



the **BLACK** *bitch*

Linlithgow's news by Linlithgow's people

LINLITHGOW COMMUNITY MAGAZINE ISSUE 73 APRIL 2020

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DAVID TAIT, EDITOR...

Thanks for visiting the 73rd edition of The Black Bitch magazine and the first to be produced as a “virtual only” magazine.

Under lockdown conditions and with a sizeable elderly population health concerns had to be given top priority. In addition with many businesses taking time to find means to keep their heads above water – and to service existing customers – it felt right to pause production of our hard copy.

That of course does not mean that Linlithgow has nothing to say. Quite the opposite it would appear. In this issue we have tried to reflect the many activities undertaken by community groups, businesses and individuals to deal with different aspects of the lockdown and the ever-present threat of Covid-19.

Our regular contributors have also been busy, some looking ahead to better times, some looking back at glories past and some reflecting on where we are now.

Here's some highlights from our list of contributors:

Linlithgow Coronavirus Support Group: inspired by Rev Liam Fraser of St Michael's Parish Church, 4 groups lead the way in co-operative working to address different needs in the community.

One Linlithgow (Business Improvement District): all businesses have found themselves in unprecedented trading conditions; for some it is a full stop, for others trading in a different way is possible; One Linlithgow, has produced a comprehensive list of who's doing what along with insights into how some businesses are coping.

Arts, Pat Swan: with no current events to highlight Pat has reminded us of the range of superb events brought to Linlithgow every year and has also researched a range of online art-related activities to keep us amused while in lockdown.

And on the subject of lockdown **The Godley Family** show us how – even enjoying a little glass of wine with

their neighbours on the opposite side of the street!

Award winning Tartan Texts tell us about **Young Enterprise** at the Academy while Alice Ferguson gives an insight into the early end of term for 6th years

Burgh Beautiful, Lucy Purbrick and New Hopetoun Gardens remind us of the enjoyment and pleasure to be derived from spending more time in contemplation of all that grows round about us – if only we'd take the time to look!

And will we find Peace in a Garden?: the proposal to build a Peace Garden in Linlithgow is discussed at a public consultation.

Our book reviewer **Lisa Nettleton** has taken advantage of being trapped at home to “revisit and reread favourites from times gone by, and to hopefully find a tale which would resonate and strike a chord as we adjust to this strange new way of living, working and learning”. The result is a first class review of *Life of Pi*.

On the sporting side we recall local sporting heroes from 100 years ago (George Allan) and from 50 years ago (Linlithgow Rugby Club) and display the technical dexterity of the Rugby Club's Male Voice Choir as they record “Caledonia” - while respecting distancing rules.

ONE LINLITHGOW Local business updates and contact details.

We look to the future with Linlith-Go-Solar and Linlithgow Planning Matters. There is much speculation as to whether when we “come out of this pandemic” we will revert to type or come to the collective realisation that a new way has to be found. We hope you enjoy reading more about your town Linlithgow and its multi-talented community.

We'd love to hear your views on the magazine and anything else Linlithgow. You can send them to The Editor at: on.a.lead@gmail.com

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 20 May 2020.



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The magazine subscription was launched at the Advent Fayre last year and Issue 72 carried a paper Standing Order application form.

The response has been excellent and we want to thank everyone who has subscribed to date. Your contributions have got us off to a great start which is really appreciated.

We are, however, now at the beginning of a journey which has the potential to secure the future of the Linlithgow Community Magazine for as long as there are enough supporters in the community who see the value of locally published information on local community issues.

It is now widely accepted that the traditional business model for newspapers is broken. For many years advertising revenues have been in serious decline as circulation has collapsed and advertising revenue migrated to the more cost effective Internet. The problem is widespread around the world and has been foreseen for at least twenty years and possibly longer.

There is an argument that we don't need local newspapers; that you can get all the information you need from the Internet. We don't agree with that.

We know from reader feedback that many people really enjoy reading about the town and a comment we've heard often is "I read it from cover to cover".

On the more serious side we only need to look at our prized High Street – a Conservation Area of Outstanding merit – to see the effect of the absence of local reporting from within the community.

One of the most glaring communication breakdowns is at that community level where the lack of connection and information exchange between community and government in general and local government in particular is most obvious. And that is of course understandable – how would people know what is being done in their name by their local authority when there are no newspapers reporting it in any detail?

The magazine cannot hope to compete with what local papers used to do – in our case, the Gazette – but that newspaper model is broken beyond repair. Even now sister papers of the Gazette have been closed down, with re-opening an unlikely possibility.

There needs to be a new solution if communities are to re-connect and re-engage with their local government to the benefit of all.

In our view, the beginnings of that new solution must be at grass roots level where there is sufficient support for a publication that will produce fair,

unbiased comment by people whose first commitment is to the community they enjoy living in and wish to see prosper in every respect.

And that is the purpose of the magazine subscription – to raise sufficient regular funding from within the readership to be able to consistently develop over time the scope of coverage and the backroom facility that will be needed to achieve that.

We are providing in this issue an online subscription process and are asking you to support your community magazine with a contribution of any size.

Our aim is to create a new business model fit for the world we will live in to make the magazine secure and sustainable against any future eventuality. In achieving that we hope the community will experience an enhanced sense of ownership, participation and partnership in the project and in their community.

