Round Table with Santa and his sledge, and sundry other activities! We were blessed with good weather, and advertising from the Gazette, events columns in the Scotsman and a mention on BBC Scotland ensured a good turnout. Local shopkeepers donated generously - from **Anne Oliphant and Mrs Keane** keeping the participants fed to the owner of our much missed toyshop providing gift tokens for our fancy dress children (who in the end all got one!)

Gillian and Andrina had come up with what has been one of the most successful ideas, the torchlight procession! This took off as darkness fell, and the day ended with a concert in St Michael's Church, sponsored

by West Lothian Council and given by their national Schools Brass Band. I introduced the concert and gave some readings, and classical interludes were provided by **Alison and Alan Hastie**. A delightful and fitting conclusion to our first fayre.

For our second year we, the committee, now expanded by more local representatives, decided to concentrate all our efforts on the Saturday. The theme was simplified to one of Christmas Colours and the invitation to local Gala Queens to participate was begun. Also instituted was the custom of carol singing at the Cross at the end of the torchlight procession, led by the Reed Band and involving a local minister. We had rather a treat that year as **Anne Lorne Gillies**, in town for a function, came to see what was going on and was promptly kidnapped to lead the singing! I had always said that I would get things up and running then step aside to let others take over. Despite all the assistance given, it had become what Vic described as a full-time job, so after the second fayre, I handed over in order to pursue other interests, including acting as unpaid adviser to other bodies elsewhere in Scotland who thought Christmas festivities a good idea! Andrew took over as chairman, Ella as secretary and the funds were taken over by the Community Council. I arranged the Craft Fayre for the third year but after that the Community Council accessed my craftspeople database I moved on.

In 2012, however, to mark the 15th anniversary of the setting up of the Advent Fayre, I was invited by another old school friend, Robert Johnstone, the then secretary of the Community Council, to escort the Queen in her carriage in the torchlight procession and on the platform for the switch-on of the Christmas lights afterwards. For me another lovely day, with a most gracious speech from **Eddie Malcolm** and a beautiful presentation of flowers!

Obviously the Advent Fayre continues to evolve and long may it continue to do so! From the Black Bitch whose gift it was to her beloved town - best wishes for a most enjoyable day!

Rena Gray

ALL
your favourite
pubs,
bars and
restaurants
open as usual

**WIN
£100**
of shopping
vouchers
on the night

**WIN A
SHARE
of £500**
shopping
vouchers to
spend on the
High Street

**SPECIAL
LINLITHGOW
LINTIES**
performance
and more
entertainment
on the
High Street

**Thursday
7th December**

Your favourite shops
open until 8:00pm

Special
Linlithgow
cotton bags
launched on
the night

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regular updates

Linlithgow

FESTIVE SHOPPING NIGHT 2017



**LINLITHGOW
TOWN CENTRE BID**

RETAILERS

🍷 A Wee Mindin'

🍷 Beautique Beauty Salon

🍷 Boots

Boutique 42

CL Hair will be open inside, too.

Centre Stage Dancewear

Chest, Heart and Stroke Scotland

Coffee Neuk

🍷 Crafted Merchant

🍷 Creative Workshop

Create and decorate your own Christmas tree ornaments and baubles, while enjoying some mulled wine and tasty treats.

Detail Hair

EK:JN Architects

Mince pies and a glass of wine.

🍷 Fair Tradewinds

🍷 Far From The Madding Crowd

Special book deals for late-night shoppers and a "book bundle" prize draw. Enjoy home made shortbread, wine, hot drinks and mince pies.

Greggs

Open until 7pm.

🍷 J. Walker Carpets & Gifts

Kelly's Sweet Shop

🍷 Lilypond Crafts & Gifts

Special 15% discount to all late-night shoppers. Enter the late-opening raffle to win a Peat Incense Croft. Mulled wine and shortbread, too.

🍷 Linlithgow DIY

🍷 Linlithgow Papercraft

🍷 Linlithgow Stoves & Gifts

Little Beau Peep

🍷 Mackie & Brechin Vets

Mince pies.

🍷 Norman Cummings Textiles

Oxfam

Post Office

🍷 Purely Patchwork

Star Barbers

Subway

Free cookie with every hot drink.

Taste Café Deli

🍷 The Granary

The Nail Bar

🍷 The Line Gallery

The Tranquil Room

🍷 Truly Scrumptious Designer Cakes



RETAILERS PARTICIPATING IN LATE NIGHT £100 LOTTERY

find out more in the News section of: linlithgow.com contact **stewart ness**, bid manager: t. 07717 865225

ADVENT FAYRE 2017

Sat
25
Nov

Linlithgow's glorious festive lighting, accompanied by community carol singing.



Linlithgow is all set for another hugely popular Victorian-themed Advent Fayre in 2017. The full day of festivities begins at 10am on Saturday 25th November 2017, when Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive and the farmers' market (The Vennel), charity street fair (The Cross) and craft fair (Burgh Halls) begin in earnest.

Tea, coffee, cakes and lunch will be available at St. Michael's Church Hall at Cross House, then later in the day (2pm - 4pm), the Line Gallery's "The 23rd Angel" exhibition will be launched to a feast of mince pies and mulled wine! Frilly ruffs and cuffs will abound as Linlithgow's revellers drape themselves in Victorian finery for the occasion.

THINK
CHRISTMAS
THINK
LINLITHGOW



As darkness falls, the spectacular Torchlight Procession leaves Low Port at 5pm.

Don't forget to pick up your torch tickets in advance, from Far From The Madding Crowd (20 High Street), The Line Gallery (238 High Street), Linlithgow DIY (167 High Street), or Linlithgow Papercraft (230 High Street).

On the day, head down to join the festive throng at the Low Port Centre for 4pm - 4:30pm to collect your torch and take part in the procession. Demand is always high, so make sure to pick up your tickets early. A torch ticket costs £2, with any minimal proceeds going towards the running costs of the event, which receives support from Linlithgow Town Centre BID, and West Lothian Council.

The Fayre, as ever, culminates in the switching on of Linlithgow's glorious festive lighting, accompanied by community carol singing. A wonderful day to spend with friends, family, and fellow Black Bitches that is not to be missed!



