



the **BLACK bitch**

Linlithgow's news by Linlithgow's people

LINLITHGOW COMMUNITY MAGAZINE ISSUE 65 APRIL 2019

ST MICHAEL

'KINDE TO STRANGERS,
UNKINDE TO ALL EVIL'

Civic Insignia Sculpture
Project P7



**GORDON MCBREARTY
EXHIBITION** P4



**BURGH BEAUTIFUL
COMPETITION** P9



**PERAMBULATION
OF THE MARCHES** P10

PLUS

Burgh Beautiful, Town Centre BID, 'Moondance' is back, Police Scotland, Book Review, Paul Rolfe Property Review, Late Night Shopping, Bruce Jamieson & Local History...

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SCOTLAND LADIES JUNIOR CURLING CHAMPIONS 2019



Local S6 Linlithgow Academy pupil, Annabel Skuse, has had her most successful curling season with ‘Team Davie’ since forming four years ago.

Their pre-season training went well throughout the summer at the NCA (National Curling Academy) in Stirling, and this set them up to make a strong start to the season which started in September 2018.

The early target for their curling calendar was to aim to retain the Asham Under 21 Slam which is a league event. The four competitions took place in Glasgow, Kinross, Inverness and Lockerbie.

As a result of winning the first Slam event at Greenacres (Glasgow), Team Davie were invited to represent Scotland at a Nordic Tour competition in Copenhagen. Having come second the previous year, they managed to get over the line this time and take first place. They also won the Slam events at Inverness and Lockerbie which meant that their points tally could not be beaten and in December 2018 they were crowned as Asham Slam winners for a second consecutive season.

The team also competed in the Braehead competition of the EJCT (European Junior Curling Tour) in October 2018 and managed to win the final against a top Norwegian team. The EJCT events take place across venues in Europe and teams are awarded points for their placings. It is one of the main targets for next season that Team Davie will aim to compete at the highest European level and push for honours within the EJCT rankings.

However, the real highlight of their season was to win the Scottish Junior Championships in January 2019, which is an intense 5 day tournament that takes place in Aberdeen. This is the ultimate title for any Scottish curler, with the additional prize of becoming Team Scotland at the World Championships 2019. The girls therefore only had two weeks to turn around before flying off to Nova Scotia, Canada in February to represent their country. Their Scotland kit and visas were sorted in time and it proved to be an

amazing experience for the girls. The level of competition was vastly superior to anything that they had been involved with before, which made it a tough week for the team. They managed to win their first game against the hosts, Canada, despite being the youngest team in the World Championships. They learnt so much about curling on the world stage as well as bonding as a team and managing their competition routine over a week-long event. Having got the taste for such high level competition, ‘Team Davie’ are determined to compete at another World Championship and they have another two years in the Under 21 category to achieve this.

Curling is a sport for all ages, whilst being very sociable and relying heavily on positive sporting values.

If anyone reading is interested in having a go, there are ‘Try Curling’ sessions advertised on the Scottish Curling website and you just turn up! If any child between the ages of 7-18 would like more information about the Stirling Young Curlers Club (which is where Annabel started to curl) then contact the information desk at the Peak, Stirling.

There is also a Linlithgow Curling Club (www.linlithgowcurlingclub.btck.co.uk) that play matches on Monday evenings, and you would be most welcome to join whether as a novice or experienced curler.



Huge thanks go to the team coach Andrew Barr (pictured), and to Alan Steel Asset Management for their very kind donations. Thanks also to Linlithgow Academy who have allowed a lot of authorised time away so that Annabel can compete at home and abroad.

As with any sport, funding is always an issue and the girls are continually searching for sponsorship and donations. Team Davie would be delighted to hear from you via their Facebook page.



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LINLITHGOW

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WHAT'S ON - APRIL/MAY

* Repeating Event

April

Fri 19 Grand opening of Linlithgow Museum, Partnership Centre.

Easter Eggsplorer, Linlithgow Palace, Free for Historic Scotland Members. *Till 22 April.*

Sun 21 The Easter bunny has been hiding his chocolates at the Burgh Halls! Easter egg hunt and roll your eggs in the beautiful Rose garden. ! Burgh Halls, 12:00pm - 3:00pm. Free entry.

Tue 23 Nutriclub class, every Tuesday, 5.30pm, Cross House, Linlithgow.*

Wed 24 Scottish Women's Institutes. Show of competition entries in both Handcrafts and Homeskills, 2:00pm - 5:00pm Chalmers Hall, Main St.

Fri 26 Red Door Present, Letters for Peace is Graeme Stephen's new work composed for string trio and guitar.

Mon 29 Introduction to baby and child emergency first aid. The Old Pavilion, Linlithgow Cricket Ground, 10am.

RED DOOR

**Karen Marshalsay,
master of
traditional
Scottish harp
music.**

Friday 24 May

Starts 8pm, St Peter's Church
153 High Street
Linlithgow.

May

Thu 2-6 In the footsteps of John Muir exhibition. Ken Paterson photography exhibition traces Muir's travels from childhood in Dunbar to the American National Parks, Blackness Castle. Opens 9.30am.

Sat 4 Water Safari. Discover Linlithgow Loch by Canadian canoe. 9.30am.

St Peter's Church in Linlithgow will host Play Church. Helping children learn about the Holy Communion, baptism and more. 2pm - 4pm. *Also 7 & 11 May.*

Wed 8 Bumper prize bingo night. Linlithgow Rose Social Club. 7.30pm.

Sat 11 Deacons Court - Gin and Malt Whisky tasting night, Queen Margaret Hall, 7.30pm

Mon 13 Art & mindfulness. A range of relaxation-based activities. Free event. Linlithgow Burgh Halls, 6:00pm.

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.



CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 12th - 18th May

1st - 20th May "Christian Aid Exhibition Uprooted", in St Michael's Parish Church, 10.30am - 4pm (weddings and funeral times excepted).

ABBA tribute night
at Linlithgow Rugby Club on
8 June - tickets: 01506 845087

WANT TO WRITE / BLOG FOR THE BLACK BITCH MAGAZINE?

The magazine is looking for young people to help establish a regular presence on its website, Facebook and Twitter accounts. Contact me in via social media, tel or email
Alice Ferguson MSYP
Twitter - @aliceMSYP
Instagram - @alicemsyp
Facebook - @aliceSYP



Contact the Black Bitch

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



Copy deadline for next issue is 22 MAY 2019.

'LADIES DAY' see p25

Linlithgow Players

Four ordinary women whose lives are transformed in the space of an extraordinary day at the races. **16/17/18 May**

17 MAY. Curry night in collaboration with Delhi's Winter. Linlithgow Cricket Clubhouse. 7:30pm - 10pm. Fundraiser/Quiz.

Perambulation of the Marches
Wednesday 12 June, starting at about 7pm outside St Ninian's Craigmailen Church.

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.



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

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



WEDDINGS • EVENTS • PORTRAITS

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PHOTOGRAPHY





from
27
April

SNAPPER GORDON WILL SHARE HIS 'PASSING MOMENTS'.

Gordon McBrearty was a full-time press photographer - a 'Snapper' - for thirty three years. For a significant part of that time, he was involved with the Journal & Gazette in Linlithgow, either as a freelance or a staff member. Gordon was well known to the multitude of organisations whose activities he covered and was a familiar figure at local events. His coverage of the big civic occasions always showed great imagination and vitality.

"I really loved those events", he told me. "Things like the Marches, the Gala day and the Bo'ness Fair are mechanical. We do the same thing every year at the same time and it's only certain faces that change. All the costumes stay the same, so your big challenge is to make it different. Stop taking pictures from the same spot, look for something different. I had a great passion for all of it and always tried to find something new."

His job was his great obsession, but in September 2013, Gordon experienced what he describes as the first of a series of mental breakdowns while out running with his dog Harry. A few months later, he was made redundant from the job he loved, which only added to his problems. He tried to do small

assignments, but found the whole experience too difficult.

Gordon's mental health issues meant that he was unable to work and he found great comfort in walking Harry, especially at his two favourite places, Blackness and Bangour. As time went by, he occasionally took a camera along with him and found that he was photographing the same spots time and time again, but always discovering new things.

"I was finding fascination in almost everything", he explained. "The buzz was beginning to come back a wee bit and I was really enjoying it. All I was doing was just snapping and that's where I came up with the idea and the feeling of passing moments, because that's all they were. I might wait for a cloud to move across, take a picture and that's it. Take the picture and walk away, look at it back in the house."

Gordon found that he was taking more and more photos and he became intrigued by the sky and by clouds. He had never done landscapes before. He was really enjoying his new experience of photography and also took great pleasure in the response his passing moments were getting on Facebook. He felt he was entertaining people with something that was helping him.

On his walks at Blackness, he would meet Elisabet Thorin of the Line Gallery out with her dogs. An accomplished photographer herself, she suggested that Gordon should do something with his photos.

"Gradually, I picked up the courage to actually think, maybe I could, maybe I should" he told me. "The idea of therapy through photography has helped me tremendously. Getting out and doing that, getting a bit of confidence back. Getting a lot of feeling back."

On Saturday April 27th, Gordon will open an exhibition at the Line Gallery, called "Passing Moments". It will run until Tuesday May 14th. In the publicity, he writes:

"I hope my images share some peace with you and give you some hope to escape everything for just a passing moment, just one moment."

Announcing the exhibition. Elisabet said:

"The Line takes great pleasure in welcoming Gordon's photographs back to Linlithgow, and to opening our doors to all those who remember his images of local events, and to those who have a new experience to discover."

Murdoch Kennedy



SPRING LATE NIGHT SHOPPING EVENT IN LINLITHGOW

Put a spring in your step and head down to Linlithgow High Street at the end of May for a very special shopping event. This year the High Street Traders group of Linlithgow businesses are offering seasonal shopping nights, the first of which has a spring flavour to it and is taking place on Thursday 30th May. All of the participating businesses will be keeping their doors open much later than usual to allow people to browse their favourite shops at their leisure.

Most of the shops taking part will be running special offers on the evening and there is also a Free Prize Draw with the chance to win a hamper loaded with goodies from all of the participating businesses.

As if that wasn't enough to tempt shoppers to join in on the night, the Linlithgow BID are running a special Linlithgow Loyalty Lottery for that evening only with £100 worth of prizes to be won!

Sally Pattle, Manager of Far From The Madding Crowd, said,

'There's a greater range of businesses taking part in the seasonal late night shopping events in 2019 and we are all really excited about giving people more of a chance to see what Linlithgow High Street has to offer. There are a wealth of independent and specialist shops for people to enjoy: Linlithgow has one of the best High Streets for a town of its size in Scotland, if not the UK.'

.....

At the time of writing the following businesses are taking part:

A Wee Mindin', Crafted Merchant, Far From The Madding Crowd, Granary Café, Jewellery By Design Linlithgow, Kütchenhaus, Linlithgow, Lilypond Crafts & Gifts, The Line Gallery, Linlithgow Pottery, Linlithgow Stoves and Gifts, Mid-C Mod, Purely Patchwork, The Thread Counter and The Tranquil Room.

Looking at the list of shops already taking part, the last Thursday in May is definitely a date for your diary!

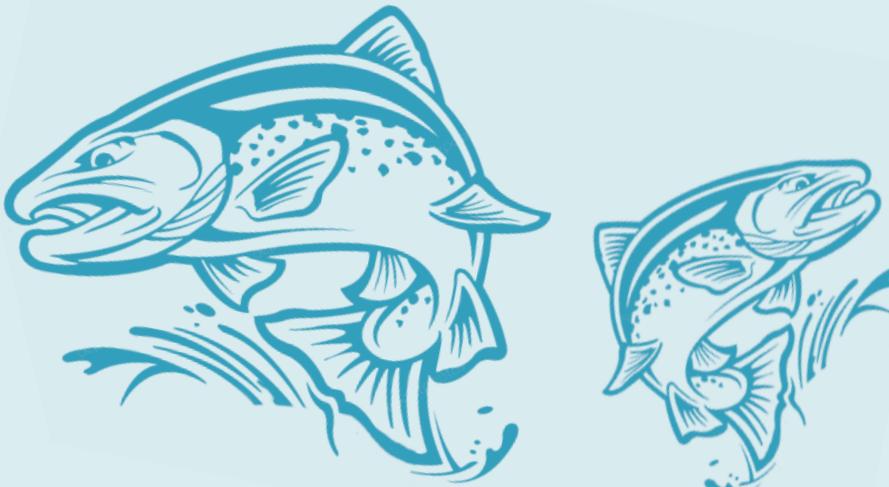
More shops and businesses may decide to join in nearer the time and there will also be more information on the individual special offers available, so Sally advises the best place to keep updated is the Linlithgow High Street Traders facebook page.