Today sees the launch of an online subscription process and we ask that you give consideration to making a contribution however big or small.

Thank you and I hope you enjoy the content and find it useful.

David Tait, Editor

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LINLITHGOW CORONAVIRUS SUPPORT GROUP

Like many groups, St Michael's has been dramatically affected by the coronavirus outbreak. With the lockdown, we are no longer able to gather in the church building, and our doors have closed for the first time in centuries.

As a phrase doing the rounds on the internet puts it, however, the Church has not been shut... it has been deployed! Our services have now moved online to Facebook and YouTube, and we are working daily to provide for our neighbours in Linlithgow and the surrounding area.

By working with Linlithgow Churches Together, the Development Trust, the Community Council, Black Bitch Magazine, and others, we have set up Linlithgow Coronavirus Support. This consists of a Facebook group where people can ask for and offer help, along with an email address and phone number for folk to contact should they need urgent care. Many dozens of people have volunteered and hundreds have been helped, with new friendships and community connections being made.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to Linlithgow's response to this crisis. No matter how long the outbreak lasts, I pray that the community spirit and altruism shown by so many in the town continues long afterward.

Rev Liam Fraser



Linlithgow Community Development Trust

Linlithgow Community Groups – all in this together

Linlithgow Community Development Trust has just been awarded funding from the Scottish Government Covid-19 Supporting Communities Fund. This is to help coordinate and support the local community response to the pandemic, particularly for groups supporting older, isolated and infirm people, and families and households in need, and to help coordinate and promote good communication of local information across the whole community.

Last month, the Scottish Government announced an investment of £350 million to support local communities and households in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. This funding has been established as part of this investment package to provide financial support targeted through community anchor organisations, working in partnership with others in the community and with public services, in co-ordinating local responses to the pandemic.

Funding for Linlithgow is secured until the end of September to support this work and also respond to new priorities and challenges in the town arising from the Covid-19 emergency as the situation continues to evolve.

There are many groups in Linlithgow providing support to the community at this time. Linlithgow's strength is the many groups, volunteers and businesses ready to help those in need. **Over the past month LCDT has begun working with 1st Step, Linlithgow Link, Linlithgow's Young Person's Project and Linlithgow's Coronavirus Support Group helping everyone work together.**

Ensuring all groups work together and in line with Council, NHS and other

public sector responses, will be very important to ensure we support those most in need safely, and in the best ways possible, keeping up with all national developments, throughout this crisis. LCDT, is developing collaborations with the Community Council and OneLinlithgow Business Improvement District, to help coordinate the community responses.



MyLinlithgow

Keeping You Updated During the Coronavirus

If you don't already, make sure you are following My Linlithgow on Facebook and have the My Linlithgow website bookmarked.

Linlithgow Community Development Trust is working to make sure we keep MyLinlithgow updated on the latest news about efforts within the community to support those most in need, and how you can help.

The My Linlithgow What's On calendar has now also been expanded to include online events, activities and classes to keep you busy and entertained while we are all spending more time at home during the coronavirus outbreak

Please let us know if you have any other thoughts or ideas on the type of information you would like to see on MyLinlithgow. **Contact us at hello@mylinlithgow.com**

We will be sharing local updates in a dedicated coronavirus section of the website. This also contains links to the West Lothian Council coronavirus information pages which provide useful information.

Pamela Barnes



Local 1st Step Charity *offers Free Repairs and Gifts of Bikes for Coronavirus Key Workers*

Local Linlithgow charity, 1st Step Bikes are offering free bike servicing, repairs and gifts of bikes to key workers, during the coronavirus pandemic.

Maria Throp, 1st Step's Development Manager said *"The on-going COVID-19 crisis is really difficult for so many people, so at 1st Step we really hope this small gesture will help key workers who are working so hard to keep us all safe, healthy and making sure we receive essential items.*

With public transport reduced and social distancing precautions in place, getting around on a bike can be one of the best ways to stay safe, get your daily exercise and improve your mental wellbeing."

All people need to do to access the service is ring on **07869381382**, or private message 1st Step through **Facebook 1stStepcafeandbike**. They urgently need donations of adult bikes and if you have a bike that you would like to gift they would also be delighted to hear from you.

Maria Throp

(Part-time: usual working days
Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 1pm)
Development Manager
1st Step Development Ventures SCIO



Linlithgow Link is a voluntary service which provides support to the elderly, isolated and infirm people throughout Linlithgow. Our service aims to maintain older people's independence and well-being.

The service is delivered by a team of dedicated, trained volunteers who offer encouragement, companionship, and support to help older people engage in social, leisure and community activities. Under normal circumstances the main activities of the service include:

- >> Car service where volunteers will take the elderly/infirm to Hospital/ Doctor appointments when they have no other means of transport
- >> Tuesday Club held weekly at the Bield housing complex, where our clients meet up and have a get together to have a chat or enjoy various forms of activities and entertainment arranged by the volunteers.
- >> Caring Café, held monthly at the Low Port Centre, provides support to individuals and families affected by Alzheimer's, Dementia, or memory loss.
- >> Befriending – one to one mainly face to face, for people who find it difficult to get out and about and feel isolated
- >> Social Outings and functions are organised at various times throughout the year.