For updates, visit the "News" page on linlithgow.com. Contact Stewart Ness (Stewart.Ness@westlothian.gov.uk) for further information.

COMMENCING
10.00am
Saturday
25
NOVEMBER

LINLITHGOW

VICTORIAN

ADVENT

FAYRE



— SATURDAY —
25TH NOVEMBER

**MUSIC & FAMILY
ENTERTAINMENT**
at the **CROSS AND**
ALONG THE HIGH STREET
THROUGHOUT THE DAY
BUY YOUR TORCH
TICKETS IN ADVANCE!

— —
FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
WWW.LINLITHGOW.INFO

10AM FORMAL OPENING OF THE
ADVENT FAYRE

FROM 10AM VISIT MRS CLAUS
IN HER GROTTO IN BURGH HALLS
WHILST SANTA HANDS OUT SWEETS

FROM 10AM CHRISTMAS STALLS

10AM-3PM CRAFT FAIR IN BURGH
HALLS, CHARITY STREET FAIR AT THE
CROSS, FARMERS MARKET AT THE
VENNEL

10AM-3PM TEA, COFFEE, CAKES
AND LUNCH IN ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH
HALL, CROSS HOUSE

2PM-4PM THE LINE GALLERY
EXHIBITION AND MULLED WINE

5PM GRAND TORCHLIGHT
PROCESSION FROM LOWPORT CENTRE

6PM COMMUNITY CAROL SINGING
AND CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHT SWITCH
ON AT THE CROSS

STREET FAIR AT THE CROSS AND
FARMERS' MARKET AT THE VENNEL,
CHILDRENS FACE PAINTING AND
BALLOON MODELLING IN THE BURGH
HALLS, CHILDRENS' FUN FAIR RIDES
AT THE VENNEL

FESTIVE EVENT

Yes, the festive season is upon us and we're now officially allowed to get excited about it without eliciting eye-rolling from humbugs claiming it's too early in the year! **The famous Advent Fayre** will take place on Saturday 25th November, with the torchlight procession beginning at 5pm. Torch tickets (£2) are available from Far From The Madding Crowd, The Line Gallery, Linlithgow DIY and Linlithgow Papercraft. Don't forget to exchange your ticket for a torch in good time for the procession (aim for 4:00pm – 4:30pm on the day).

Linlithgow's festive late shopping evening 2017 will take place on Thursday 7th December, with scores of outlets keeping their doors open until 8pm. Many will be taking part in the special Late-Opening Lottery and special festive treats will be available. One lucky shopper will win £100 of Linlithgow vouchers and there will be outdoor entertainment throughout, including the Linlithgow Linties. Please see our separate advert in this edition of the Black Bitch for further details.



BURGH BEAUTIFUL SUPPORT



The unstinting efforts of almost 100 Burgh Beautiful volunteers, who have transformed the town into a riot of colour this year, have been recognised by Linlithgow Town Centre BID with a £2,500 donation.

The cash boost follows hard on the heels of Burgh Beautiful's magnificent achievement in being awarded Gold as the best medium-sized town in the annual Keep Scotland Beautiful competition. In a remarkable double, the organisation also won the RHS Scotland Award for Overcoming Adversity.

After West Lothian Council stopped providing or maintaining summer bedding last year, having withdrawn winter displays two years previously, Burgh Beautiful stepped up to the plate. A successful campaign drew significant sponsorship from the local community (including a previous £5,000 donation from BID) and saw a doubling in the number of green-fingered volunteers.

Taking a "whole town, whole year" approach, the group has adopted almost every floral feature in the town and ensured Linlithgow enjoys virtually year-round displays.

Burgh Beautiful's Chair, **Chris Gunstone**, said that the £2,500 BID grant would primarily be used to pay for watering the 120 hanging baskets round the town. With the kind assistance of local businesses, volunteers had access to water for most of the tubs in the High Street and elsewhere.

Said Chris, *"It's all about getting together to ensure Linlithgow is a place people want to live in, or be attracted to the town, either as a place to visit or to come and live. It really can make the difference. One couple told me the displays and the community pride involved had persuaded them to move to Linlithgow - and they've joined us as volunteers!"*

FUNDING CALL TO COMMUNITY GROUPS

The Community groups of every kind in Linlithgow are missing out on the chance of landing a cash boost of up to £4,000 - no strings attached!

The recently-appointed manager of the Tesco store in Linlithgow, Catherine Potter, has been frustrated that customers are rarely offered the chance to vote by token for groups from the town in the Tesco "Bags of Help" scheme, which pays out every two months from money raised from the sale of carrier bags.

"I and many customers who have raised it with me feel frustrated that there's hardly ever a Linlithgow-based project to vote for in the three chosen to take part. They're almost all from groups outwith the area who have realised what a great boost Bags of Help can provide for worthwhile projects."

"The Bags of Help scheme is continually open for local charities and community organisations, whether large or small. Projects can be standalone or part of a larger fundraising effort. There is no requirement for the applicant to match the funds."

She said that the only criterion was that projects brought benefit to their local community. These could range from improving community buildings and outdoor spaces to buying new equipment, training coaches or volunteers, or hosting community events.

Added Catherine, *"Each of the groups chosen is guaranteed up to £4,000 if they win, and up to £2,000 and £1,000 for second and third place. The scheme is run by the community charity Groundwork (Tel: 0121 237 5780). They're very helpful, and I'd be happy to assist anyone with an application form."*



BID COMMUNICATION

As mentioned in previous editions, Linlithgow Town Centre BID is continually working to improve communications with member businesses. Work continues to deliver the projects in accordance with the BID business plan, as well as responding to new opportunities as they present themselves. The "linlithgow.com" website is used for general information, e-mailshots inform businesses about important news, such as the recent resurgence of counterfeit currency on Linlithgow High Street, and this regular Black Bitch submission introduces new

businesses, highlights events, and summarises current BID activity.