Sally Pattle
Far from the Madding Crowd

Thu
30
May



FUTURE-PROOFING FOR THE RIVER AVON



If you stand on Linlithgow Bridge looking down onto the River Avon you might be forgiven for thinking that the river is quite small, or for believing that the river takes care of itself. You'd be wrong on both counts. The Avon has a catchment area of 195.3 sq kilometres and is circa 31 kilometres long. All along its length the river and its environs are cared for by angling clubs who are members of the River Avon Federation, including the Town's very own Linlithgow Angling Club.

The club was founded in 1974 and has maintained a membership of 80 plus dedicated to enhancing the quality of river angling for wild trout, sea trout and salmon and, just as importantly, the eco quality of the river and its environs.

The stereotypical image of anglers is one of a craggy old gent sitting by a canal in the pouring rain with an ancient pipe clamped in his teeth. The image is outdated. You would be more likely to see members of the Linlithgow Angling Club wading in a burn to clear rubbish, shopping trolleys etc., or maintaining the serpentine flower bed, or marking drains with badges urging folk not to empty their waste down the drains because it goes into the loch and the river.

Here's the point. Anglers are more than fishermen, they are guardians of water quality and the eco health of the river and its environs.

This year the Club recognised the importance of ensuring the river's health was managed into the future by adopting a development plan

which would develop our membership and thereby the Club's capacity to care for the river and its environs. Having consulted our members we have adopted a programme which will ensure that the burns which feed into the main river (the lifeblood of any river) will be regularly surveyed to watch out for pollution and clear obstacles to a clean flow of water. We will also have regular sessions for clearing the backside of rubbish and dense vegetation to allow better access to the river, for both anglers and the community.

Most importantly we will continue to play our part in educating local children on the value of clean rivers and the satisfaction which is derived from understanding nature and helping maintain a healthy fish and insect population. River insects are the 'canaries in the mine' of river health. Their decline is an early sign that something isn't right - which is why we try and build children's understanding of the role that river insects have for the health river and its fish population.

Children from four local primary schools, together with the Forth Rivers Trust and Linlithgow Angling Club participate in a programme called '**Trout in the Classroom**', which is sponsored by Historic Environment Scotland. Pupils receive talks about the lifecycle of fish in a river and then rear baby trout in specially prepared tanks installed in the school. It's quite a challenge for the children as the water

in the tank has to be maintained at a specific temperature by using plastic bottles filled with frozen water.

When the baby trout are sufficiently 'grown on' the kids, parents and teachers take them in little plastic bags to be put into a local burn. There are trays displaying insect life and talks on river health. As the pictures alongside the article show - it's great fun for the kids. Many of them name the baby trout they are putting into the river!

The club also gives free training and a fishing experience to local scout troops with tuition from expert fly casters. The excitement in the eyes of a child catching their first trout is something to behold!

The club has an active programme of outings to fish local lochs and great social events through the year.

The lure of fly fishing is only partly in catching (and more often returning fish to the river) but in the quiet, idyllic charms of a river as it gleams and sparkles, rustles and swirls, chatters and bubbles down to the sea.

Are you hooked? If you want to know more about the club email visit our website: www.l-a-c.co.uk

David Manion
President
Linlithgow
Angling Club



Linlithgow Angling Club

Linlithgow Angling Club (LAC) aims to increase and enhance fishing for trout.

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ROYAL BURGH OF LINLITHGOW CIVIC INSIGNIA PUBLIC ART PROJECT



BURGH BEAUTIFUL LINLITHGOW

The Black Bitch and St Michael – most Linlithgow inhabitants know about the town's two traditional civic emblems. These are depicted on the burgh's ancient seal and coats of arms and are reproduced in many ways throughout the town.

Following Burgh Beautiful's successful installation of the Dudley sculpture at the Canal Basin last year, local residents contacted the group about the possibility of a Black Bitch statue. Some were also keen on a sculpture of St Michael and – given that a good proportion of the funding was potentially available from the ring-fenced public art fund held by the Linlithgow Town Centre BID and the Linlithgow & Linlithgow Bridge Town Management Group – we agreed to undertake a Public Art project with the aim of installing sculptures of both civic emblems.

Planning permission has been granted for the sculptures. It is envisaged that the Black Bitch sculpture will form the centrepiece of a new seating area at the top of the Serpentine Bed opposite St Peter's Episcopal Church. New paving and an interpretation board giving background information will also be provided. The 'St Michael' sculpture is planned for the recently-landscaped area at the entrance to the grounds of Low Port Primary School, along with another interpretation board.

Linlithgow's original coats of arms were granted by the Lord Lyon King of Arms on 16 July 1673. The coats of arms are

based on the oldest known burgh seals, dating from as early as 1296 and 1357. In these days, it was customary for burghs to have a double-sided seal, one side normally carrying a secular object and the other a religious object, usually referring to the town's patron saint. It is thought that, from an early date, annual civic processions would feature the secular object (in Linlithgow's case, the 'Black Bitch'), carried in the form of a banner, while the religious object (St Michael, the town's patron saint) would appear on a sacred flag.

There have been some format changes over the years – the 1357 example of the burgh seal shows simply a dog chained to a ring on a pole. Legends abound about the dog and the addition of the tree but, most likely, the Black Bitch is a hunting dog, symbolising the royal hunts around Linlithgow. St Michael the Archangel traditionally carried a shield showing the Scottish Royal Arms, reflecting the town's many links with royalty over the ages, not least their residence in Linlithgow Palace from the 14th century onwards.

The commissioning process for both sculptures is now well advanced. On Wednesday 27 March, our public consultation event helped select the sculptors and the final form of the sculptures, followed by the group's carefully conducted technical assessment, taking into account relative costs. The outcome was a clear preference for Alan Herriot as the sculptor of St Michael and the Dragon, but the selection of the artist to create the Black Bitch was less clear cut with further information requested from one of the sculptors concerned to aid a final decision.

Considerable 'match-funding' is required to complete the funding package and applications have been submitted to over ten sources including Heritage Lottery Fund, Tesco, the Rank Foundation and the Bank of Scotland Foundation. In addition, to complete the fund-raising and give local people a sense of ownership, donations are invited from individuals and organisations. **Anyone interested in donating should contact Burgh Beautiful at bbl.public.art@lbt.scot** as should anyone interested in donating a memorial bench. On-line donations will be welcome at our 'Crowdfunder' campaign which will open on 1 May 2019.

Primary 5-7 schoolchildren at all five of the town's mainstream primary schools have been invited to conduct of their own research and submit their own artwork to show how they would like the 'Black Bitch' and 'St Michael and the Serpent/Dragon' to appear in sculptural form. At the time of writing, local historian Bruce Jamieson had spoken to assemblies at three of the schools and a volunteer was lined up for the other two schools.

The closing date for the work to be submitted, within school or at Linlithgow's public library, is at lunchtime on Friday, 26 April 2019. A selection of the submitted work will be displayed at the Low Port Centre on Wednesday 29 May, from 2.30pm until 7.30pm. Some of the children's work will also be featured on the proposed interpretation boards and within a proposed booklet on the overall project.

Ron Smith
Convenor, Burgh Beautiful
Linlithgow

BUDDING YOUNG FOOTBALLERS...

HONOUR A LOCAL SPORTING LEGEND

Budding young footballers from Primary schools in the Linlithgow area will parade their skills at the annual George Allan Memorial Football Festival on Sunday May 19th at Linlithgow Rose FC's Prestonfield ground. Kick-off is at 9am.

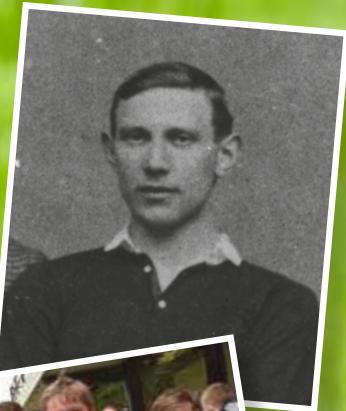
First established in 1991, the Football Festival honours the memory of Linlithgow Bridge footballer, George "Dod" Allan, a star centre forward on both sides of the border who, in 1897, became Liverpool Football Club's first Scottish internationalist. Sadly, on the cusp of a glittering career, George died of tuberculosis in 1899, at the age of only 24.

George Allan was one of Liverpool FC's very first star players and his exploits have never been forgotten by the club. Until recently, a large photo of the man described as "*a model centre; of fine physique, great speed and no fear*" hung proudly in the club museum at Anfield.

Last year, his name came to public prominence again due to the scoring prowess of **Mohammed Salah**. When Salah reached the total of twenty goals scored for Liverpool, it was announced on Sky Sports and other media outlets that he was only the second fastest to achieve that accolade in a season. The record is still held by George Allan, who was also the first player to score for Liverpool when they changed their club colours from the original blue to the more familiar red in September 1896.

The Football Festival has a tried and tested format. Participants play in two seven-a-side leagues: the developmental Reston League at the Social Club end and the more advanced Gallagher League at the Academy end, named after the first two Scottish Junior Cup-winning captains of Linlithgow Rose.

The **George Allan Shield** is presented to the winners of the Reston League, while the Gallagher League victors are awarded the **George Allan Trophy**. A 'Fair Play' trophy is also offered and this was donated by Mrs Georgina Waugh of Erskine, who is George Allan's great-niece.



Sun
19
May



The event is strongly supported by Linlithgow Rose FC and Linlithgow Rose Community FC, as well as local charity fundraisers "The Walk for Jock". This year, the organisers are delighted to welcome as main sponsors the **Blue Eyes Sports Foundation (BESF)**, which is a family registered charity founded in 2012 by Linlithgow residents Alex, Carole and Robbie Brown. BESF's ethos is to inspire, include and encourage young people and they firmly believe that sport fosters discipline and focus and develops healthy traits which last a lifetime. The charity supports access to sport of any kind, through individual help, equipment, coaching and travel.

Carole Brown of BESF told me:

"We are delighted to be part of the George Allan Memorial Football Festival for two reasons. Firstly, we are locals and football has been a huge part of our family's life. Secondly, we are also Liverpool FC season ticket holders! We were amazed to learn of the links between LFC and George Allan and the way he is still held in such high esteem. We feel we were destined to be part of the event's history."

The action gets underway at 9am on Sunday May 19th and a warm welcome is extended to everyone to come along and cheer on Linlithgow's football stars of the future.

Murdoch Kennedy



SUNFLOWERS FOR ALL BURGH BEAUTIFUL'S 2019 COMPETITION



2018 was a Golden Year with Linlithgow winning awards from Britain in Bloom and a successful Children's Gardening Competition. At the Awards Ceremony children asked 'Can we do it again next year?'

What with the keeping of diaries by entrants and the amount of organisation for the judges, it was decided that something simpler would be needed if another competition was to be held. The execution and weighing-in of the enormous sunflower head at the Autumn Fair led to the idea of 'Why not grow sunflowers in 2019?'

So, here we are launching the competition which is OPEN TO ALL - young or old or in between - growing on your own or with others. You choose your own seeds which may be bright yellow or white or mixed; giant or dwarf; multi-headed or a single stem.

Requirements are to send an email to bbl.comp@lbt.scot in order to register interest in participating. The sooner the better so that monthly communications can be sent.