However due to the current COVID 19 epidemic most of the above services are currently on hold with the exception of the Befriending which is now being carried out daily by telephone. We need to ensure the elderly are not feeling isolated as it is a confusing and worrying time for them.

We are now organising medication pick-ups from the chemists and delivering within the community and doing the occasional bit of shopping for them.

Where donations of surplus food have been given to us from, for example, School Kitchens and Oliphants Bakers, this is being delivered to some of our elderly people.

We are currently looking at preparing an "activity pack" which can be delivered to our clients to assist with maintaining their mental wellbeing.

It is worth noting that because many of our normal Link volunteers are in the vulnerable category themselves there is an increased workload on the reduced numbers of volunteers able to provide services so Link is grateful to be working alongside the Linlithgow Community Coronavirus Support Group in helping vulnerable people through this difficult period.



Linlithgow Young People's Project LYPP

Since the start of the Coronavirus outbreak Linlithgow Young People's Project has continued to serve the young people of Linlithgow and Bridgend despite being required to cease its face to face activities.

From Monday to Friday, 1-3pm and 7-9pm we are contactable through our 'Online drop in' space at 'LYPP Linlithgow' on Facebook and 'lypp_lounge' on Instagram. These are spaces for young people to come and chat about how they're getting on during lockdown, get reassurance and advice, and gain coping strategies if they're anxious or stressed.

Additionally, we are posting daily videos on the '**LYPP Linlithgow**' **YouTube channel** containing challenges, thoughts and plenty of fun. Right at the start of the lockdown we were also pleased to be able to provide Bridgend Primary School with 100 'Boredom Buster Bags' for young people which included colouring books, pencils, bouncy balls, sweets and a list of helpful websites for school work and advice.

If you do know any young people who may benefit from a chat or support at this time, please pass on these details. Thank you for the offers of support during these unusual days, and we look forward to getting back on the ground as soon as we can.

The LYPP team.

ONE LINLITHGOW

Businesses of all kinds in Linlithgow are proving in a variety of heart-warming ways that the town's renowned community spirit is not just the preserve of voluntary groups and individuals.

In these incredibly challenging times, they're exhibiting amazing resilience, adaptability and inventiveness just to keep their heads above water and often going the extra mile to help townsfolk of all ages, particularly the elderly and most vulnerable.

We want to give at least a flavour of this, and recognition to some of the businesses providing not only essential supplies, but also others helping preserve physical and mental wellbeing in such difficult times.

Accompanying this, we are publishing a list of contact details for businesses in the town, which are still operating - often in markedly different ways than before. You'll find this on page 42.



CRANNOG

It was only a few weeks ago that Shonagh Brown took over Café Delights on the High Street, renaming it Crannog. She's now had to shut her doors but is putting in long hours preparing meals and delivering them throughout Linlithgow. A highly qualified and experienced caterer, Shonagh is providing much more than a 'meals on wheels' service, however:

"I'm giving priority to the elderly and vulnerable, and also bringing them essentials like milk and bread. I'm in the Linlithgow Coronavirus Support Facebook group, so I'm also

delivering medicine if folk can't get to the chemist and don't have family locally."

Shonagh is also taking on the mantle of social worker on her deliveries. *"For some folk I'm the only visitor they'll have all day, and I'll have a 10-minute blether on the doorstep. I'm well-known for being very talkative!"*

Shonagh added that in her weekly menu she was finding that staples like stovies, mince 'n' tatties, and macaroni cheese were proving popular, along with favourites like crumble and scones.



TD ANDERSON

Next door to Complete Health, TD Anderson, the only traditional butcher in town, are now closing early, and shutting on a Wednesday... but it's no sinecure!

Manager **David Sharp** said they had greatly ramped up their home delivery service, giving priority to the elderly and vulnerable:

"It's probably fair to say we're doing more business overall. Our regular shop customers have been excellent. We have Perspex screens up for their protection and we're only allowing two customers



COMPLETE HEALTH AT THE MILLSTONE

Much like Shonagh at Crannog café, it was only a matter of weeks ago that Paul and Sandra Batchford took over the popular Complete Health at the Millstone from Gail Wright.

Ex-RAF, then a professional photographer in civvy street, Paul admitted in the last edition of the Black Bitch they were on a "steep learning curve", and were indebted to Gail and her loyal customers for their help with the huge array of goods in the shop.

"That curve has now got a lot steeper!" said Paul. "It's no longer nine-to-five for us. We're now working from 8am-10pm, six days a week, preparing and delivering orders. We're giving priority to the elderly and vulnerable, but all our customers have been wonderful and very understanding."

in at a time. We're just trying to work away as normal."

At the other end of the scale, the town's supermarkets, Sainsbury's, Tesco, and Aldi are playing their part in trying to keep shoppers' experience as normal as it can be in these abnormal times.

Tesco and Sainsbury's are swamped with demand for home deliveries - the latter now has a 'click and collect' service based in its car park - and both have special opening slots for the elderly and vulnerable, carers, NHS staff, and other key workers.