Some businesses have suggested that they'd like to be engaged in person more often, whether that's just to check in, or to allow suggestions for additional BID activity. The volunteer BID Board is working to provide a suitable forum for this – more details here soon – and in the meantime, if you'd like to keep up-to-date, please contact "info@linlithgow.info" to ensure your inclusion in e-mailshots, to request a "fake note kit" to combat counterfeit currency, to arrange a personal visit to your business, or just to start a conversation.

BID staff are also always available at the BID office, 28 The Vennel, every Friday

from 11am – 1pm for businesses to drop in and visit without making an appointment beforehand. If you'd like to discuss the recent mid-term BID review or any projects, like the successful Loyalty Lottery, that you'd like to get involved with, please get in touch.

The BID is always working on other "big-ticket" items, which take time to deliver, such as making improvements to Linlithgow's parking and congestion issues. Updates are published via e-mailshot and in this regular submission, but if you'd like to have a chat in person, BID staff are always on hand to show you how the BID budget is being invested and what plans are for the future.

PUB WATCH

As mentioned in previous editions, Linlithgow Town Centre BID is continually working to improve communications with members. It's drawn thousands of visitors to Linlithgow, with many of them returning. It's provided a welcome boost to nine pubs and hotels in the town centre, and has undoubtedly benefitted a string of town centre businesses.

The Linlithgow Trail, established three years ago in a collaboration between Linlithgow Town Centre BID and Linlithgow PubWatch, is continuing to grow in popularity,

with no less than 5,000 specially printed t-shirts issued so far to people who have completed the Trail.

It's a 50-50 partnership, and BID has now given a further £2,000 cheque to Linlithgow PubWatch to ensure the successful initiative can continue. If proof be needed on top of the number of t-shirts given out (Trail cards are stamped in each pub), you need to look no further than the Kelpies Bar at the west end of the High Street.

Said owner Gary Wells, "It's been a godsend - a real lifeline. We're a bit out of the way, but not when it comes to the Linlithgow Trail. I was choc-a-bloc on Saturday. We had

karaoke on, and parties doing the Trail who came in were staying on for a time."

"Most of the groups who come in are from outwith the area, many from Edinburgh. I've had a lot return because they like The Kelpies, particularly at the weekend when we have entertainment on. They're also spreading the word among friends about the Trail. It's brilliant for everybody."

Ian Gibson, owner of the Platform 3 pub, and PubWatch secretary, said that the Trail was not simply benefitting pubs and hotels in the town centre.

"It's bringing in thousands of people, who otherwise might not come to Linlithgow. They walk along the High Street, and see what it has to offer with cafés and speciality shops. Some might return for the Trail, but others will come back to spend a day in the town with family or friends. We are now having more than one design of t-shirt produced in a year, and this is further adding to the attraction of the Trail. People really appreciate getting a t-shirt at the end of it."



THINK CHRISTMAS SHOP LINLITHGOW



MILL ROAD BID CHAIR'S UPDATE



The Board know from feedback that the roads and pavements can become hazardous at this time of year, so we will look

to take measures to improve how we make these areas safe for the businesses, their staff and customers. Best Wishes, Nicholas

It has been a busy year for the Mill Road BID team and we have a lot planned for the coming year as well. As this is the last edition of the magazine for 2017 we want to say we look forward to sharing our exciting new plans for Mill Road BID with you and wish everyone in Linlithgow a very merry Christmas when it comes and a wonderfully successful 2018 too!

Social Media Training

We've had some excellent feedback from businesses who attended our Social Media workshops in October.

"Excellent, responsive and tailored training. Really relevant to my needs. Superb training - thank you."

"Fab! Really motivated to investigate further how we can use social media. Thanks!"

"A great introduction to the various social media channels available, with the opportunity to focus on specific aspects as and when needed. Some great tips on 'basic' things to do that will help grow the business audience and how to best promote posts."

"Some very useful pointers from Lisa. A fun course!"

We'll be discussing the direction the project goes in at the next board meeting. Let us know if you are interested!

CCTV

We were contacted recently by a business operator whose car had been damaged by an HGV. The other driver had left the scene without leaving contact details. Thanks to the CCTV system installed by the BID, the police were able to trace the at fault driver. Result!

BIG Applications

The Board would welcome new applications for the Business Improvement Grant scheme. 75% of up to £1,000 is available for your improvement project. Previous applicants have used the grant for projects such as CCTV and training. Contact us now!

For more information visit our website www.linlithgowmillroadBID.com or email Bridgette.Kleinman@linlithgowmillroadBID.com.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Contacts:

Nicholas Gribben

Chair
chair@linlithgowmillroadbid.com
07956 974981
www.linlithgowmillroadbid.com

Stewart Ness

BID Manager
stewart.ness@linlithgowmillroadbid.com
07717 865225

Bridgette.Kleinman@linlithgowmillroadbid.com



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NATURE'S SURPRISING HABITS...

Christmas always arrives on time but Nature has a funny habit of surprising us with her timings more often than not. Our Japanese Maple (*Acer Osakazuki*) gives us reliable autumn colour every year but it was only on Sunday night 29th October this year that she really changed colour as the first serious frost descended. Do you remember the big dump of snow we had on the Sunday night of 28th November 2010?



Autumn Maple & Winter Maple

We had fairy lights on the Maple at that time and the courtyard looked lovely, but we are very happy not to enjoy this scene until at least the New Year!



There must have been a day or two of cooler weather in September which started our Winter Jasmine flowering while she still had her leaves on, although these had taken on a reddish tinge by early October due to the cooler temperatures. Normally we would expect her to start flowering during November, after her leaves had fallen, and continue until March. To keep her tidy we clip her in April close to the

trellis and then the new branches that grow in the spring and summer will hold next winter's flowers.



Winter Jasmine + White Jasmine close up

Seeing the yellow flowers on the Jasmine reminded us of the story about the white flowering, very fragrant, indoor Jasmine that we enjoy in our homes around Christmas and the New Year. Many centuries ago the Duke of Tuscany had the monopoly of the fragrant white Jasmine discovered by his plant hunters in China and his gardeners knew that they mustn't let anyone get hold of it. His head gardener was in love with his housekeeper's daughter but they hadn't been able to save enough for a dowry to let them get married.