However, there is no deadline until a call for photographs towards the end of August. Categories for judging will be based on age groups and various characteristics of the plants grown. Judges may visit early September in order to verify measurements such as the height of plant and /or width of head / number of heads and general magnificence however, actual weight of the head would have to involve decapitation and weighing at the Awards Ceremony at the Burgh Beautiful Autumn Fair on Saturday 28 September in St Michael's Kirk Hall.

Look out for more information on the Burgh Beautiful website - lbt.scot - or Facebook and in Tesco windows facing along the High Street.

To anyone who registered interest at the Seed Potato Day in February and has not yet replied to the email sent, please make contact with bbl.comp@lbt.scot or check you Spam box.



Averil Stewart



PERAMBULATION OF THE MARCHES

Organised by Linlithgow Civic Trust.

Wed
12
June



The evening of Wednesday 12 June 2019, will see a few of the guid folk of Linlithgow, and maybe a few visitors too, taking part in the sixth Perambulation of the Marches, organised by Linlithgow Civic Trust. All are invited to this year's walk round the town's old boundaries.

*So what is it all about
I hear you ask!*

Linlithgow is one of Scotland's most ancient Royal Burghs, and a tradition dating back to the 16th century is the annual Riding of the Marches, on the first Tuesday after the second Thursday in June. This involves the inspection of the extremities of the burgh's interests, including those at Linlithgow Bridge and at the port of Blackness.

The Perambulation of the Marches complements the official Riding of the Marches, giving townsfolk and visitors alike the opportunity to walk the line of a recorded boundary (or 'marches') of the Royal Burgh – in this case the Parliamentary Boundary as established in 1832.

The Perambulation of the Marches is an event open to all. It is of course a walk which can be enjoyed at any time.

The walk is **4 miles (6.5 km)** long, and passes by seven out of eight march stones (one original and seven replicas installed in 2014) marking the old boundary. The walk passes many features of historical or architectural interest.

The Perambulation of the Marches starts at 7pm at March Stone No. 1 in front of St Ninian's Craigmailen Church on Falkirk Road (just west of the West Port Hotel) and proceeds in a clockwise direction round the route.

The walk is led by the Provost, flag bearers and halberdiers of the Deacon's Court, and the Town Crier. At each March Stone on the route, a standard is mounted on the stone and a piper plays.

The Linlithgow Union Canal Society (LUCS) will be providing refreshments at Linlithgow Canal Centre (payment by voluntary donation) and the Linlithgow Reed Band will be there too to provide some light entertainment.

The Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Gala Queen Emilie and her Chief Lady in Waiting Mairi will be present to welcome the participants in Rosemount Park.



Linlithgow & Linlithgow Bridge Community Council has produced a detailed booklet on the route of the Perambulation, and free copies will be distributed at the start of the walk. In the meantime, copies can also be obtained at the Burgh Halls, the public library, Far from the Madding Crowd, the Palace, the LUCS Canal Tearoom and elsewhere in the town.

It perhaps goes without saying but participants should take care at all road crossings and co-operate with the volunteer stewards who will be on hand to assist. Participants should also be aware that there are steps in two locations, one set particularly steep.

At the end, in Code (the back function room) at the West Port Hotel, certificates will be issued to those who have completed the entire walk, and where well-earned refreshments can also be purchased.

The organisers are hoping for another big turn out again this year and look forward to seeing you all.

Anyone interested in the other activities of Linlithgow Civic Trust should visit their website at <http://lbt.scot/civic-trust>

Allan Robertson
Linlithgow Civic Trust



Linlithgow Civic Trust is part of Linlithgow Burgh Trust. Linlithgow Burgh Trust is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Scottish Charity No. SC047211



THE THIN BLUE LINE IN LINLITHGOW

Constable Neil Hunter and Constable Andrew Murray are the two community officers based in Linlithgow Police station, which is now located within the newly refurbished Tam Dalyell House at Linlithgow Partnership Centre, High Street, Linlithgow.

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 edition, covering ongoing community issues which we are keen to address within the ward.

There is also a public assistance desk at the station, which is open from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

LINLITHGOW COMMUNITY POLICE SURGERY

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. Or if you want to discuss something which may require more privacy, arrangements can be made to speak with you by appointment at a police station or at your home address. You can also email the Constables at: LinlithgowCPT@Scotland.pnn.police.uk

To find out details of future Linlithgow Community Police Surgeries, please log onto West Lothian Police Facebook page or Linlithgow Facebook Page or Neighbourhood Watch Scotland for future dates or alternatively check local press for details.

If we don't know then we can't fix it!

CALLING ALL PARENTS

Over the past few weekends there have been numerous complaints from local residents in various areas of Linlithgow regarding large groups of youths congregating.

Unfortunately some of these groups have been involved in the consumption of alcohol, drugs, setting fires, shouting, swearing and littering the local areas. Police and other partners are aware of these issues and will be conducting patrols in the area.

This behaviour is having a negative impact on the local community and there are also concerns regarding the personal safety of those involved. The police would encourage parents in Linlithgow to have an open discussion with their children, as to where they are going and what they are doing when out with friends in the evenings and check the contents of their bags/rucksacks.

Local shops have been visited and warned regarding supplying underage persons with cigarettes and alcohol. It is also an offence for persons over eighteen years of age to knowingly purchase and supply underage persons with alcohol.

Recently local officers were alarmed to have not only found youths in possession of alcohol but also Class A and B type drugs. This person has been cautioned and

charged with these offences and a report submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

Active parenting skills are required, to challenge and check on their children's whereabouts and encourage young people to make good decisions, focusing on keeping young people and communities safe.

BOGUS CALLERS / WORKMEN IN LINLITHGOW AREA



Unfortunately we have been receiving a rise in calls regarding doorstep crime in the Linlithgow area.

Bogus callers to rogue traders, doorstep criminals are cunning creative and very skilled at deception. They will use a number of ways to try and gain entry to your home to steal and trick you out of money.

Often they will pretend to be someone they're not, claiming to be Council staff, meter readers and even Police Officers. In reality, they are criminals who are trying to steal your cash and valuables.

"Rogue traders" usually cold call, claiming to be workers offering to make repairs or carry out work on your house, garden or driveway. They will charge over inflated prices for work that is often of poor quality or completely unnecessary. Whilst bogus callers can be very deceitful, there are a few simple precautions you can do to stop yourself becoming a victim:

- > Be on guard if someone turns up unexpectedly.
- > Use a door chain or bar and keep it on whilst talking to callers. If you don't have a door chain, check on the person from the window.
- > Don't feel embarrassed - genuine callers expect you to be careful.
- > If you're not sure about the person, don't answer the door.
- > Always ask for identification.
- > Do not feel pressurised into agreeing immediate work. Never listen to scare stories and beware of traders who suddenly appear after storms, floods or even snow and avoid claims that a low price is only available if you sign up right away.
- > Do not agree to buy from the first person who calls. Ask yourself if you really want these goods or services.
- > Do not pay cash up front. Never pay for work before it is completed and don't hand over large sums of money.
- > Do shop around if you decide you need work done. Get a minimum of three quotes from reputable traders. Why not consider the council's Trusted Trader Scheme - which is administered by the Trading Standards Department and can provide details of reliable local traders to carry out work around your home or garden.

> Do report them. Don't ever feel embarrassed if you feel you have been the victim of doorstep crime. If you feel threatened, unsafe or suspicious of a caller then contact police immediately on 101.

BEST BAR NONE AWARD

Congratulations to the Four Marys who



have been accredited with a Gold Award in the Best Bar None Scotland's West Lothian Scheme. This award is recognition of the hard work, commitment and dedication the Four Marys staff have undertaken in making their licensed premises a safe and welcoming environment in Linlithgow.

PARKING IN LINLITHGOW

Police Scotland are disappointed to report that despite numerous appeals to the residents that inconsiderate parking is still continuing to blight the High Street and surrounding streets.

Despite previous articles highlighting the congestion on the High Street, the selfish attitudes of drivers who wish to flout the parking restrictions that are currently in place to save themselves walking short distances or a few minutes continues. There is no excuse for parking on zig zag areas, in disabled bays or bus stops

Should the attitudes of these drivers continue then action will be taken against them. Please as a resident of Linlithgow if you do need to drive please do not be a selfish motorist, park legally and adhere to the parking restriction signs.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCOTLAND

This system allows users to receive alerts from Neighbourhood Watch and Police Scotland. Police Scotland can send an alert to all users who may be effected or who may have an interest in the crime. Scheme is used to alert the public about:

- > Crime Trends – recent crimes that have occurred in their area, housebreakings etc.
- > Missing Persons – Details of High Risk missing persons can be broadcast to specific areas.

Members of the public can register online. Register at <https://www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk> And follow the link to JOIN

101 101 is the new number to contact the police when it's less urgent than 999.

It's quicker to contact the police when you don't need an emergency response,

For example to:

- > speak to your local police officer
- > report a crime that's already happened
- > get crime prevention advice
- > make us aware of any policing issues in your area.



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 Hunter.

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



**LINLITHGOW
TOWN CENTRE BID**

SPRING LATE-NIGHT SHOPPING

Businesses of Linlithgow are welcoming back the lighter evenings (and sunshine, at the time of writing!) by keeping their doors open for a special Spring Late-Night Shopping event on Thursday 30th May!

The most successful such event in Linlithgow so far has been 2018's festive late-shopping evening: a collaboration between Linlithgow High Street Traders and Linlithgow Town Centre BID. BID staff were duly deployed to inspect mince pies and mulled wine at participating businesses, later reporting unprecedented levels of festive cheer and businesses glad to have taken part, keen to prepare for the next one!

The Spring late-shopping event promises to be bigger and better, with loads of businesses already signed up and many more to confirm. You can see the list of participating businesses on the Linlithgow High Street Traders Facebook page and if you'd like to join in the fun and keep your own business' doors open on the night, please contact Linlithgow High Street Traders through their Facebook page. The earlier you get in touch, the more promotional activity you will be included in!

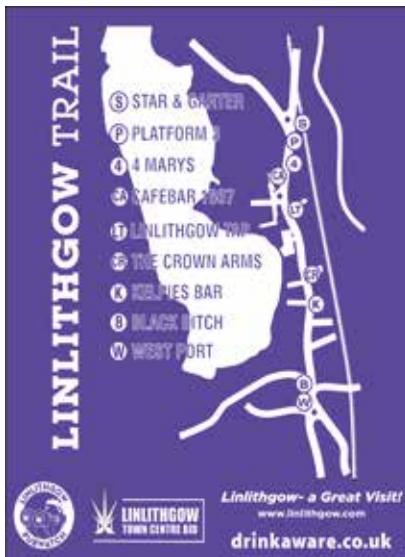


As if the huge selection, great atmosphere, special one-night discounts and freebies weren't enough, there are also two fantastic prizes to be won, just for coming down and shopping on the night! There's a hamper stuffed with the finest items from participating businesses, as well as £100 of Linlithgow Loyalty Lottery vouchers!



LINLITHGOW ALE TRAIL SUCCESS

The Linlithgow Ale Trail keeps going from strength to strength: the BID has supported it over the last few years, in recognition of its continued positive impact for Linlithgow's town centre, but organiser PubWatch now reports that the project is self-financing and more successful than ever!



GET A T-SHIRT FOR COMPLETING THE LINLITHGOW TRAIL. FOR TERMS AND CONDITIONS, SEE PARTICIPATING ESTABLISHMENTS FOR DETAILS.



To date, at least one pub has credited the Trail with single-handedly keeping the business afloat, and it's a great way for residents and visitors alike to explore the town. Visitors often complete the Trail over several return visits. To date, over 10,000 t-shirts have been given out to intrepid Trailblazers and demand keeps on growing!

Previous seasons' shirts (currently available in black or pink, and a variety of sizes) are available at the Town Centre Hub (28 The Vennel) in exchange for a £2 suggested donation to the Linlithgow Community Development Trust. Further details in the "Heritage Trails" section of mylinlithgow.com.