Said Katie Hainey, Store Manager at Sainsbury's: "We would like to highlight the fantastic work our colleagues are doing during these unprecedented times, with a huge thanks to those from Argos who are helping in this time of need. I also want to thank all our customers, who are seeing that all the measures we have put in place are beneficial to everyone's safety. And a big thank you to all for their lovely kind words and feedback..." *It's not all about food and other essential items, however...*



LINLITHGOW DIY

Steven Wilson, at Linlithgow DIY on the High Street, is moving heaven and earth (or should that be compost?), to ensure lockdown is not just spent in front of the telly.

He's really beefed up his delivery service, but has had to call a halt, at least for the moment, to all but compost, fence and interior paint, and appropriate tools.

Said Steven, "Our aim is to serve as many of our amazing customers as quickly as possible to ensure you are kept as busy as possible in these challenging times."

For Steven, Facebook posts say it all... "you're doing a fab job"... "amazing service"... "thank you for all your service"... "great job guys"... "such a brilliant business"... "people will remember all you have done after all this is over".

And finally, why not shop for something a bit off-beat, or just plain self-indulgent to bring some much-needed cheer?



MID-C-MOD

In the last 18 months, Jim Brown has seen his 60s and 70s memorabilia shop, mid-C-mod on the High Street, achieve great popularity.

He's now selling on eBay and upcycling items from his shop for purchase. One of Jim's specialities is making lamps from unusual antiques (one was an old mincer!). For the ladies, costume, antique, or locally-crafted jewellery provides some 'lockdown glamour'. With 12 years spent as on-board jeweller on the QE2, Jim should be able to cater for the most exotic of tastes!

ONE LINLITHGOW UPDATE

We continue to supply coronavirus-effective antiviral hand sanitiser, free of charge, to our member businesses. If you need bulk, we would encourage you to contact Linlithgow Distillery, who are supplying their own hand sanitiser to front line workers free of charge and for a reasonable price to the public.

>> Our continuously-updated list of businesses still operating has proved very popular indeed. It's a short-term response to a rapidly changing situation and it's not perfect, so our next step is to update the **MyLinlithgow.com** business directory with relevant information about the innovative ways that individual Linlithgow businesses have found to continue trading. As ever, we'd encourage you to follow us on social media (search "One Linlithgow") to keep up-to-date.

>> We've partnered with "TideOver.co" website to produce a bespoke Linlithgow page, which lets loyal customers buy digital vouchers for their favourite businesses. The customer buys the digital voucher and 75% of the money is transferred to the business to help them keep afloat during lockdown. Once doors are open

again, the customer redeems the vouchers and the business gets the remaining 25%.

>> We're applying for almost £30,000 of Scottish Government funding to help the community effort to support the vulnerable, other community groups, and businesses throughout the crisis. Currently, the application (made jointly with the Local Authority) is being reviewed by West Lothian Council and we hope to hear back very soon. Between One Linlithgow and Linlithgow Community Development Trust, almost £60,000 of support has been applied for in total. Both organisations are working closely together (with other partners like the Coronavirus Support Facebook page, Linlithgow Link, Linlithgow Young Persons' Project, Community Council and others) to make sure the community response is powerful and coordinated. See the separate update in this magazine from community groups.

>> In mid-April, the Scottish Government announced that the business support package is being extended to cover multiple business properties. In addition to the £10,000

and £25,000 grants available to each business, 75% of those amounts (whichever is applicable in each case) now extends to additional properties. This will inevitably rescue many businesses, which would otherwise have "fallen through the cracks" of the terms of the original support package.

We hope that this update finds our readership in rude health and high spirits at this strange time for everybody. We've been delighted to hear of the stories of success in the face of adversity (like Linlithgow DIY, Complete Health and TD Anderson) but we're acutely aware that far from all of our member businesses are so lucky.

Throughout the crisis more than ever, One Linlithgow must be supporting its individual members, as well as being part of the town-wide response, so please do contact us by the usual means to find out how we can help, or just to tell us about your situation (office@onelinlithgow.com).

In order to try to facilitate a satisfactory solution to the continuing difficulties associated with the completion of the Templars Court site, the Planning Forum is currently attempting to investigate ground conditions which appear to have acted as an impediment to development of the front part of the site.



PLANNING MATTERS IN LINLITHGOW UPDATE

Not unsurprisingly in this current difficult time, there may appear to have been a bit of a downturn in planning activity. However, the wheels are still turning and planning applications continue to be processed - albeit sometimes in a different manner from the norm.

Planning Procedures and COVID-19

The Council has indicated that although it continues to process planning applications, it may not be possible to progress them all, particularly where site visits are necessary. In this respect, it advises there is likely to be a much greater reliance on photographs or other means of assessing sites. The Council has also indicated that enforcement for breaches of planning control will continue to be pursued, but that no enforcement will be progressed where the breach is in direct response to the current COVID-19 situation - e.g. when a supermarket needs to operate beyond the terms of their planning conditions in order to maintain a key service whilst complying with social distancing requirements. The Council goes on to confirm that all members of staff are working remotely and that they can be contacted via their normal email addresses. **Any general development management enquiries should be submitted by email to customer.service@westlothian.gov.uk. It should be noted that the level of services may not be the same as in normal operating times.**

The 'Gap' Sites - Templars Court and former Victoria Hall

In order to try to facilitate a satisfactory solution to the continuing difficulties associated with the completion of the Templars Court site, the Planning Forum is currently attempting to investigate ground conditions which appear to have acted as an impediment to development of the front part of the site. It is hoped that clarification of this issue may be sufficient to attract a developer to undertake completion of this important and prominent site.