A November Tussy-Mussy for a special person picked from the garden

Every birthday he would pick her a little bouquet, what we might call a Tussy-Mussy, but this particular year there was nothing new to pick in the greenhouses and he had a sleepless night worrying that she may think his love was waning as there was nothing new in her Tussy-Mussy. He went into the greenhouses at dawn and, as you might have guessed, the jasmine had opened and was filling the air with its rich perfume – he just had to pick some!

That night she unpicked the Jasmine stems and put them into water as she didn't want them to die. She managed to root them and continued taking cuttings until she had built up a few dozen little plants. When they started to flower she took them to market to sell them. The Mayor of Pisa's wife saw them and bought a bowlful to give to the Duchess that evening at the big house where they were going for a grand dinner. The Duchess was delighted with the gift but the Duke was incensed when he recognised his special Jasmine!

He quickly got to the bottom of the matter but he was in a dilemma because if he sacked his excellent head gardener his housekeeper would probably resign in protest and she produced the only food for his household that did not upset his stomach. Wisely he decided to forgive his gardener and give the young couple a dowry so they could marry and also a new cottage on the estate. The moral in this story? Gardening can bring out the best in all people and does!

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ROSIE'S CHRISTMAS PLAYLIST...



Christmas. The one word that spreads hope and joy to everyone of all ages. The season to be jolly and merry. Together with all the excellent things like presents, food and getting together with friends and family there is one thing that Christmas would not be the same without. Music. Christmas would be nothing without the music that provides the backdrop to the season. Without all of those songs - sometimes sentimental, sometimes 'cheesy' - that you sing together with your family... or loudly to annoy your friends!

The following is a playlist (in no particular order) with 8 of my favourite songs to do with winter and Christmas.

>> Fairytale of New York The Pogues

This is an Irish folk Christmas song. I know at times it doesn't lyrically sound very appealing but somehow this is one of the best Christmas songs ever written. With Kristy McColl as a featuring artist this was the anthem of December 1988.

>> Snowballed AC/DC

Blizzards, winter and Christmas are not the first things you think of when you think of an AC/DC classic hit and their Aussie homeland but this song just goes to show that you should always expect the unexpected. This song is filled with rage about winter which, if you are stuck knee-deep in a snowdrift shovelling snow, you can probably relate too.

>> Happy Xmas (War is Over) John Lennon

This song was originally a protest about the Vietnam war highlighting the peace campaign of John Lennon and Yoko Ono. In December 1969, in twelve cities around the world, white posters with black writing saying "War is over! If you want it. Happy Christmas love John and Yoko" were displayed for everyone to see.

Two years later the words were made into the classic song we all love.

>> Winter Winds

Mumford and Sons
"Winter Winds" is the second single from their first album "Sigh No More". Its upbeat feel makes it the perfect song for dancing around the kitchen on Christmas day.

>> Christmas Lights Coldplay

"Christmas Lights" is yet another song written about his ex-wife, Gwyneth Paltrow, by Coldplay frontman Chris Martin. It was a very unexpected song as absolutely no-one was waiting for Coldplay to release a Christmas song. There was a countdown from the 1st of December to Christmas Eve in 2010 and when they released it the song went to number one in 6 countries.

>> Winter The Rolling Stones

"Winter" is a beautiful song with a very melancholy nature to it. Mick Jagger makes many, many references to the beauty of a cold, cold winter. Jagger's vocals definitely lean towards a tone of sadness and longing. Come on Mick... Christmas is no time to be sad!

>> Do They Know it's Christmas? Band Aid

Band Aid is a charity super-group that was formed with British and Irish music acts. The first single "Do they know it's Christmas?" was released in 1984. The group was organised by

Bob Geldof and Midge Ure to help starving children in Africa. It featured artists like Bono from U2 and George Michael from Wham. The song sold 2 million copies worldwide and, over the years, has been made into different versions featuring stars like Ed Sheeran and Sam Smith.

>> Santa Baby Eartha Kitt

This 1953 classic by Eartha Kitt describes what most girls want for their Christmas: yachts; sables; the perfect man; a Tiffany ring... and much, much more! This song has been covered by over 6 different artists (such as Taylor Swift, Madonna and Kylie Minogue) but none of them match Eartha's rich tone of voice. It's a Christmas gem.

Merry Christmas everyone – hope that you enjoy the music on my Christmas playlist along with favourites of your own

Rosie Crowe



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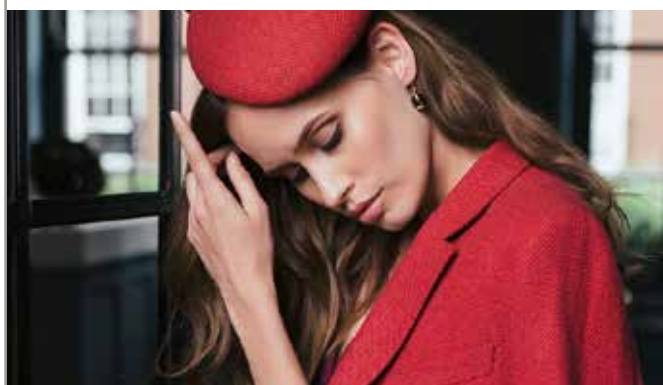
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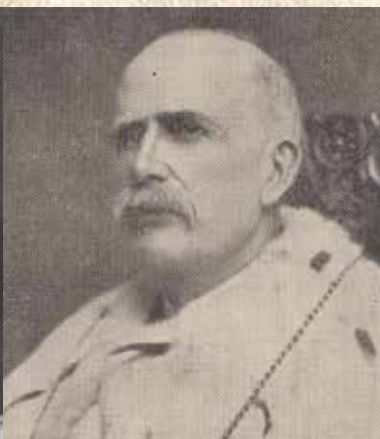
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A TOUR OF BRAEHEAD CEMETERY



Above:
Provost Jack Thomas
with HRH Queen
Elizabeth
Left: Headstone
for Peter Macdonald

Images left to right:
Provost Gilmour,
Provost Philip,
Provost Robert
Jamieson



As part of Doors Open Day, Bruce Jamieson conducted a guided tour of Braehead Cemetery. A combination of factors, including bad weather and the Pedal for Scotland event, meant that few people were able to attend this presentation. Here, he gives a brief outline of the visit and introduces some of the characters who lie there and appear in his book “A Parade of Provosts.” – available from “Far From The Madding Crowd” bookshop, priced £9.99.