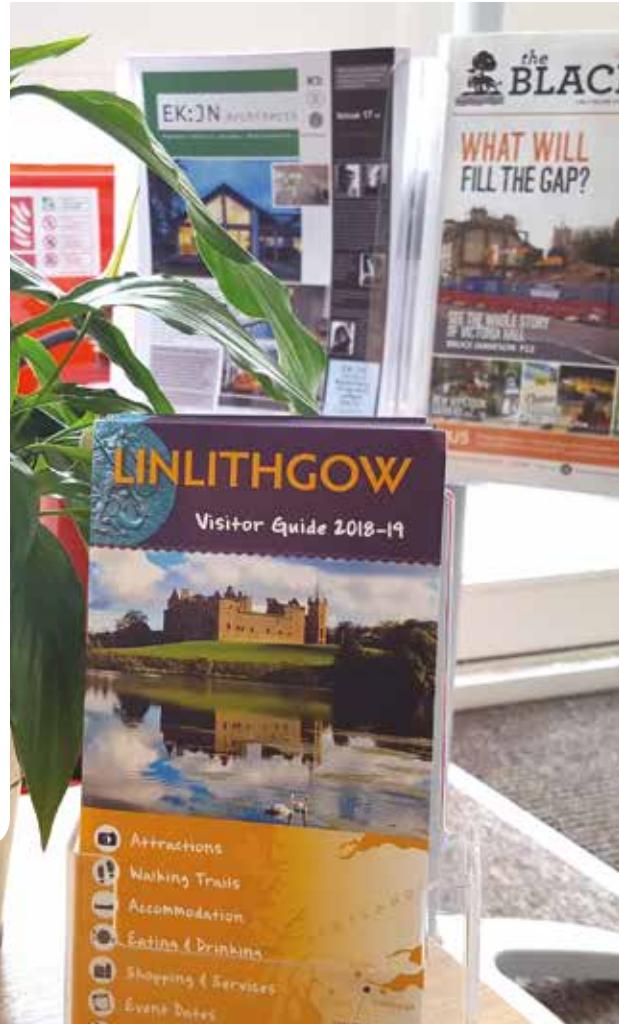


VISITOR INFORMATION

As spring springs, the Easter holidays bring coachloads of visitors keen to soak up the town's heritage and culture, while using our shops and services.

The recent partnership between Town Centre BID and Linlithgow Community Development Trust has led to an improved function of the Linlithgow Town Centre Hub as a visitor information centre. Now open from Monday to Friday every week, it has never been a more reliable means of uniting visitors with the pubs, cafés, restaurants, shop and attractions they've come to see!

The ever-popular visitor guides, which include a town centre map and lots of other useful information, have been praised time and again by tourists and weekenders navigating the town, and both BID and LCDT staff are always happy to check/print out public transport schedules to ensure the Linlithgow experience goes smoothly.



RELOCATION, RELOCATION, RELOCATION

The Linlithgow Museum will soon be opening its doors in the Linlithgow Partnership Centre in the County Buildings, moving on from its previous home at Annet House. Three new galleries and community space will be open in time for peak season 2019 and we look forward to reporting on that soon!

Linlithgow Pottery (formerly Creative Workshop) has moved from the Vennel to 226a High Street, next to Linlithgow Stoves & Gifts. Find Linlithgow Pottery on Facebook to enquire about classes!

Linlithgow Travel is now open at 3 The Vennel – the former TSB bank – and has spruced up the interior already! Grab a great deal for your summer holiday!

Purely Patchwork has moved to 43 High Street, next door to Taste Café Deli. All the quilting and patchwork supplies you'll ever need, and classes for all ability levels to get you started, or to reignite your passion for patchwork!





OUR SCOTTISH FRIENDS

For almost 50 years, West Lothian has enjoyed close twinning links with Germany, firstly with Kreis Arnsberg and later with the larger Hochsauerlandkreis. Linlithgow Reed Band has been a strong supporter of the twinning since 1981 and in this article, Detlev Becker from the Arnsberg district of Niedereimer pays his own tribute to the band.

As a fan of Scottish music with their pipes and drums I – as well as many others – was especially delighted that the Royal Burgh of Linlithgow Reed Band had promised to take part in the Schützenfest (markmen's festival) in our village of Niedereimer on Monday 11th July 2011.

I already knew the band from 1985 and 1989 when they had supported local bands on the Monday festivities of our Schützenfest. The exceptional sound of their music was a highlight of the parades and promenade concerts. However, when marching in the procession, you had to get used to the walking pace, because of their faster beats. The ascent to the village hall needed special effort, but you could get the impression that this was intentional and arranged beforehand among the

participating musicians, with the aim of reaching the bar as quickly as possible. I was particularly pleased, as my wife Simone and I had the honour to be the Festival King and Queen for 2011/12. At the end of the morning procession, the local newspaper wanted a photo of us with the Scottish visitors in their smart bright red uniforms. Conductor Lex McDowell and drummer, Murdoch Kennedy, were quickly pressed into service. Thanks to Murdoch's excellent German skills and Simone's good grasp of English, this worked out reasonably well. Quickly, we developed a friendship with the Scottish musicians and their family members who had accompanied them on the trip.

For the afternoon procession, we as King and Queen were collected from our home by local bands and Linlithgow Reed Band. The Scots made rousing music and were much admired. Unfortunately, in the early evening we had to say goodbye to the dear musicians.

However, we met them again shortly after at the German-Scottish event in the neighbouring village of Herdringen on the following Friday. The Musikverein Herdringen, German twinning partners of the Reed Band, had invited us to this event

which took place at their village hall. The two bands made music individually but also jointly. Enjoying the wonderful summer weather, a group from Niedereimer sat together listening to the great music. During the event we presented a small gift to the conductor Lex McDowell and the chairman **Jonathon Molloy**, a photo collage and a CD as a thank-you and a souvenir of our Schützenfest. Later **Brian McSherry** pulled some bottles of whisky for tasting out of his luggage. Every participant was very much into these high-proof spirits. In addition to this they offered self-made clootie dumplings, a special pastry from Scotland, which we were not familiar with, but everybody liked it very much. Simone asked for the recipe straightaway.



"The exceptional sound of their music was a highlight of the parades and promenade concerts."



After some hours in a convivial and happy round, we really had to say goodbye to the nice and new friends, which was very hard for us.

Luckily, we had exchanged email-addresses with band members to keep in touch. Email or Facebook messages went to and fro between Germany and Scotland and we stayed in lively contact throughout the year.

They also regularly sent us the latest editions of the Black Bitch Magazine. One of these issues contained a big report on the Reed Band's visit to Germany. The Niedereimer Schützenfest was particularly mentioned, along with some pictures.

Close email communication was on when Simone wanted to offer the delicious clootie dumplings at a special event for our retinue. This turned out to not be as easy for German standards. Not every baking ingredient, such as beef tallow, was easy

to get. In addition, the baking process itself was a challenge, too. Finally, she managed to get this stubborn pastry done and thus we surprised the invited guests with the clootie dumpling.

In August 2012 four Reed Band musicians, Edgar Liddle, Brian McSherry and Ian Stewart and Murdoch Kennedy kept their promise to take part in our centenary Schützenfest. The four headed all the way out with their instruments and original Scottish kilts to support our anniversary event and to celebrate it with us. Our Scottish friends handed over as gifts a bottle of Black Bitch whisky, a coat of arms and a Scottish flag to our committee. The four musicians also took part in the festive music and the parade on Saturday. During that weekend we celebrated the friendship between us and the four musicians long and intensively.

When Linlithgow Reed Band visited Hochsauerland again in 2016 to celebrate their 60th anniversary they, of course, took the opportunity to attend our Schützenfest. On Sunday 10th July, they framed the traditional morning concert in honour of the King and Queen. They also played in the big parade in the afternoon. After a breather, the Reed Band gave a special concert. The band played individually as well as together with the band from Langscheid. The Scottish band always manages to create an exceptional atmosphere and to give a real feeling for their way of living. Also during this Schützenfest, Simone and I could deepen our friendship with the Scottish visitors. In the evening we had to say goodbye again to our dear friends. However, we met them all again a few days later at another Twinning event in Herdringen.

Linlithgow Reed Band has visited our area six times since 1981. This was reason enough for Simone and me to assign two plot-sponsorships (660 and 661) of the Niedereimer Schützenhof (marksmen's court) to them and put their names on them. The sale of the plots was to contribute to the refurbishment of the festival place.

Linlithgow Reed Band visits always took place through the city partnership between West Lothian and the former district of Arnsberg which became part of the Hochsauerland later.

In the meantime, Simone has found a new recipe for the clootie dumpling, which is lower in calories and less time-consuming. So today she manages to make the pastries involving less time and effort. Anybody who has tasted the pastry is surprised by its peculiar taste.

Me and my family are enthusiastic about the great friendship with the Scottish musicians and their family members. This lived city partnership is a real benefit for all parties involved.

Detlev Becker



CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

from
12-18
MAY

Christian Aid Week "comes but once a year and when it comes it brings good cheer" to millions of poor people around the World - in 37 countries in fact and working in partnership with 456 local groups.

Christian Aid Week is a fund-raising effort and can take many forms depending on the volunteers in the different communities taking part. Some set up events like breakfasts or brunches offering "a taste" of the countries being helped, some devise town wide treasure hunts, others hold "declutter sales" or arrange sponsored challenges for the "fit folk" either in gyms or at bike track locations.

For years now Linlithgow has opted for a door-to-door collection, raising well over £12,000 in each of the last 30 years - a goodly contribution to Scotland's average annual total of £1.5 million and the UK's total of £8.5million. Over and above the £8.5m figure mentioned, the Government contracts Christian Aid to deliver poverty reduction services and receives funds for those purposes.

Poverty is largely man-made - the result of the unfair distribution of Creation's bounty, like when the natural resources are exploited by the powerful or where there is poor governance, which covers such matters as tax raising and how those taxes are spent for the benefit of

all, providing health services, education and the creation of jobs, as well as a system of law and order which ensures no discrimination on account of people's gender, class or creed.

Wars and violence are other causes of man-made poverty - vast sums of money being diverted to destruction of homes and livelihoods, condemning people to wretched refugee status.

Poverty is also caused by natural disasters - floods, droughts, earthquakes, hurricanes, again destroying homes and livelihoods, and often ending in epidemics and famine.

Christian Aid campaigns vigorously on Climate Change, and for the successful delivery of the globally-agreed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the end of the year 2030.

With regard to the SDGs all Countries have undertaken to report to the UN at intervals how their plans are progressing. The UK will be presenting its first report in July 2019. It is vital that it is a transparent and realistic report. The job of writing this report has fallen on the Department of International Development (DfID). This task will involve a lot of extra work for every Ministry, but particularly DfID. The UK, with all its experience around the Globe over many years, should take this opportunity to lead the way in achieving the goals on time and so reverse the decline in the UK's influence on the world stage that has been the result of the matter of Brexit. Christian Aid is asking its supporters to press the Government to produce a world class report. Contact your MP to call for this action. Contact him today.

Martin Day MP, 62 Hopetoun Street,
Bathgate, EH48 4PD Tel: 01506 654415,
Email martyn.day.mp@parliament.uk

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25 The High Street, Linlithgow EH49 7AB tel: 01506 840225 enquiries@lilypondcrafts.co.uk

Our door-to-door collectors number 65, and even with that number we do not cover every street.

We hope to recruit new collectors in 2019. Please volunteer - it is not a huge commitment - just a few hours in the week 12th - 18th May.

If you can help please telephone 842646 or email wandeross@hotmail.com



Christian Aid Week's Door-to-door collections provide a great opportunity to meet our "neighbours" and at the same time express our concern for the World and its People.

PLEASE HELP GARDENING TO BE GOOD FOR YOU!

As Spring has truly sprung it's time to get on with your summer garden displays either in pots or borders. The colours in your display can influence your mood almost without you realising it. So, hot, exciting colours can stimulate you which might be just what you need after a boring day at work, and cool, calming colours can help you unwind after a hectic time. Whatever the doctor ordered your garden can deliver!

We had a lovely break in the Cotswolds in early summer last year and this calm relaxed border at Broughton Castle with soft cream, pale yellow and pastel blue blooms with some lovely purple foliage created a very restful background on a lovely hot day. It's lovely to have pictures of pots and borders to remind us how to achieve the effects we loved last year.