As well as the unfinished and increasingly untidy appearance of this site the deteriorating condition of the adjacent Category C listed building (presently shored up) is also of increasing concern. The Council has been made aware of continuing concerns regarding the appearance of the High Street and the impact on its outstanding conservation area status.

At the time of writing, there was no updated information on the Victoria Hall site. We are aware that the 'Stage 3' building warrant

application) for the entire building above ground level was withdrawn some time ago, and understand that the site remains for sale, so far, without an identified developer.

The Vennel Redevelopment

The Planning Forum continues to keep a close eye on developments concerning the Vennel. At the time of the last Planning Update, it was the intention of Council officials to seek approval to ascertain the market viability of any future developments proposals at the Development & Transport Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel (PDSP) meeting of 31 March. Following cancellation of this meeting, the Chair of the PDSP has indicated the matter will be carried forward and that arrangements for the Planning Forum to be represented in discussions (as per the terms of the Participation Request) will be put in place. The Planning Forum has noted several changes to the original Draft Planning Guidance and continues to press for the community to be involved in the concept brief.

Preston Farm, off Preston Road (approximately 60 houses)

The previously reported application to waive the requirements for a full Environmental Impact Assessment, was approved by the Council on 3 April. The approval letter to the applicant notes a 'raft of technical documents' being prepared for submission with a detailed planning application. These include reports on landscape impact, transport assessment, tree and ecology surveys, flooding and drainage, a site investigation report, archaeology and a design and access statement. The letter also notes the need for an Air Quality Assessment and a Health Impact Assessment. It is reasonable to assume that a detailed planning application will be submitted in the near future.

Wilcoxholm Farm (approximately 200 houses)

Consideration of the current planning application in principle (together with an Environmental Impact Assessment) remains ongoing.

Planning Application to for change of use from Class 4 (business) to Class 6 (storage and distribution) at Oracle Global Services, Blackness Road, Linlithgow - Objection by LLBCC

An objection to this application was made by Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council. Whilst LLBCC has no objection to the change of use, it is concerned about transport issues and in particular the response from the Council's Roads and Transportation which does not include a requirement that west bound heavy goods vehicles should use the Philpstoun Junction 2 slips to gain access to the westbound M9

motorway. LLBCC is also concerned that delivery vehicles will add to congestion in the High Street.

Planning Reform Agenda

Whilst it is a Scottish Government priority to maintain a functioning planning system, it is also acutely aware of the need to work on measures needed to implement the new Planning Act which came into force last year. Alongside its main aim of contributing to inclusive growth and delivering housing and infrastructure, the reformed planning system wants to see greater community empowerment and engagement in planning. One way of doing this is through the preparation of Local Place Plans (LPP) - which are intended to give local people an opportunity to develop proposals for the development and use of land in their local area, capitalising on local knowledge.

Any 'registered' LPP will require to be taken into account in the preparation of future Local Development Plans and will be a 'material consideration'. It remains to be seen how these new provisions will be rolled out. Firstly, the timetable for Scottish Government guidance on the topic has been put back, as have also the Council's plans for preparation of its next Local Development Plan.

The Linlithgow Planning Forum considers its 'Linlithgow - A Plan for the Future 2020 - 35' to be an example of what a Local Place Plan might look like. The document is an update of the original 'Plan for the Future' which was the subject of extensive consultation during 2017. The Planning Forum intends to consult with the community on this second edition at the most appropriate time.

Another change to current arrangements is the preparation of the over-arching National Planning Framework (NPF4). Unlike the present NPF3, the new Local Development Plan will have to adhere to NPF4. This is a change to the current position and will mean that its policies will have a stronger role in informing day to day decision making. NPF4 will have a longer time horizon to 2050, fuller regional coverage and improved alignment with wider programmes and strategies, including on infrastructure and economic investment. NPF4 will also focus on carbon reduction, housing (particularly for the elderly and disabled); health and wellbeing; and equalities and diversity

Anyone wishing to learn more about Planning Reform - or to engage in the 'call for ideas' for NPF4 (consultation currently extended to 30 April), should go to www.transformingplanning.scot

There is already a wealth of information about Local Place Plans. For a useful summary go to <https://nickwrightplanning.co.uk/lpps-scdc-sg-research.htm>

Joyce Hartley

LAST CHANCE TO INVEST IN LINLITH-GO-SOLAR!



If you've been out walking for your daily exercise in Linlithgow, you may have seen the solar panels peeking through on the roofs of Linlithgow Golf Club, Linlithgow Sports Club and Linlithgow Rugby Club.

Despite the impact of the coronavirus, Linlith-Go-Solar (a project from Linlithgow Community Development Trust) and AES Solar Ltd managed to complete the installation of all the solar panels before the end of March, the UK Government's Feed-in-Tariff incentive deadline. This means there have been 3 systems installed on 4 different roofs just in time.

However, it isn't just the clubs that will benefit from renewables, local people can also get involved by investing in the Linlith-Go-Solar project in our community bond offer. The bond will be paid back with interest and you will be helping the local community do our bit for the environment and local sustainable enterprise.