A sign on the Braehead Road gate announces that the cemetery is a recognised war grave, administered by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Just inside, the impact of the Great War is very obvious. Within a few paces, are the headstones and family memorials to twenty of the young men who died in the 1914-19 conflict.

Up the central path stand the Portland stone markers of war casualties who died from their wounds while back in the UK. The rule was that if a combatant was killed abroad then he would be buried where he fell or close to the Casualty Clearing Station

where he died.

Private John Anderson passed away, aged 32, two months after the Armistice of November, 1918. He was a member of the Royal Field Artillery, looking after the horses which pulled the gun carriages and had been wounded during the last weeks of the war. Nearby, is **Serjeant Harry McIntosh** who also died in 1919, leaving his widow to grieve at 19 Strawberrybank. He had been a member of the Labour Corps and, as a pigeon fancier, had been put in charge of a flock of messenger birds used to carry missives across the battle zones.

Moving west, over the grassed area, we pass memorials to casualties of the Second World War including **Private Patrick Caulfield**, a Philpstoun boy killed in 1944 during the heavy fighting which took place in Italy as the Allies tried to break through the heavily fortified German Gothic Line, north of Rome. Patrick lies buried today in Gradara Cemetery.

Further along, is a family tribute to **Serjeant John McGurk**. His body was never recovered from where it fell in the jungles of Burma. He is listed on the

Rangoon Memorial to the Missing.

In the South West corner stands a headstone recording perhaps one of the most poignant memorials in the graveyard – that of **Private Andrew Douglas**, a gardener at Nether Parkley, who was accidentally shot by his rifle instructor while undergoing training at Berwick. Opposite is an unusual World War One headstone - erected ‘by public subscription’ in memory of **Peter Macdonald** who died in 1915 in St Michael’s Fever Hospital. When the news broke that the young, orphaned soldier was about to be buried in an anonymous pauper’s grave, many Linlithgow folk contributed to the provision of a proper military funeral, and the erection of the large, granite headstone.

Moving north, a large, bronze-inlaid marker records the **Macdonald brothers**, born at The Syke on the Bo’ness Road. **Evan** died after fighting with the Canadian infantry at Vimy Ridge while **Hamish** was killed in 1919 when Kurdish tribesman entered the house in which he was sleeping and murdered him in bed.

The cemetery does, of course, record

many such tragedies. Just past the Macdonald tombstone is the tall obelisk beneath which lies the **Rev. John Ferguson** – the long-serving minister of St. Michael's Church. On either side of his column are named his two daughters: **Esther**, who burned to death after her nightdress caught fire in 1888, and **Jane** who drowned when she fell through the ice on Linlithgow Loch. Immediately opposite her is the resting place of her fiancé with whom she had been skating. **William Russell** lies in the family plot, next to his father, Town Clerk **James Russell**.

Russell had served the town's longest served Provost, **Andrew Gilmour** who had campaigned for the creation of a new cemetery to replace the one which had served the town for centuries, around St Michael's Kirk. As the town's doctor, Gilmour was aware that the old graveyard was grossly overcrowded. This had been known since at least the early 19th century when the 'body-snatchers' had taken advantage of shallow burials to remove recently interred bodies to sell to Edinburgh 'anatomists'. A recently discovered poem records an incident which took place in Linlithgow High Street in 1823 when a cart containing "resurrected" bodies was intercepted by a crowd led by Mr Scott who had tracked the body snatchers from Polmont. Inside the cart were found three naked, dead bodies – that of a man, a woman, and a female child. The indignation of the Linlithgow crowd knew no bounds. They tore the driver from his seat and almost killed him. The gig was broken to pieces, and burned at Linlithgow Cross. While the grave-robber was taken to the Thieves Hole, Mr Scott was feted in every High Street pub.

It is ironic that, despite protesting about the unhygienic state of St Michael's kirkyard, Provost Gilmour

was buried there himself, in a family lair. Grave digger **Francis Robertson's** report makes grim reading: *"Ex Provost Gilmour died not very long after his son, Andrew, and he was buried in the same grave. In opening the grave, I found Andrew's coffin only about 2 feet under the surface. In order to get the Ex-Provost's coffin in, Andrew's coffin had to be smashed up. His body was not completely decayed."*

The decision was made to create a new town burial ground in an area called Gowanstank where previously there had been a group of allotments and garden nurseries. The land was laid out with appropriate trees: yews representing longevity and immortality, holly trees with their ancient connections to resurrection, weeping willows and cedars, the oil from which was used in mummification practices.

To the east of Ferguson's mausoleum are the graves of two of Linlithgow's most eminent educators – **James "Baldie" Walker** who, in February 1902, arrived at the town's Grammar School behind the Burgh Halls to find the place a smouldering ruin, and **James "The Turk" Beveridge** – the second headmaster of Linlithgow Academy who led 102 pupils into the "new" school at the Low Port in the same year. Between them is the grave marker of long-serving Public School Janitor, **Ian Grassick** who died in 1990, aged 81.

In the centre circle of the graveyard lie the mortal remains of five of Linlithgow's Provosts: **Robert Jamieson**, (1902-14); **James Thomas** (1914-19); **William Philip** (1919-21) **Jack Thomas**, (1955-58) and **James Lawrie** (1961-64).

Close by is **William Dougall** (1931-35) – near to a headstone which proudly bears the inscription "HARRY MEENAN, TOWN CRIER OF



Provost Fergus Byrne

LINLITHGOW, 1962-65." Harry is one of the eleven men who have held the position since 1901 – the present incumbent being **David Duncan**.