Of course it would take a couple of years to achieve such a full border so perhaps we should turn to some more instant effects that we can achieve with seasonal bedding plants that will give us great restorative 'medicine' almost immediately. This trial bed of summer annual plants goes from the calm blue of salvias through the soft pinks and whites of diascias to the more exciting reds, yellows and oranges offered by marigolds, nasturtiums and dwarf dahlias.



You might have space to have an exciting patio and a calm patio. Perhaps these exciting pots of petunias and begonias could furnish a morning and lunchtime patio. The storks are supporting hanging baskets above the pots to give some extra dramatic height.

Come the late afternoon and evening you could move to a patio that catches the last of the evening sun and use calm colours in the pots around you? Here we have combined soft pink hydrangeas and soft blue catmint to give an instant dose of calmness. These plants might then be planted in a permanent border at the end of the summer to allow you to create some different 'medicine' for your soul next year.

**Dougal Philip and
Lesley Watson,**
New Hopetoun Gardens



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than just a
garden centre**

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**ARE YOU 35 THIS YEAR?
OR DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS?
35 IS THE 'GARDENER'S BIRTHDAY'**

Send us their name, date of birth and address and we will send them a £35 Voucher to spend here at New Hopetoun Gardens!

THE ARTS

"EVERY PICTURE TELLS A STORY"

The Line Gallery is hosting 'Passing Moments' an exhibition of photographs by Gordon McBrearty.



I'm excited to announce that I've been given permission to expand my Arts page to include something happening out with, but close to the town. I'll highlight an Arts event which I think perhaps shouldn't be missed, or one which I've been to and can recommend. I'd appreciate feedback on whether people think this is a good idea or whether you'd rather I stick purely to Linlithgow events.

So, my first "Arts Outing" section is at the end of the article – it will perhaps appeal more to the ladies, so apologies in advance if it makes you want to spend money on a new handbag! Otherwise I'd like to talk about the Art of Photography, one of my passions on a very, very amateur level. I can't explain why getting a good shot pleases me so much and why I can't imagine life without the ability to take a photo anytime anywhere. Maybe it's because we don't often take a photo of something we want to forget.

The Line Gallery

I'm pleased to see that The Line Gallery is hosting an exhibition of photographs by Gordon McBrearty, starting on April 27th and running till May 14th. Gordon worked for the Gazette and many of you will have seen his photos in the newspaper over many years. The exhibition is titled "Passing

Moments" and Gordon hopes his images might let you escape everything for just a passing moment. Take a minute or two to enjoy the pause button of life that a photograph gives – every picture tells a story.

Far From the Madding Crowd

Far From the Madding Crowd have Jess Kidd coming on Wednesday 8th May to talk about her latest book, Things in Jars, a brilliantly entertaining Victorian Detective novel. This is the third novel from the Costa-Award winning author and Jess has described her latest creation, Bridie Devine, as a Victorian Detective extraordinaire and her favourite character to date. Wednesday 8th May, 7pm, Linlithgow Canal Tea Rooms, Tickets £8.

Embroiderers' Guild

For the final two meetings of the 18/19 session of the local branch of the Embroiderers' Guild, the members are offering "dabble and do" mini workshops, as a sociable gathering. Come along as a visitor to these meetings in Linlithgow Academy library at 7pm on April 24th and May 29th and see how varied textile art can be – you might be surprised at what "embroiderers" get up to!

Red Door

The next Red Door event is on Friday 26th April – it's a mixture of spoken word, images and music inspired by the stories and letters of WW1 conscientious objectors – it promises to be a moving event. Tickets for Letters for Peace with Graeme Stephen are £12 from Far From the Madding Crowd.

Jazz de St James
Red Door Performance
Graeme Stephen
Letters for Peace
Award winning composer and guitarist Graeme Stephen performs his work with string trio, inspired by the stories and letters of WW1 conscientious objectors. Music, spoken word and image highlight their sacrifices and the public perception of war.
8pm Friday 12th April 2019
St James Church, 11a Johns Place, Leith
8pm Friday 26th April 2019
St Peter's Church, 153 High Street, Linlithgow
Tickets £15 (£10 for 16 and under) available from: jazzatstjames18@gmail.com 07849 509407 and 'Far From the Madding Crowd', 20 High Street, Linlithgow, tel 01506 845509

Linlithgow String Orchestra

Linlithgow String Orchestra have concerts in Linlithgow and Bo'ness in June – see the poster for details.

Torphichen Nights'

Torphichen Nights' new season starts on Sunday 28th April with Stories & Songs from White Rose. These local lads have entertained audiences in Scotland, Europe and the USA.

Linlithgow String Orchestra LSO 2019
SUMMER CONCERTS
Celebrating Film Music
... 'Out of Africa', 'Amadeus',
'Lord of the Rings', 'Harry Potter'.....
- LINLITHGOW BURGH HALLS
2ND JUNE 2.30PM
- CARRIDEN PARISH CHURCH
BO'NESS, 8TH JUNE 7.30PM
Conductor: Kate O'Hara
Tickets on the door:
£7/£6 concessions/
£1 Child (12yrs & under)
linlithgowstringorchestra@gmail.com

With a range of instruments (Mandolin, Eb Mandolin, Bouzouki, Guitar, 12 String Guitar, Octave Mandolin, Bodhran, Adapted Guitar, Whistles, Techno-Pipes, Harmonica and Accordion!!) at their disposal they leave audiences spellbound with

stories and songs reflecting the glory of Scotland.

On Sunday 26th May "The Quiggs" who are a Scottish/Danish folk duo consisting of the married couple Stephen and Pernille Quigg entertain. Book online at www.torphichensummernights.org.uk.

Please do keep in touch so that I know what's going on - patswan@virginmedia.com. I hope you have time to experience some ART this month.



Pat Swan

patswan@virginmedia.com.



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"photography is a love affair with life"

ART OUTINGS ORLA KIELY:

A LIFE IN PATTERN IS ON AT THE DOVECOT STUDIOS IN EDINBURGH UNTIL 29TH JUNE.

It explores the power of decoration and its ability to transform the way we feel. Inspired by the upbeat exuberance of the 60s and 70s her designs are known for eye catching colour and rhythmic repeats. Her plant-based patterns pack a powerful graphic punch, and many people will recognise her designs from their Tesco jute bags which she has designed for several years. You may own a handbag, a dress, a lampshade or kitchen equipment designed by Orla.

Tickets cost £9 and guided tours run on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1pm. If you've never been to the Dovecot it's worth seeing itself. Oh, and there's a nice cafe.

BOOK REVIEW **THE DIARY OF A BOOKSELLER** SHAUN BYTHELL

According to the blurb on the back of the book, Shaun Bythell is a "bookshop owner, bibliophile and misanthrope extraordinaire", all of which ring true after reading this candid (and very often laugh-out-loud funny) diary.

Shaun has written his diary to capture a year in his life working as a bookshop owner, buying and selling second-hand books in Wigtown; the Book Town of Scotland. His writing offers a unique insight into the quirky world of the bookseller and - for anyone who may have harboured a secret, romantic notion of working in a bookshop - quickly encapsulates the trials and tribulations which appear to come with the job.

Working with the public has given Shaun much of his material for the book and it is his wit, wry humour and general outlook on life which makes this book so difficult to

put down. I have many favourite passages from this book but a few of my favourites have to be:

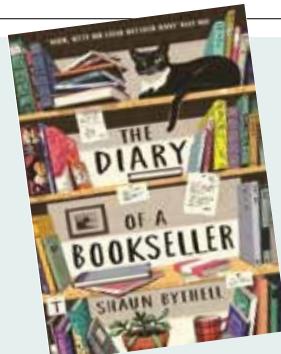
"At 10.15am a woman walked in and roared, "I am in my element! Books!", then continued to shout questions at me for an hour... Predictably, she didn't buy anything."

"At 2pm a customer walked in and demanded a copy of Barnard's The Whisky Distilleries of the United Kingdom... I told the customer we had five copies, upon hearing which he turned on his heel, said 'Hmph' and left."

"A whistling customer with a ponytail and, what I can only assume was a hat he'd borrowed from a clown, bought a copy of Paulo Coelho's The Alchemist, I suspect deliberately to undermine my faith in humanity and dampen my spirits further."

Shaun mixes the mundane, ordinary events with the extraordinary so, as we read, we gain as much knowledge about the dreary humdrum world of online orders and misplaced books as we do about living life in Wigtown. He gives a smattering of factual information behind some of the obscure titles that cross his path and we get an insight into his own varied reading habits. Shaun also gives unfailingly (and oft unflatteringly) honest descriptions of his employees, customers and friends, of which they are presumably already aware!

The Bookshop itself sounds a fascinating and wonderful place, crammed full of books piled on crooked shelves and all sorts of 'nooks and crannies' for book-lovers to explore and while away the hours. I enjoyed reading the behind-the-scenes information regarding the organisation and fundraising of the various festivals held in the town throughout the year, including the most famous Wigtown Book Festival.



This book was warm, witty and highly entertaining to read. Underneath his acerbic humour, Shaun Bythell comes across as a community-spirited, kind-hearted observer of people who, despite his grumbles, loves his life as Scotland's second largest, second-hand bookshop owner.

Lisa Nettleton

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



FINANCIAL ADVICE – WHAT'S THE COST?

Susan Ralston, Virtue Money



Virtue Money

There will be times in your life when you need to think about different financial products to suit different financial situations.

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The first consultation is free of charge and you are under no obligation to use us if you don't feel like we're a good match. It is always a good idea to come to the meeting with a summary of your financial situation,



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things like any savings or debts you have, details of existing plans and pensions, a rough idea of your income and expenditure and what your future plans look like.

Having a list of questions that you might have about your finances is also a fantastic idea, remember "there are no silly questions".

If you would like to proceed down the advice route after the initial consultation, then there a number of ways the fee will be worked out depending on your situation –

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- >> **Fixed Fee per service** – if you prefer to deal with us on a transactional rather than an ongoing basis then this might be the option for you.
- >> **Hourly Rate** – Depending on the

situation this option might be a more favourable one for you where instead of taking a percentage we would look at the cost of the advice on an hourly rate basis.

Please bear in mind that we will also discuss the matter of the cost with you and you will never be hit with an unexplained bill for our services.

I suppose the question that you now need to ask yourself is "[Can I afford not to have advice?](#)" If the answer is no then please do not hesitate to contact me and I can arrange a suitably convenient time for your initial free consultation with one of our Financial Advisers.



**FREE
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If you would like to make an appointment to speak to one of our advisers, please contact me, Susan Ralston, directly on 0345 034 3424 or email me at susan@virtuemoney.com

The first consultation is completely free of charge and no obligation.

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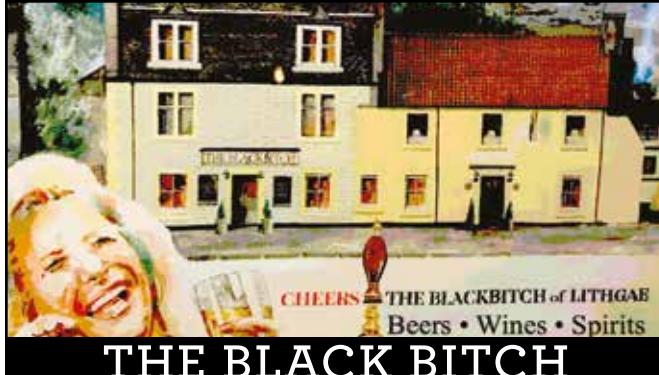
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Th' Auld Hole i' th Wa' in 1958 with Provost Jack Thomas Fencing the Court on Marches Day.