Linlithgow Community Development Trust has successfully secured grants for most of the costs of the project, and thanks to the generosity of people who have invested to date, we've now reached over £22k of the required £25K match funding for the project.

With less than £3K to go, we really need people to keep investing. Due to the coronavirus lockdown and the bank holiday, the bond will remain open to applications till the end of April.



LINLITHGOW SPORTS CLUB



LINLITHGOW RUGBY CLUB

Ronnie Anderson shares why he invested in Linlith-Go-Solar.

"I bought bonds for each of my grandsons. The process was easy and they each now have a certificate in their name. I was very impressed by the professionalism of SCF who manage the bonds."

Visit <https://scotcomfinance.scot/community-bonds-linlith-go-solarphs2> to find out more and to purchase a community bond from just £50.

FOLLOW THE LINLITH-GO-SOLAR FACEBOOK PAGE TO STAY UP TO DATE WITH ALL THE NEWS!



LINLITHGOW GOLF CLUB

NAE MAIRCHES NOO

Bruce Jamieson

*"The Roke and Row's
a funeral knell
Makin' folk's heids boo
A dirge comes frae
the auld toon bell
There's nae Mairches noo."*



Robert Fleming

So wrote Gazette editor **Robert Fleming** when Mairches Day was cancelled in 1926. Once again, almost 100 years later, we are faced with that same, chilling prospect.

I find it deeply ironic that on Mairches Day, 2019, the town remembered the return of its soldiers from World War One and the reappearance of the Mairches after a gap of four years. Now, a year later, the Mairches once again is cancelled. Unlike some other local festivals, it can't be postponed. For centuries, Linlithgow's great day of community celebration has taken place on the first Tuesday after the second Thursday in June. The day is sacrosanct. Given the Government's advice and bearing in mind the need to ensure public health there was no alternative but to remove the Riding of the Mairches from the 2020 calendar.

The Mairches have been ridden for at least 478 years – when, for the first recorded time, Provost Henry Forrest, wrote that the Mairches would take place on Pasche Tuesday in 1542. In all likelihood, the boundary check had existed for many years before that – perhaps right back to the granting of the town charter in 1389.



In 1989, Thom Pollock, as King Robert II, and members of Linlithgow Players, re-enacted the 600th anniversary of the signing of Linlithgow's royal charter.

Through periods of religious upheaval, civil war, Cromwellian occupation and Jacobite upheaval, the Mairches have continued. The drastic and heart-breaking decision to cancel this year's, centuries-old, Linlithgow tradition has only been made on three previous occasions. In 1915, local tanner **Provost James Thomas** and his Council, following the dictates of the Defence of the Realm Act, unanimously made the decision to cancel the Mairches for the duration of the war. A small group of locals, accompanied by two pipers and a drummer did walk to the River Avon on Tuesday 15th June but they were then persuaded to end their boundary check there. As the war progressed, and the casualty figures mounted, the townsfolk were in no mood to celebrate and so the Mairches of 1915 – 1918 did not take place.



Huge crowds at the 1914 Crying of the Mairches - the last for four years. There will be no Crying, or any other Mairches-related events in 2020.

The same 'DORA' legislation, banning large gatherings, came into play in World War Two although, once again, a small group of locals, coming off the night shift at Avonmill Paper Works, woke up the town by banging on

biscuit tins to the tune of the Roke, as they paraded the Brig and the High Street. Some shouted encouragement, crying down from open windows such imprecations as, "Weel done, lads, Dinna let yon b**** Hitler stop oor Mairches"

Of course, the year 2020 has been cancelled for reasons of public safety and this kind of vigilante celebration is to be discouraged.



A stern-looking Provost Hebson and Baron Bailie Spence.

The one other time that the Mairches was not ridden was in 1926.

The decision was made by Provost John Hebson and

his bailies, just two weeks before the event, and the pronouncement was not well received in the burgh. A petition was drawn up and a deputation marched to the Provost's house. However, the inability of the police to guarantee public safety during the procession meant that there was no choice but to cancel the event. It resumed again in 1927 when there were many difficulties to overcome, given the dislocation of the year before and the state of the local finances.



Provost John Cunningham and his bailies had to make the distressing but inescapable decision to cancel the 2020 Mairches.

Doubtless, organising and running the 2021 Mairches will bring challenges to many aspects of local life and especially to the Deacons' Court who will need to pick up the pieces and make sure that the hallowed and well-loved ceremonies recommence with renewed vigour.

Long Live the Mairches.

ROSS MILLER LINLITHGOW'S YOUNG PIPING SENSATION



ROSS MILLER TO HEADLINE LINLITHGOW FOLK FESTIVAL

MUSIC ///



Linlithgow's young piping sensation -Ross Miller - will headline this year's Folk Festival in the town!

Fresh from the release of his debut album, called *The Roke*, in honour of Linlithgow's historic civic anthem, Ross has been snapped up by the Festival organisers and will appear with his band at the headline concert on Friday September 11th in the Rose Social Club. The event will also mark the official album launch and the music featured on the CD will be played live by all the musicians involved in the recording.