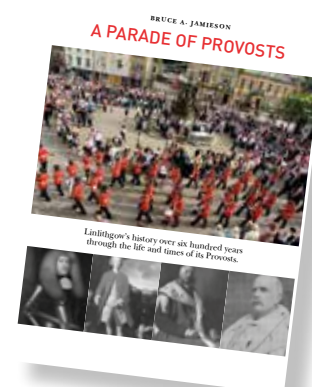
Close by is the simple grave marker of Provost **Fergus Byrne** – a maths teacher at Scotus Academy who died, in office, in 1973. He was replaced by the last Provost of the Town Council, and the first of the Deacons Court, **Bill Wilson** who lies in a small, walled area to the north, past the large "new" burial ground where lie many town characters of the past including **Sandy Dalrymple**, **Rev. Father McGovern**, **Bailie Jim Clark, JP**, the eccentric "**Chicken**" **Jock Macintyre**, the poet **Hugh Young** and **Headteachers George Beattie**, **William Alexander** and **Herbert Glennie**.

Bruce Jamieson

This written 'tour' has just scratched the surface of what Braehead Cemetery has to offer, as the whole history of twentieth century Linlithgow is recorded there. It's well worth a visit. You can also read about many of the characters mentioned in this article, including all the Provosts, in my book – sold in aid of the Riding of the Marches which now costs almost £40,000 to stage.



Images left to right:
Harry Meenan and Bill Wilson





LYPP OPEN DAY

For the last 27 years Linlithgow Young People's Project has been working with the young people of Linlithgow through various clubs and activities. From schools work to drop in youth clubs to holiday programmes, including camping trips, LYPP has always aimed to give young people as many opportunities as possible to challenge themselves and try something new.

Recently, thanks to **Go For It** funding, we were able to run free fortnightly skate park sessions in the Vennel throughout the summer. These proved popular and we quickly saw a new group of young people interested in skateboarding getting involved and growing in confidence. The skate park sessions were run by **Radworx** who set up the equipment and ran the sessions.

Following on from the success of the summer skate park programme, we decided to run a community event to finish off the project. On Saturday the 30 September, we opened up the LYPP and took over the Vennel.

The skate park was open to anybody over the age of 8 and we had 25 young people giving it a go, many of whom had never skated before. We were open

from 10am until 4pm and some young people were there the entire time getting tutoring and encouragement from the Radworx workers.

From mid-day onwards we ran a free BBQ and cooked up more than 80 burgers! While we had a trained cook on the BBQ, a number of our young people were around for the day helping out. We had young people serving tea, coffee and cakes as well as handing out flyers and teaching children how to make our skateboarding crafts.

One of the projects we run throughout the year at LYPP is Foody Friday which we use to help the young people improve their cooking skills and teach them about healthy eating. For the open day we made an exception to the healthy rule and they spend the Friday afternoon making muffins to give to people who came to the open day the next day.

For children who came and were too young to take part in the skate park we ran crafts inside. Keeping with the skateboarding theme we made mini skateboards out of lollipop sticks, cocktail sticks and beads. These proved to be very popular and we had around 20 children in making the

skateboards and using the space to try out their creations. We had a number of young people helping to teach the children how to make these crafts and it was great to see our young people engaging and teaching the children.

Looking forward, we plan to run more open days and continue to get involved in the local community and raise our profile further. We want as many young people and families to know we are here and get involved.

2018 is the Scottish government's "Year of the Young Person" and we are getting involved. We are currently planning a number of exciting projects ready to launch throughout the year. To keep up to date with everything we're doing follow us on Instagram @lypp_lounge and on Facebook (LYPP Linlithgow).



We would like to thank all the people who came along to our event and to all the volunteers and funders who made it possible. Without the support of the Linlithgow community we would not be able to do the work we do.

Katherine Orr

BOOK REVIEW

LAST WILL

WILLIAM HS MCINTYRE

This novel by Scottish crime-writer William McIntyre is a thrilling instalment in the Robbie Munro Best Defence mystery series. First published in 2015 it tells the story of criminal defence lawyer Robbie Munro as he finds himself drawn ever deeper into the criminal underworld of Edinburgh and the Lothians.

At the heart of this novel, however, is the fact that Munro is fighting for custody of his newly discovered long-lost daughter. With one month to prove to the law courts that he is a fit and reliable father-figure to four-year-old Tina, Robbie must juggle a complex investigation into a double-murder with only his father and brother for help.

Munro's dodgy landlord, Jake Turpie, who appears to have many fingers in many pies, is responsible for providing the launch-pad for Robbie's involvement in the mysterious double-murder which takes place on a small farmhouse in a secluded location on the outskirts of Linlithgow. Turpie is a formidable opponent and throughout the novel comes good on several threats of menaces. His hold over Robbie is complete when he offers him an extremely lucrative offer for his future.

What sets McIntyre's crime novels apart from others in this popular Scottish genre is the fact that his hero, Robbie Munro, is not a loveable yet maverick member of the Scottish police force. Instead his investigative prowess is conducted entirely through his abilities as a criminal defence lawyer. However this does not make Robbie Munro any less loveable or maverick.

Indeed the opposite is true; incorrigible and determined Munro has a questioning mind and a keen sense of justice. He never pretends to be perfect – he is always only ever trying to 'do the right thing' by everyone. He is inventive and creative in his methods for acquiring knowledge pertinent to his case and seems to permanently teeter on the edge of 'hot water' both in his working and personal life.

William McIntyre writes with considerable skill and humour. His own career in criminal defence law has provided him with a wealth of knowledge of the Scottish legal system and his novels provide a refreshingly clear insight into the multi-faceted caseload of a defence lawyer. In an uncomplicated manner he outlines to the reader the complexity as well as the sensitivity that many legal cases present. His protagonist Robbie Munro has an unerring sense of justice and ethics although his methods may, at times, be questionable.

For Robbie Munro the end most certainly justifies the means!

Lisa Nettleton
Lisa Nettleton is a teacher who lives in Linlithgow and enjoys reading on her daily rail commute into Edinburgh.