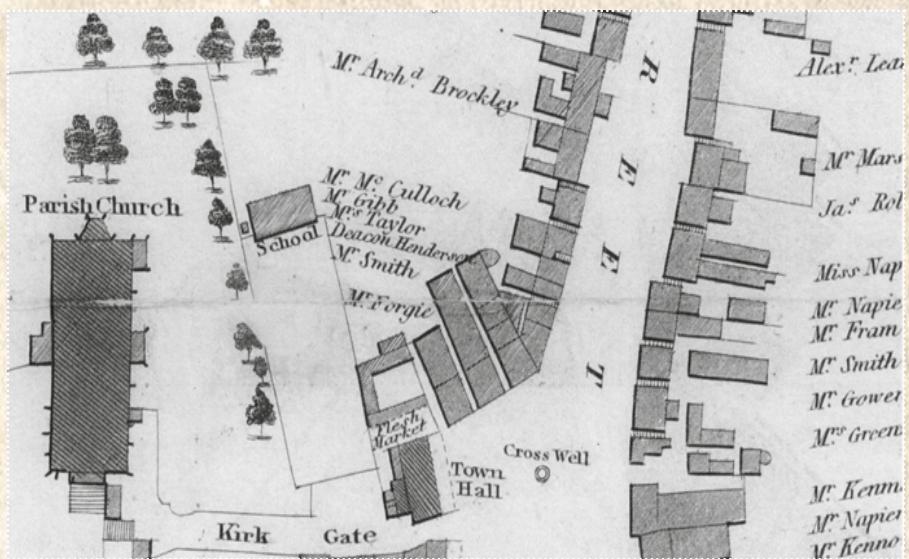
**"O, a canty bit hoose is
the Hole-i'-the-Wa';
When our gabs are let loose
at the Hole-i'-the-Wa!"**

R. Quinn, Dumfries poet. 1910

Don't you just hate it when a well-loved pub, a local landmark, changes its name? Linlithgow has had its fair share of such happenings - with the alteration of hostelry names as "The Red Lion", "The Footballer and Cricketers" and "Th' Auld Hole i' Th' Wa". Historians particularly dislike such name changes as often historical documents contain reference to these places - buildings which have borne the same name for generations.

There are several establishments called "The Hole I' the Wa'" across Scotland - in places such as Edinburgh, Dumfries, Greenock and Musselburgh. The name probably began as a reference to a simple way of dispensing drinks - literally they would be passed outside to a waiting carter through an aperture cut into the side of the hostelry. Later, the name was given to any small, modest establishment.

Linlithgow's pub of the name dates back to the days of Robert McGregor, the first recorded Innkeeper, in 1878. He purchased the tenement from local merchant David Henderson whose father (John) had been Deacon of the Linlithgow Coopers. The fact that the Hendersons were also wine and ale merchants probably saw their property being used for the dispensing of alcohol - maybe through a hatch in the side of the building. That may be the origin of the sign, hung outside the pub, declaring that the pub was established in 1823.



Wood's 1820 map showing Henderson ownership of the building.

Earlier owners of a building on the site included John Easton, Flesher, James Easton, writer (lawyer), Burgh Treasurer George Bell (son of Provost George Bell, 1645-48) Patrick Gibson, shoemaker, and William Touris who married Margaret, daughter of James Hamilton of Kingscavil in 1590.

Before that, the property on the site was known as one of the Priory Tenements - liable to pay an annual feu duty of 3d Scots to the Priory of St Andrews. The owners of the building were also liable to pay towards the upkeep of the Altar of Corpus Christi in St Michael's Church and towards the payment to the Chaplain of the Chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary which was situated where Tesco's now stands, in an area called the Middle Raw.

Following on from the first known publican, came others. David Barclay took over in 1898 and advertised in the Marches magazines:

Next came George Stewart in 1905 and then Alexander Downie in 1911. Below is his advert:

A POPULAR RESORT.
THE AULD HOLE-I-THE-WA'
Alexander Downie, - Proprietor.

ALL THE LEADING BLENDS OF WHISKY KEPT IN STOCK.
BEER ON DRAUGHT AND IN BOTTLE IN PRIME CONDITION.



In 1950, the Alloa brewing firm of George Younger and Sons took possession of the building and they employed managers such as C. W. Leith and T. Young. In the 1952 Marches Magazine, new lessee Iain Mackay, of the West Port Hotel, boasted that the pub had been "completely redecorated and modernised."

Popular Resort at the Marches.
"The Auld Hole-i'-the-Wa'."
(Near the Cross.)
DAVID BARCLAY, - Proprietor.
FINE OLD SCOTCH WHISKIES.
BEER on Draught and in Bottle in prime condition.
WINES AND AERATED WATERS.

It remained in Downie hands for many years - at least until 1939 when the publican is listed as James Proudfoot. The Marches Magazine of that year calls the pub "Th' Auld-Hole-I'-the-Wa'."

The pub was popular - although it had to compete with many others such as "The Cunzie Neuk", "The Masonic Arms", "The Windsor Buffet", "The Cricketers Arms" and "St Michael's Hotel". Iain Mackay eventually bought the premises

in 1959 but just two years later sold it to James Clark - an Airdrie man who had just moved to the town. Jim went on to become a Town and later District Councillor - and is now commemorated in the street name "Clark Avenue".

In 1978, he sold it on to the Polmont-based dairy firm of Brown Ferguson and Tam Gilmour became the licensee. There is a lovely story told concerning the severe snowstorm in January 1978. Local milk supplies could not get through but Brown Ferguson managed to get a delivery to "Th' Auld Hole I' the Wa". Word went out on Radio Scotland that milk was available in the hostelry and two well-kent Linlithgow gentlemen volunteered to brave the snows and fetch supplies. On being warmly welcomed in the pub, their minds strayed from pints of milk to other liquid refreshments and they eventually arrived home some hours later, to their less-than-pleased other halves, carefully clutching their dairy provisions.

The building eventually came into the possession of Belhaven Breweries, under the umbrella company of Greene King, and then Hilditch Inns Ltd. And now, of course, it is no longer "The Auld Hole In The Wall" (as it was latterly designated). Since March 2017 it has been called "1807" - named after the year in which Robert Gray carved the Cross Well. Whatever the reason for the change of name, another small part of Linlithgow's local heritage has been lost.



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LINLITHGOW ACADEMY ECO-SCHOOL



LINLITHGOW ACADEMY KIDS CLEAN UP AND DOMINO'S REWARDS

On March 22nd a group of Linlithgow Academy pupils took responsibility for a litter pick along The Lie - a well-used path running between Mains Road and Falkirk Road just east of the Rugby Club. Over 20 bags were filled and the pupils then treated to tasty pizzas at Domino's. Thanks to West Lothian Council for removal of the bags and to Domino's for its sponsorship.

There was creative use of extra long litter picks borrowed from Transition Linlithgow: just the job for reaching through wire fencing! The Academy's Eco Committee and volunteers from Burgh Beautiful shared in the responsibility for the event. The pupils enjoyed the task, walkers there will see a tremendous difference. Please may it remains as litter free and the bin be used!

Contributed by members
of the Eco Group

GO TO THE RACES WITH THE LINLITHGOW PLAYERS

This year's **Linlithgow Players' Spring Production** is about four ordinary women whose lives are transformed in the space of an extraordinary day at the races.

Ladies' Day, by Amanda Whittington, is set in York, 2005 when, due to a multi-million pound refit at Ascot, the race event of the year, Royal Ascot, moved to York's racecourse.

Four workmates, whose daily grind is packing fish at a Hull factory, impulsively decide to celebrate Pearl's semi-retirement by heading off to Royal Ascot at York. How they get in and the people they meet during this life changing adventure is the theme of this exuberant comedy.

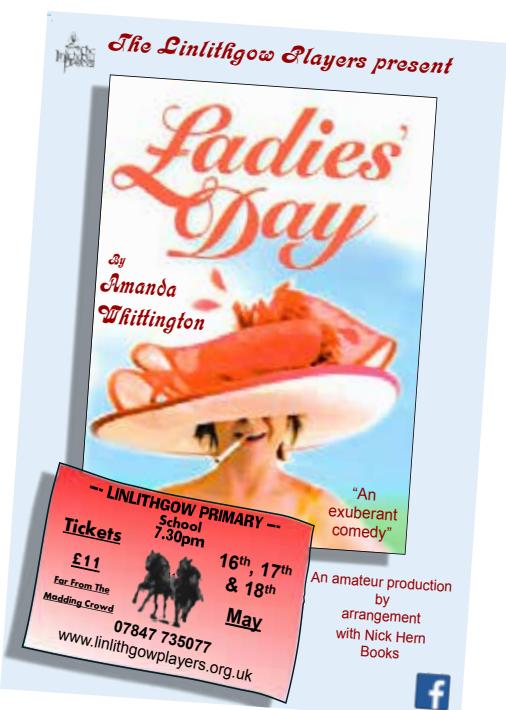
Ladies' Day is one of the most popular plays offered by Nick Hern Books. This comes as no surprise because, as Amanda Whittington herself says, in an interview recorded for a production of the play. "I think what audiences will

enjoy is the fact it's about ordinary life and I mean that in the best sense of the word. It's about a gang of workmates and their friendships and bigger things than the races. It is funny and poignant and the characters are very familiar."

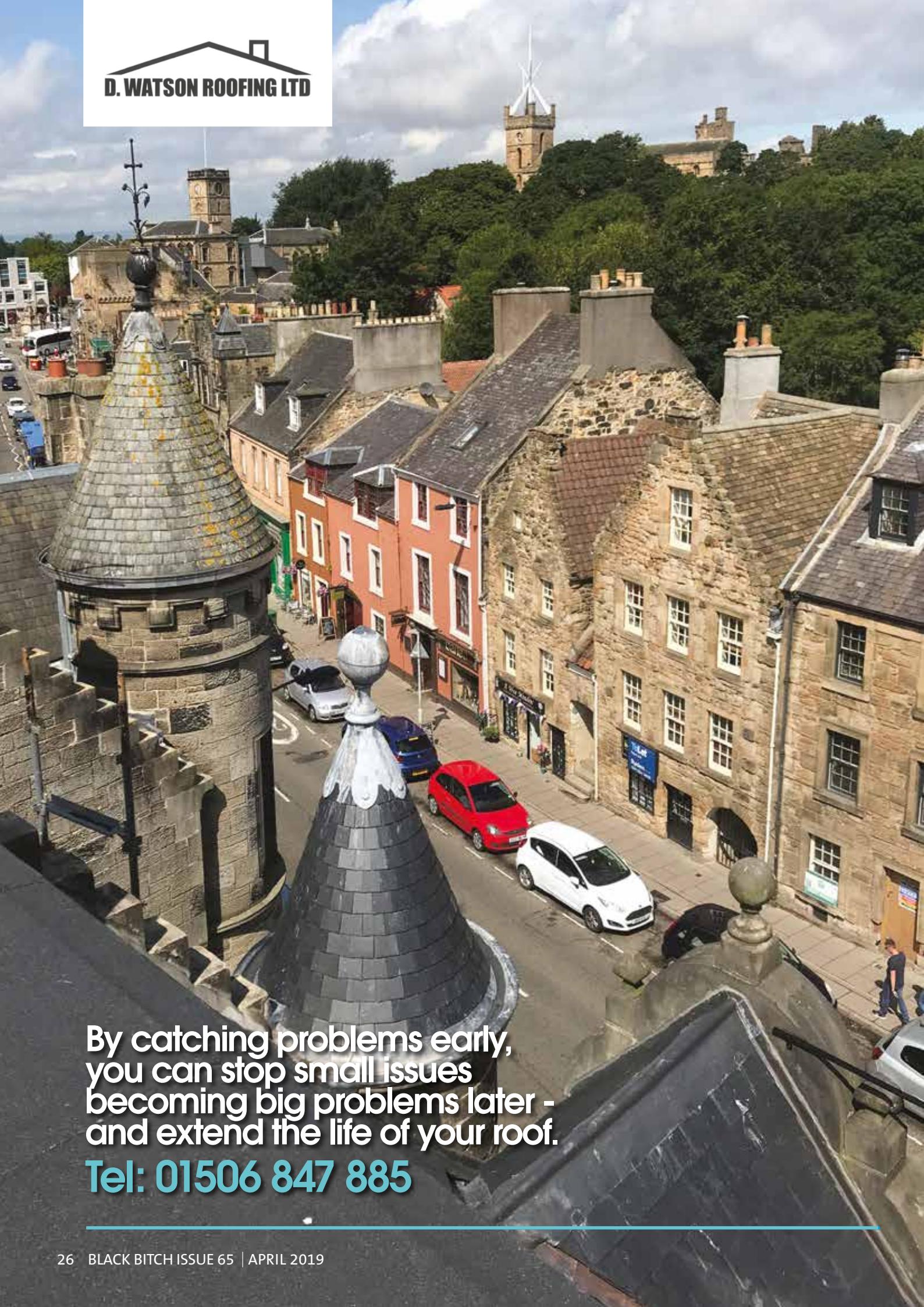
Amanda Whittington has written over 30 plays for theatre and radio. Her radio series D for Dexter is award winning, and she is a regular writer of The Archers for Radio 4.