Ross was enjoying a very successful tour in Germany with some of Scotland's finest young traditional musicians when the coronavirus crisis struck and the group had to come home. His album was released on his 25th birthday on March 9th and was due to be performed in Linlithgow on March 28th. Now this will take place as the highlight of the annual Folk Festival in September, which is now in its 22nd year.

Ross Miller has grown up with the Folk Festival and he is very pleased to have the opportunity of performing again in his home town, where he holds the title of official Town Piper.

He told me: *"I'm delighted to have been asked to headline this year's Linlithgow Folk Festival. I had some of my first ever public performances at the Festival and to be headlining this year, alongside the release of my debut album, is a real honour. I have seen some excellent artists play the headline concert before and it will be great to be listed amongst them. I'm excited to bring the full band from the album plus a couple of special guests to perform all the music live for what will be the first time in public. We will also be putting together some new music especially for the concert."*

In recent times, Ross has been travelling the world. As well as trips to Germany, he has also performed in Australia at the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo in Sydney, in Ghana for the Caledonian Society of Ghana's Burns Supper, and in France for the Breton Pipe Band Championship with Bagad Cap Caval. 2020 has been a bit different, as he explained:

"This year so far has been a strange one. I've had a couple of great trips away and released an album and now suddenly there are no opportunities to play in public for the foreseeable future. I'm managing to keep myself busy, with all my regular teaching now taking place online and I have been making some videos with friends and posting them online. To be honest, I've not been playing the pipes a lot because I live in a flat,

but I don't think it is necessarily a bad thing to take a bit of a break especially with all my pipe band and solo competitions cancelled until at least October."

Plans for the 2020 Linlithgow Folk Festival are continuing, although the organisers are constantly reviewing the situation. Assuming the Festival does go ahead as planned, Linlithgow Rose Club will be the main concert venue again and three great events have been pencilled-in, including the much-anticipated return of the brilliant young Glasgow Bluegrass band, The Daddy Naggins. Full details of all the Festival events will be posted on Facebook and on the website www.linlithgowfolk.com.



Murdoch Kennedy



GEORGE ALLAN FOOTBALL LOOKS FORWARD TO 30 YEARS...

The George Allan Memorial 7-a-side Football Festival for the local Primary schools is held traditionally on the third Sunday in May but has been cancelled this year. However, plans are already underway for a return on Sunday May 16th, 2021, which will mark thirty years of this much-loved community event.



ST JOSEPH'S PS - FIRST WINNERS IN 1991

The football festival was first established in 1991 to honour the memory of Linlithgow Bridge footballer **George "Dod" Allan**, who was a star centre forward on both sides of the border in the 1890s. A glittering career was tragically cut short when George died of tuberculosis at the age of only 24.

The story of this local sporting hero was largely unknown until 1989, when it formed the centrepiece of **Lithca Lore Five**, a collection of local poems and historical articles. Simon Mason, chairman of the Linlithgow Bridge Community Council at that time, was intrigued by the details of this forgotten

son of the Brig. He suggested that there should be what he described as a "living memorial" and proposed a football event involving all the local Primary schools. The Community Council purchased a trophy, and this was first awarded in 1991. In the years that followed, the event developed into the George Allan Memorial Football Festival, held at the Linlithgow Rose ground at Prestonfield and supported by both the Rose FC and the Rose Community Club.

George Allan was born in Linlithgow Bridge in 1875. His football talents were first developed with the village team, Vale of Avon, and he then moved on to Linlithgow Athletic, which was established in 1888. He enjoyed cup success at both Broxburn Shamrock and Bo'ness and after a short spell with Leith Athletic, he joined the army of Scottish footballers who were plying their trade south of the border when he signed for Liverpool.

Liverpool Football Club was formed in 1892 and most of its early players were recruited in Scotland. The first side was known as "The team of the Macs" and many of these players were still around in 1895, when George Allan arrived. Among these was Matthew McQueen, whose brother lived in Linlithgow.





George was an instant success in the 1895-96 season, scoring an amazing 25 goals in just 20 league appearances and helping **"The Anfielders"** secure promotion from Division Two. Liverpool scored 106 goals that season, a record amount that has yet to be beaten. George's individual tally would have been greater, had it not been for an eight-game suspension at the start of the season. The following term saw Liverpool return to the First Division and George was top scorer, with 17 goals from 34 games.

In September 1896, Liverpool changed from their original colours of blue and white to their now familiar red and George has the distinction of being the first player to score in a red jersey. He also achieved another notable first for the club in April 1897, when he became the first Liverpool player to represent Scotland. He then moved to Celtic for a year, where he won a League championship medal, but returned to Liverpool in 1898 and quickly re-established himself as a star player. With a great career ahead of him, he took ill in the Spring of 1899 and returned to Scotland, where he passed away on October 17th. The football world mourned his untimely death and representatives from all the leading clubs attended his funeral at Linlithgow cemetery.

George Allan's fascinating story will be outlined in a book to be published in 2022. The 30th anniversary of the Football Festival in May 2021 will be part of the final chapter of that book.

Murdoch Kennedy



BRIG UNITED FROM LINLITHGOW BRIDGE PS
- WINNERS 2019 - AND CURRENT HOLDERS.