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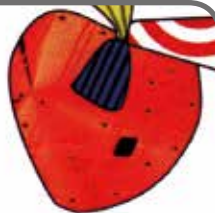


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We offer a holistic and person-centred approach to give women the tools to achieve their own empowerment. Our staff provide over 450 support sessions each year and as well as providing accommodation WLWA offer telephone and on-call support, emotional support, drop-in sessions, money advice, resettlement support, pet and art therapy, monthly activities, and fun day trips.

1 in every 4 women will experience domestic abuse at some point in their life.

>> Help us make a difference and support our cause.

The charity is holding their first benefit event to support the launch of the 16 Days of Activism campaign.

This feature is in loving memory of a very special dog, Ziggy Hutton. Sadly, Ziggy passed away earlier this year in June, but his humans hope by telling his story that they will help others who find themselves in their situation.

Ziggy was a 10-year-old Tri-Coloured Collie Cross adopted from the Dogs Trust nine years ago. His behaviour was all Collie despite showing signs of thinking he was human! Ziggy knew how to open doors and when it was time to go out into the garden at the end of the day.

Some of his favourite things included tummy rubs and cuddles and heading along the River Avon with his pals Seve and Harvey. Every toy he received ended up in the garden, some making it into a hole he dug beneath an apple tree! Ziggy used to sneak onto the sofa when he knew no one was around, quickly hopping off when a human appeared with his ears flat and looking rather sheepish.

Ziggy became very sick suddenly last November with a painful back and swollen lymph nodes. After a scan of his spine the neurologist explained that there was wear and tear in a couple of spinal discs which could be easily controlled by painkillers. However, the swollen lymph nodes were more worrying with the normally hungry dog refusing water and food and losing 3kg in weight. A biopsy confirmed the worst that Ziggy had lymphoma - cancer in his lymph nodes.

Ziggy's humans were unsure about what to do next but following a chat with vet Stuart, who gave them all the different options, decided to take Ziggy to the Dick Vet School to discuss the chemotherapy route. It was explained that chemo in dogs is different to humans because the cancer can't be cured so the dosage is reduced. Chemo aims to keep the cancer in check and therefore, allow dogs to live what time they have left happily. Ziggy had the more aggressive type of lymphoma with a life expectancy of six months. The Suttons decided to go ahead with the treatment and say that it was the best decision they have ever made. Despite not being a cheap option, their pet insurance covered much of the treatment.

Ziggy's health improved after the first dose of chemo and despite coming out of remission several times, the use of different drugs managed to keep the cancer at bay. Ziggy enjoyed a further eight fabulous months with his humans who describe it as a really special time.

If you have any questions regarding your pet's health, please do not hesitate to contact us on 01506 844165 to make an appointment



West Lothian Women's Aid presents the 16 Days Benefit

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You may downsize to release some of the cash from your property but perhaps you don't want to move, you love your home but you'd just like to free up some of the money tied up in it. If this is the case then a scenario you could discuss with your Financial Adviser is Equity Release.

>> What is equity release?

Equity release is a term that covers a range of products that let you access the cash (equity) tied up in your home if you are over the age of 55. You can take the equity released as either as a lump sum, several smaller amounts or as a combination of both.

Depending on your circumstances, there are two equity release options:

>> A Lifetime Mortgage

This is where you take out a mortgage secured on your property, if it is your main residence, while retaining ownership. You can choose to ring-fence some of the value of your property as an inheritance for your family. You can either make repayments on the loan or choose to let the interest roll-up. The loan amount and any interest due is paid back when you die or when you move into long-term care.

When considering a lifetime mortgage, you might want to think about the following -

- > The minimum age at which you can take out a lifetime mortgage. Usually it's 55. As we are all living longer, the earlier you start the more it is likely to cost in the long run.
- > The maximum percentage you can borrow is normally up to 60% of the value of your property. How much equity or cash that can be released is dependent on your age and the value of your property. Generally, the older you are the higher the percentage that you can borrow. Some providers might offer larger sums if you

have certain past or present medical conditions.

> Interest rates must be fixed or, if they are variable, there must be a "cap" (upper limit) which is fixed for the life of the loan.

> You have the right to remain in your property for life or until you need to move into long-term care, provided the property remains your main residence and you abide by the terms and conditions of your contract.

> The product has a "no negative equity guarantee". This means that when your property is sold, and agents' and solicitors' fees have been paid, even if the amount left is not enough to repay the outstanding loan to your provider, neither you nor your estate will be liable to pay any more.

> You have the right to move to another property subject to the new property being acceptable to your product provider as continuing security for your equity release loan. Different lifetime mortgage providers might have slightly different thresholds.

> If you can make repayments, the mortgage will be less costly. However, with a lifetime mortgage where you can make monthly payments, the amount you can repay might be based on your income. Providers will have to check that you can afford these regular payments.

> You can withdraw the equity you're releasing in small amounts as and when you need it or take it as one lump sum. The advantage of being able to take money out in smaller amounts is that you only pay the interest on the amount you've withdrawn. If you can take smaller lump sums, make sure you check if there's a minimum amount.

>> Home reversion

Home reversion allows you to sell some or all your home to a home reversion provider.

In return you'll get a lump sum or regular payments.

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This article is intended to provide a general review and opinion of certain topics and its purpose is to inform but not to recommend or support any specific investment or course of action.



You'll normally get between 20% and 60% of the market value of your home (or the part that you sell).

When considering a home reversion plan, you should check:

- > If you can release equity in several payments or in one lump sum.
- > The minimum age at which you can take out a home reversion plan. Some home reversion providers insist that you're at least 60 or 65 before you can apply.
- > The percentage of the market value you will receive. This will increase the older you are when you take out the plan but might vary from provider to provider.
- > You have the right to remain in your property for life or until you need to move to long-term care, provided the property remains your main residence and you abide by the terms and conditions of your contract. You have the right to move to another property subject to the new property being acceptable to your product provider as continuing security for your equity release loan.
- > The product has a "no negative equity guarantee". This means that when your property is sold, and agents' and solicitors' fees have been paid, even if the amount left is not enough to repay the outstanding loan to your provider, neither you nor your estate will be liable to pay any more.

- > What level of maintenance you'll be expected to carry out and how often your property will be inspected (this could be every few years).