This play follows the Linlithgow Players' successful and well received production of the beautiful and demanding Cinderella: A Fairytale at the Burgh Halls in January. In Ladies' Day the Players have accepted the challenging casting suggestion offered by the author and only one actor will play the six distinctive male characters, helping the audience to appreciate the women's stories and personalities.

Ladies Day will be at Linlithgow Primary School on 16th, 17th and 18th May. Tickets, £11, are available from Far From the Madding Crowd and www.linlithgowplayers.org.uk with group reservations via 07847 735077.



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GIVING YOUR ROOF A SPRING HEALTH CHECK

In Linlithgow, spring has sprung and we're at the end of what has been a fairly mild and not particularly stormy winter. Yet even so, some of us may have noticed tell-tale signs that our roofs are not in as good a state of repair as we would like.

Your roof acts like a big umbrella for your home. It's there to keep your house dry and is the first line of defence against the unpredictable Scottish weather. Looking after it properly is essential. But how many of us take the time to get it checked regularly? The end of winter is the perfect time to get your roof inspected to make sure it's in a good state of repair.

Spotting problems early

The problem is that many of us can't get up on our roofs to check them for ourselves. Often, the first sign that anything is wrong is the appearance of damp on the walls or ceiling inside the home. However, most of the time issues can be spotted before they reach this stage. So, how can you check if there is a potential problem with your roof? Here are a few simple steps that you can take:

- » *Get up into the loft and look for any water, damp patches or signs of mould particularly in areas around a chimney and vents*
- » *Look for failing mortar at ridges and verges*
- » *Check the exterior walls of your home for signs of damp*
- » *Check your roof for missing or loose tiles*
- » *Get your gutters cleaned at least once a year to stop blockages and spot any leaks*

Depending upon the type of building you live in, these are all things that you can usually do yourself. However, it's good practice to get your roof checked by a professional firm once a year as well. This way, any issues can be spotted early and dealt with before they become a major problem. Many homeowners worry that issues with a roof will take a lot of work to repair and cost a lot of money. This is often not the case. By catching problems



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early, you can stop small issues becoming big problems later - and extend the life of your roof.

Avoiding rogue traders

Choosing a roofing firm can be daunting. There are so many to choose from and the work they do is often hard to see. While most roofing firms are reputable, you do need to take precautions when choosing who to use. In Linlithgow, most of us have notices on our front doors to stop doorstep callers. This is a great way to stop rogue tradesmen and very important when considering repairs to your roof.

At D Watson Roofing, you can take comfort from the fact that we've been in business for over thirty years, with an experienced team of ten and premises here in Linlithgow. We're members of the National Federation of Roofing Contractors and West Lothian Trusted Trader Scheme to give customers extra peace of mind. We specialise in all forms of domestic roofing from minor repairs to

full roof replacement as well as working with major organisations such as Historic Scotland and Scotmid. This means we have the skills and experience to repair or replace any roof.

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When David (editor of the Black Bitch magazine) first emailed to ask if I would be interested in trying out Transition Linlithgow's new electric bikes for a week, little did he know that he was putting his question to Linlithgow's most reluctant cyclist. However never one to shy away from new ventures and after only a moment or two of hesitation I clicked send on a tactfully worded reply to say that I would be up for the challenge to take an electric bike for a spin.

Transition Linlithgow is part of an international movement of community-led initiatives exploring the benefits of sustainable living. Their website (www.transitionlinlithgow.org.uk) offers information on the diverse range of projects currently in operation for our town.

The Electric Bike Hire Scheme is available for the people of Linlithgow and offers locals an opportunity to experience all the joy of cycling with very little of the effort required to power those pedals. Transition Linlithgow currently has three adult bikes to hire, at competitive rates, for either a half-day or full day hire; or a whole weekend for the more enthusiastic rider.

Each electric bike comes fully charged and can be equipped with either panniers or baskets containing a helmet, lights, lock and high visibility jacket. A nice touch from the kind people at Transition Linlithgow is a set of very clear instructions on how to operate the bike (including charging and locking) and transport routes guide of Linlithgow, allowing for careful planning of your pedal-bound adventures!

So, before long I found myself in touch with **Wendy, Transition Linlithgow's Transport Officer**, and soon we were arranging the day and time for me to collect my bicycle for the week. By this time I had also managed to raise an interest in electric bikes with my husband Will who, by complete contrast, is an avid cyclist and actually goes cycling for fun.... unimaginable to me! Together we popped along to the Transition Linlithgow offices one evening after work. They are situated in Braehead Industrial Estate and are very easy to access. We found it was lovely to meet Wendy in person and instantly I found myself getting caught up in her friendly enthusiasm. Being such a biking novice, I was grateful for her patience in explaining how to operate the controls and mechanics of the bike. She took time to answer all of my questions. After a quick trial run around the car park she waved Will and I off into the evening, leaving me desperately hoping I wouldn't forget any of her instructions and handy tips.

In my mind, I was setting myself up for a week of pain, endurance and aching muscles. How wrong could one person be? Truthfully, it did take me an embarrassingly long time to lock up the electric bike on my first attempt but, after a wee bit of consultation with the instruction sheet, I was eventually victorious and immediately rewarded myself with a well-deserved cup of tea.

Over the course of the week I found myself



Lisa enjoying a cycle ride around the Linlithgow countryside.



Wendy,
Transition Linlithgow
Transport Officer.



The Shore, Leith.

getting more and more adventurous with my use of the electric bike. To start with my horizons were limited and my aspirations were low. One sunny Saturday I spotted a biking opportunity when I realised I had a few errands to collect along Linlithgow Main Street. On an ordinary push bike this would have been a momentous challenge to me. It would certainly not have been my idea and would have taken quite a lot of time out of my afternoon. On an electric bike however...well let's just say I experienced all of the pleasure without any of the pain in a fraction of the time. Rather than being hunched double over the handlebars focused only on my front tyre wobbling on the road in front of me, I was able to sit straight in the saddle, taking in all of the scenery around me as I flew effortlessly past. I found I was not quite so worried about cars getting impatient behind me at my snail-like pace and then getting close as they spotted an opportunity for overtaking (my usual experiences on a regular bike). Instead I felt like I was keeping pace with the flow of traffic - moving with it rather than creating an obstruction.

Once I had figured out the best way to use the gears and the power controls together for optimum speed and momentum it was wonderful. There was no holding me back - my vision for electric cycling got very ambitious very quickly much to the surprise of Will. I even ventured into Edinburgh on the bike on a commute using the train then managed a cycle down to the shore at Leith

and back; all in the same morning and all without feeling utterly spent and like I had completed a feat of great endurance.

From Will's point of view, the electric bike was fun but as he already enjoys cycling (road, mountain, endurance) he didn't get the same level of enjoyment. He missed the feeling of exhilaration and release of endorphins that comes with pushing his muscles to the limit; for me that was all of the appeal! However he realises that the main purpose of an electric bike is not to replace 'real' cycling. Instead, it is to provide an alternative, healthy, environmentally friendly mode of transport to as many people as possible, irrespective of age, mobility or health.

So, whether you are a serious cycling enthusiast looking to try an electric bike before committing to the cost of owning one or you are just looking for a pain-free way to enjoy cycling around Linlithgow and the surrounding areas, we both recommend that you pop in to see the friendly folk at Transition Linlithgow's offices. Get in touch with Transport Officer Wendy first (tel: 01506 844182 / contact@transitionlinlithgow.org.uk) to ensure the bikes are available for hire and avoid disappointment.

With the advent of the better weather coming soon (I am ever hopeful!) and holiday times approaching for many, why not give one of Transition Linlithgow's electric bikes a try? They are a great way to get motivated, get outdoors, get moving and - most importantly - to feel fantastic!

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NEW LINLITHGOW MUSEUM OPENS



The new Linlithgow Museum opens to the public on 19th April, in a new location, and with new galleries and new exhibits for everyone to enjoy.

"We have so much more space now," says Sheila Menzies, Secretary of Linlithgow Heritage Trust, the charity behind the new museum. *"It means we can put more of our collection on display and we can explain the history of Linlithgow in a different way."*

Additional space was just one of the reasons behind the museum's move from Annet House on Linlithgow High Street to its new location on the first floor of Linlithgow's Partnership Centre.

"Not only is the museum now fully accessible, but it is perfectly positioned at the Cross, close to the Palace, St Michael's Church and the Burgh Halls," explains Sheila. *"It is much more convenient for tourists and locals alike."*

The new museum takes the form of three large galleries, which explore the

history of Linlithgow, trades within the town and 'Life by the Loch' – an historical look at life in Linlithgow. Old favourites, such as the Newlands plough and the statue of Mary Queen of Scots, will be on display, as well as many objects that have never previously been shown. New interactive features are also available, including listening posts with clips from participants in the museum's recent oral history project.

"The aim is for the town to view the museum as their museum," says Sheila. *"We not only want it to be a visitor attraction but for it to become part of the community, so that people both enjoy the galleries and participate in the events that will be held in the community space."*

Community is the watchword of the new museum, which has set aside an additional room for community displays and activities. Reminiscence and handling box sessions are already planned, and the first display in the community cases is already in place. Co-curated with pupils from Bridgend Primary School, the display shows what life was like for the

children's grandparents.

Pupils from St Joseph's and Low Port Primary Schools have also been involved. They have created an animation of the history of Linlithgow that will be on display at the museum too.

According to **Stuart Kennedy**, Community Coordinator for the Trust, other events are in the pipeline. On **Wednesday 1st and Thursday 9th May**, pupils from Linlithgow Primary and Linlithgow Bridge Primary will perform a play they have written themselves, under the guidance of local drama group Firefly. On **Thursday 2nd May** children from Low Port, Linlithgow and Springfield Primaries will perform a selection of songs they have also written themselves, with the help of singer-songwriter Caro Bridges.

"Events like these help to bring the community together, but volunteering can do that too," says Stuart. *"We have had amazing support already, with volunteers helping to document the collection, develop our reminiscence programme and acting as welcome hosts in the galleries of the museum. We are always looking for help, though, so get in touch if you would like to get involved. There are lots of things to do!"*

Volunteers aside, the development of the new museum would not have been possible without funding and support from a number of organisations, including **National Lottery Heritage Fund**, **LEADER**, **West Lothian Council** and **Museums Galleries Scotland**.

"On behalf of Linlithgow Heritage Trust," says Sheila, *"I would like to say a massive thank you to everyone for their support. Every single contribution - of money, time, advice or practical help - has been vital. We look forward to welcoming you all to the new museum and we hope that you enjoy it!"*

The Linlithgow Museum opens to the public on 19th April 2019. Opening hours are from 10am to 4pm on Monday, Wednesday – Saturday, and from 1pm to 4pm on Sunday.

Entry is free but donations are very welcome.

Sheila Menzies

MOONDANCE IS BACK!

It's back! After the phenomenal success of Linlithgow's first ever Moondance last year, the Moondance Committee are excited to announce that the event will return to the Marches Marquee at the rugby club on Saturday 15th June.

After last year's sell-out ladies night, the committee are hoping to repeat the event's success. Only this time they are aiming to smash last year's total and raise even more money for the Breast Unit in Oncology at St. John's Hospital and Breast Cancer Now. Last year's massive total of £7,937 exceeded all expectations. This year they are going all out to beat that and are hoping that the ladies of Linlithgow, their friends, family and the surrounding areas, will help make that happen.