Equity release might seem like a good option if you want some extra money and don't want to move to a new house; however, there are important considerations which you should talk through with a financial adviser to make sure that this is the best option for you and your situation.

>> Disadvantages of Equity Release

- > The Interest charges can mount up
- > The longer you borrow money through an equity release plan, the longer interest charges have to build up.
- > If you go down the Equity Release route then it is inevitable that when you die or move into care that at least some of the value of your home will be used to repay the provider. This means that your relatives could get a small inheritance that they had anticipated.

If you would like us to review your particular situation then please contact us – we look forward to hearing from you. To make an appointment with one of our advisers, please call me, **Susan Ralston**, directly on 0345 034 3424 or email me at susan@virtuemoney.com.

There is no fee for the first consultation and no you are under no obligation – if we do not feel like the right fit for you then that's absolutely fine.



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THE BOYS' BRIGADE JUNIORS

THE ADVENTURE CONTINUES AFTER 100 YEARS!



This year is a big year for the Boys' Brigade.

Until 1917 The Boys' Brigade only catered for boys aged 12 and over. In September 1917 the Brigade Council set up the Boy Reserves for ages 9-12. Following changes they were renamed the Junior Section, a temporary name which has lasted more than 50 years! Celebrations for the 100th year of the Juniors is now in full swing.

I visited the 2nd Linlithgow Boys' Brigade on the evening of their celebratory party and the boys were certainly in high spirits! The friendly helpers all looked to be having a lively time too. This company, which is the only one in Linlithgow, is thriving, with approximately 70 boys in total over the different age groups. They are well supported by the local community, with adult volunteers rising from 12 to 27 last year, an amazing achievement.

The group are celebrating the 100th birthday by aiming to complete 100 challenges from September till the end of December. The first challenge was for everyone to take an active part in the church service at St Michaels; the party was the next challenge, and the boys are currently involved in taking selfies with a specially designed BB frame as Challenge 83. They are recording progress on the 100

challenges on a "thermometer" on the wall of the hall and you can keep up to date with how they are doing on their Facebook page (Linlithgow BB).

The object of the BB is the advancement of Christ's kingdom among boys and the promotion of habits of obedience, reverence, discipline and self-respect, and all that tends towards a true Christian manliness. I'm sure making friends and having fun comes in somewhere too.

At the end of each year the group has a display of all the boys' achievements, and this year eight boys who have been in the company for 12 years, were awarded the Queen's Badge, which is the highest award in Boys' Brigade. They learned great life skills over that period and take on some responsibility for the younger boys as they progress. The Junior section also won the West Lothian Battalion figure marching competition last year.

The whole group have many one-off events over the course of the year as well as the regular weekly opening service, prayer time, games, marching practice and craft activities.

Over the course of last year some of the activities the group have enjoyed include making catapults, science experiments, a visit from a local dentist, a British Sign Language interpreter taught the boys basic signs, they had an outing to Kingsfield Farm to ride tractors and feed lambs, and have been

go-karting, swimming and even to the mega-zone in Falkirk.

One activity that the boys have experienced which sounded particularly good fun was a sleepover in the Glasgow Science Centre, hopefully to be repeated in the future.

I asked a couple of the boys about their favourite thing about Boys Brigade Group activities and earning badges were mentioned and one of the Juniors said it was his favourite thing to do Monday to Friday (I won't repeat what he said was the worst to avoid upsetting his teacher!). One boy insisted on going to tonight's BB party, despite having had an operation on his eye and being under doctor's orders to not do too much. They obviously enjoy their time at BB.

The group meet at Cross House on Thursday evenings from 6.30pm – Primary 2 - 3 (Anchor Boys) for an hour, the Junior Section (Primary 4-6) meet from 7 - 8.15, and the Company section/Seniors from 7.45 – 9.45. The group have capacity for more boys to join the fun, as do the 2nd Linlithgow Girls Brigade who meet on a Wednesday night in Cross House from 6.30 – 9.30pm.

If your son would like to join the group please get in touch with Jamie on linlithgowbb@outlook.com or via Facebook

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WHAT'S ON AT THE ROSE



Images by ANDREW WEST

WHAT'S ON AT THE ROSE

Full Session Bingo at 8pm
on Tuesday, Thursday and
Sunday evenings.

Live entertainment every
Saturday and Sunday evening.

Domino competitions on
Wednesday afternoons and
Friday evenings.

We're open 7 days.

XMAS PARTY
Friday 15 December
7.30pm – 1am

Xmas Party with live
entertainment from
**"Scotland
Rocks"**



HOGMANAY
Sunday 31 December
9pm – 2am

Brilliant vocalist
Donna Glass plus
Support Act & Scottish Piper
leading up to the Bells.

£12 includes Buffet.
Admission by Ticket Only

2018 TALENT COMPETITION
Commences **FRIDAY 2nd FEBRUARY**
6 HEATS - Acts now being sought.

WIN £2,500

CONTACT: DAVID MCDUGALL ON 01506 843736 FOR MORE INFORMATION.

community garden



Want to grow your own fruit & vegetables, or other plants and flowers, but don't really know where to start or don't have a garden? A community garden may be the answer!

Transition Linlithgow are looking into building a Community Garden in a central location, on a main bus route, and we would really appreciate your feedback so we can assess interest.

Our aim is to apply for funding to help to set up the garden, which could include a polytunnel, raised beds, tool storage and a seating area. Beds could then be gardened as a community effort, or rented by individuals, community groups, schools etc. We could also run classes to learn about gardening eg 'grow your own', gardening for wildlife or growing cut flowers.

Gardening has proven benefits for both physical and mental health, and community gardening in particular helps to build communities and address isolation, as local residents meet new people and learn new skills. Growing and eating totally fresh, local, fruit & vegetables is very satisfying, and we can also benefit wildlife by growing flowers and providing attractive habitats.

So we would love it if you could complete our short online questionnaire to provide your opinions, by the end of November: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/ZPH3QNM>.

Paper copies are also available in the library – please return these to the library by end November. The more positive replies we receive, the more likely it is that we can build a new community garden together!



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