To add to the excitement, after **Kerry & the Malting Boys** huge success at last year's Moondance, (topped with the recent announcement that they will be playing at Linlithgow's 2019 Party at the Palace), the Moondance team have been lucky enough to secure the in demand band to play again at this year's Moondance event. Kerry, the band's lead singer said, "**we are absolutely buzzing to be asked back to support such a worthy cause and can't wait to see as much fun and laughter as last year on the dance floor.**"

Angela Moran, the Committee Chair, has been the driving force behind both events. Her motivation for the Linlithgow Moondance comes from her own experience with breast cancer, both as a survivor and latterly as a volunteer within the Breast Unit in Oncology at St. John's Hospital. Angela said, "**We are delighted to be holding this event for a second year. The success of last year's event and the money raised for our charities was beyond what we had imagined. To be able to do this again is fantastic.**"

Angela was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2006 and has now been clear for 12 1/2 years. During her illness she experienced the support, care and expertise of St. John's Breast Unit first hand. One of the reasons that this department is so close to Angela's heart is that it played a vital role in supporting her from diagnosis right through her treatment. Angela has since been volunteering in the Breast Unit for the past 10 years and once a fortnight she meets and greets patients; chats to them and their families; talks about her own treatment and experience; and provides the reassurance and comfort that patients diagnosed with breast cancer need.

Half the money raised from the Moondance on 15th June will go towards the Breast Unit within St. John's Oncology department. The Complementary Therapies service within this unit provides much needed support to patients during and after treatment, assisting patient recovery, and helping those ladies to feel good about themselves whilst undergoing a difficult and challenging time of their lives. This service is self-funded and not supported by the NHS so the money raised will allow this to continue. The other half of the money raised will be donated to the recently merged Breast Cancer Now and Breast Cancer Care - these charities merged on 1st April to create one comprehensive charity for everyone affected by breast cancer. Together they'll have the ability to carry out even more world-class research, provide even more life-changing support and campaign even more effectively for better services and care. As one, they'll make greater progress in more effective ways and provide coverage right through from ground breaking research to care and support for those affected.

Angela's Moondance team consists of local ladies: **Amanda Bannister, Kirstin Crombie, Christine Evans, Helen Hassall, Bridget McGee, and Susan Weyzig**. They have been busy planning this year's Moondance since the success of last. With two such deserving charities and so many people asking if there would be a second Moondance, the team are excited to be doing this all over again!

The success of last year's event has already ensured a stream of ticket sales since the beginning of the year and the event is again expected to sell out. Tickets are £15 and include a glass of fizz on arrival. Ten or more tickets secures a reserved table. From 7.30pm to midnight there'll be music, dancing, a bar, and a raffle with some amazing prizes that have been kindly donated by companies both local and further afield for which the team are extremely grateful. For those feeling peckish later in the evening, a snack will be available to purchase on the night courtesy of Linlithgow's Zio G's. This is not a night to be missed - ask anyone who was there last year!

Sat
15
JUNE

Kerry & the Malting Boys



The Linlithgow Moondance Team would like to say a huge thank you in advance for the help of the Linlithgow Round Table, both for setting up and their help on the night. Thank you also to all our advertisers, particularly to Jill McNair at The Arrow, and also to our ticket outlets - Beautique Beauty Salon, Walkers Carpets and Kerry & the Malting Boys. Tickets are available from any of these outlets or by messaging the Facebook page.

If you haven't already, make sure you've got your ticket, and 'like' the Linlithgow Moondance Facebook page @linlithgowmoondance or scan the QR code at the bottom of the page to keep up with the latest Moondance news. The ladies are looking forward to another fantastic night and raising lots of money!

Christine Evans



Information on movement in house prices is readily available, but less so on rental values, and we thought it might be interesting to compare them.

In the 11 years from 2008 to 2018 the mean average property price in Scotland, as a whole, has risen by 15.6%, compared to West Lothian where it has risen by 20%.

At the same time the mean average rental value in Scotland, as a whole, rose by 19.5%, in West Lothian the increase was 20.5%.

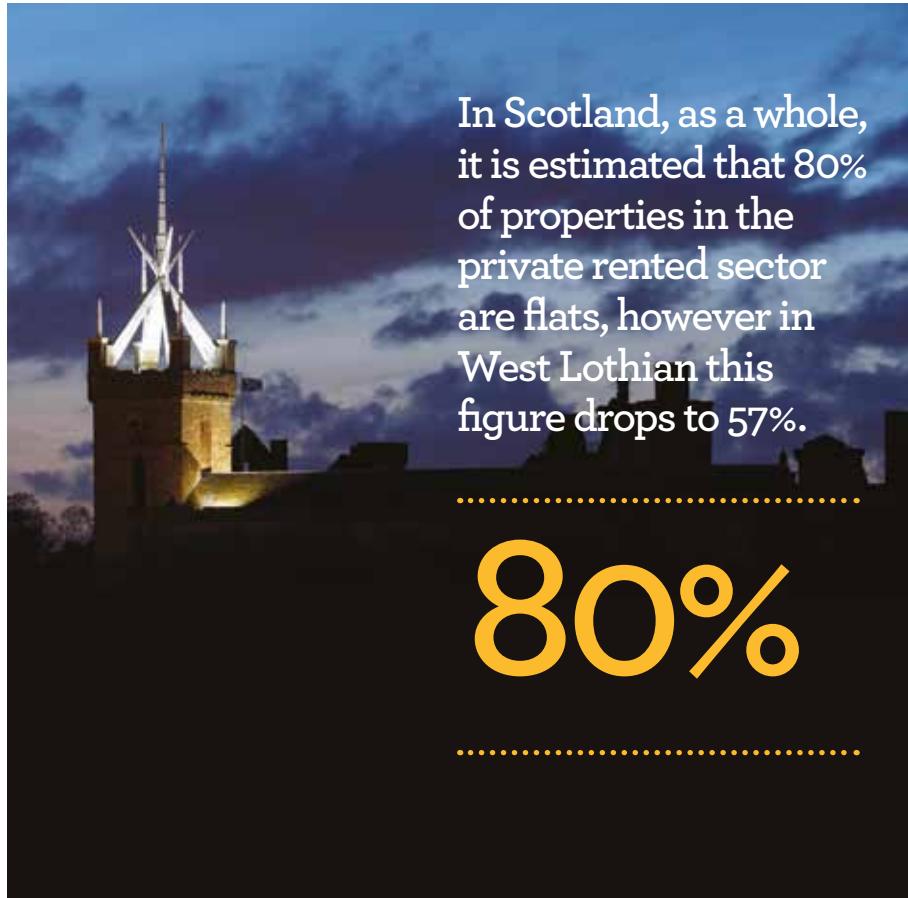
Data indicates that across the central belt the property type demonstrating the strongest growth in rental values is larger 3 and 4 bed properties, and it is estimated there are approximately 90,000 families living in the private rented sector, some 25% of all PRT households.

In Scotland, as a whole, it is estimated that 80% of properties in the private rented sector are Flats, however in West Lothian this figure drops to 57%.

Our long term view

Our longer term view is that demand for good quality properties in the private rented sector will continue to remain strong.

On the supply side we see Landlords exiting the sector either because they never really intended to become Landlords but needed to move in the immediate aftermath of the financial crisis, when selling did not make sense, but now the value of their property has recovered sufficiently, or they



In Scotland, as a whole, it is estimated that 80% of properties in the private rented sector are flats, however in West Lothian this figure drops to 57%.

80%

are Landlords where financial planning for their retirement means they have decided to liquidate their portfolio.

However, the portfolio of properties we manage for Landlords in the local area continues to grow and we are seeing new Landlords entering the rental market as fairly recent changes to pension laws allow over 55's to access their pension pot, and property remains a good long term investment proposition.

As ever, the keys to a good experience as a Landlord are, do your homework on property types, tenant demand, purchase prices etc., and buy good quality properties with a good spec and modern décor that tenants really want. As a potential Landlord ask yourself the question "would I like to live here?", if the answer is no, then why would you think it would be easy to attract the sort of tenant you would want to see living in your property. Finally, careful vetting of tenant prospects, just because they passed a credit check it does not necessarily mean they will make good tenants.

Confidence in the Scottish private rented sector can be seen in a relatively new market sector, "Build To Rent". It is now estimated that there are well advanced plans for the building of approximately 6,000 properties across Scotland for the private rented sector, funded by private investors, investment funds and developers.

** The above figures are based on all rental properties advertised on the rental portal Citylets, and don't necessarily represent the total rental market, but we believe it does provide a fairly accurate assessment.*

Paul Rolfe

PETS' CORNER

Stuart from the Westport Veterinary Clinic tells us about some of his regular customers. This month's pet of the month is Jack the 10 year old Collie Cross!

His family describe him as cute, fluffy but a chancer who likes to pretend he hasn't been fed when he has! Jack keeps them all laughing with his cute facial expressions and when he rolls onto his back to sneeze.

Jack's favourite hobby is sleeping and enjoys sneaking onto the couch for a snooze when no one is looking!

His favourite walk is run around the park and beach at Blackness and his favourite toy is called Ricky the Raccoon.

Jack recently underwent lifesaving surgery at Westport. He was feeling poorly and not eating - which was very out of character for him. His owner brought him straight to the vet and by performing an ultrasound scan, a mass was discovered in his abdomen. The vet suspected that this was attached to his spleen. However often with abdominal masses there are risks with additional organs being affected, as well as risks to the nature of the type of mass itself.

Jack underwent 'exploratory surgery'. This is abdominal surgery where an incision is made in the abdomen to examine the organs. It is often carried out to remove masses; remove foreign objects; take biopsies, and like Jacks

case, to perform a 'Splenectomy' - which is the total removal of the spleen.

The spleen is responsible for storing blood vessels and cleaning toxins from the blood. If damaged it can bleed profusely into the abdominal cavity, causing oedema and even infection from the substances it usually filters out.

Despite all the spleen functions, dogs can live normally without their spleen, as its functions are shared by several other parts in the body. Recovery however can be dependent on the cause, such as the type of mass or trauma that may have led to its removal being required.

Jack has been very lucky - his owners saw the signs straight away that he wasn't himself, seeking immediate veterinary attention and has been fortunate to have his mass removed safely and through a full recovery.

If you notice your pet is not themselves, we recommended you seek veterinary advice as soon as possible; in some cases, time is crucial to treatment.

Contact: Westport on 01506 844165.

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I'm Jack



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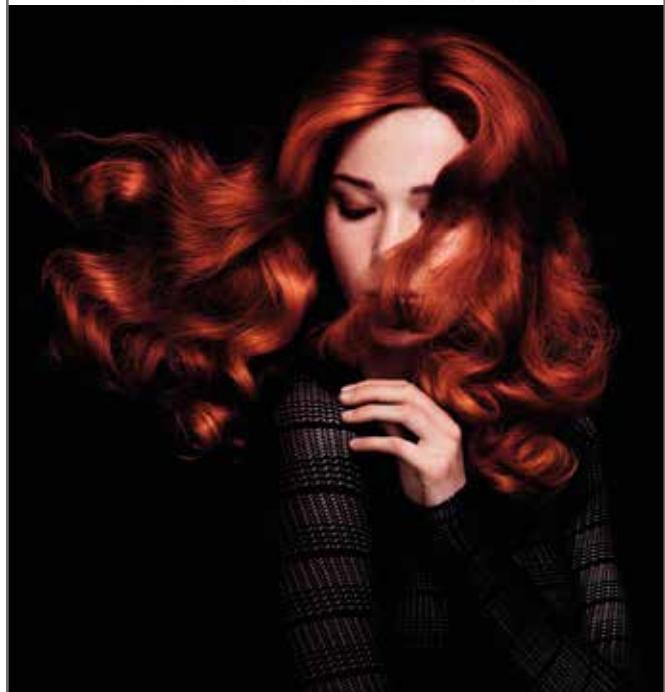
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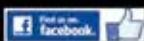
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