SPRINGFIELD PS - WINNERS 2007



LIFE OF PI

Yann Martel

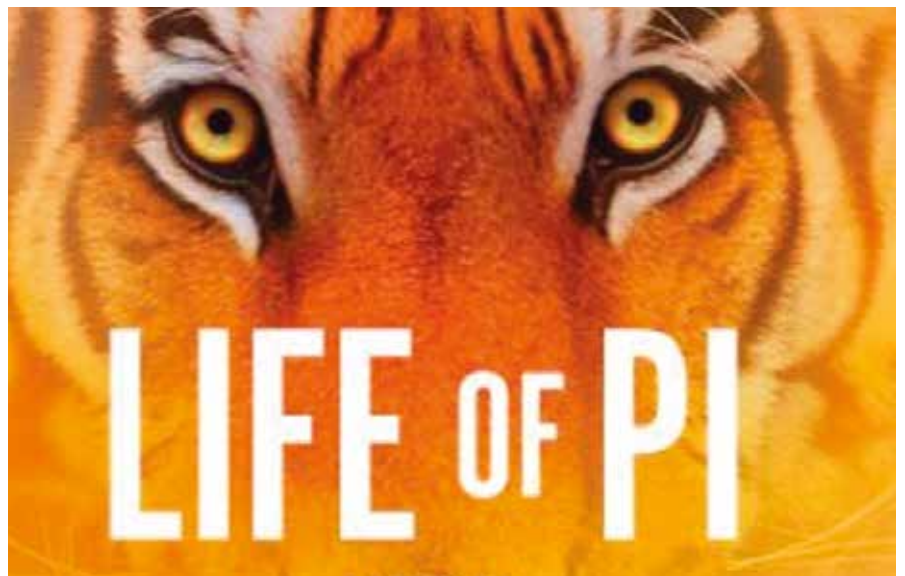
Tasked with writing a book review in this current time of global uncertainty and national lockdown gave me an opportunity to look through my book shelves once more, to revisit and reread favourites from times gone by, and to hopefully find a tale which would resonate and strike a chord as we adjust to this strange new way of living, working and learning.

I was pleased to stumble once more upon Yann Martel's 'Life of Pi'. A popular book when it was first published in 2001, I am certain that many Linlithgow readers will already be familiar with this philosophical tale. It is a fantastical story – a celebration of man's strength in the face of adversity and a triumph over catastrophic, life-changing events.

Set initially in Pondicherry, India, the 'Life of Pi' is intended to be autobiographical in its account of Piscine Patel and his early childhood years spent with his family, as they lived and worked in Pondicherry Zoo. There are some beautifully descriptive passages in this section about the zoo, it's animals, their psychology all offset against the splendour of the natural world itself.

"You must imagine a hot and humid place, bathed in sunshine and bright colours. The riot of flowers is incessant... Suddenly, amidst the tall and slim trees up ahead, you notice two giraffes quietly observing you...The more you look, the more you see."

Several times as I reread this novel, I was struck by the ways in which Pi's early life shaped and moulded him through the happy times, preparing him for the challenges he faced in a time of adversity. The people he met, his life experiences, the lessons he learned – all building blocks for providing strength and resilience in his hours of need.



"I did not grasp all of these details – and many more – right away. They came to my notice with time and as a result of necessity. I could be in the direst of dire straits, facing a bleak future, when some small thing, some detail, would transform itself and appear in my mind in a new light. It would no longer be the small thing it was before, but the most important thing in the world, the thing that would save my life."

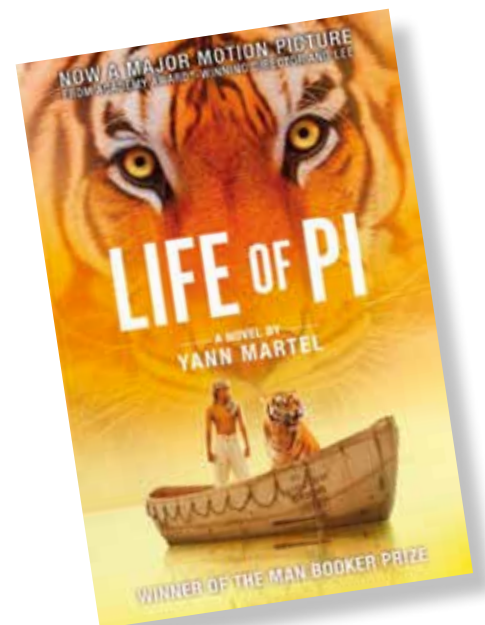
There is much humour to be found in reading this novel. Martel's skill as a writer has created a finely crafted, uniquely shaped albeit surreal story. It is a story within a story which explores philosophical, political and religious themes through careful repetition and symbolism. It promotes storytelling as means of survival and endurance with many layers and subtexts. Martel deliberately leaves the story and its origins open to interpretation, allowing each reader to formulate their own theories on validity, metaphor and improbability.

I was glad that I had taken the time to revisit 'Life of Pi'. It is a story that I enjoyed when it was first published, and then again when it was adapted into a film. At a time of world-wide uncertainty I found the positive philosophical passages refreshing and enjoyed the casual, easy humour breaking through the bleak harshness of Pi's seemingly impossible situation.

It is easy to identify with Pi at this time in our world history; to feel like castaways, adrift in a vast endless ocean of space and time, reduced in our human comforts and reliant on basic essentials...and with a ferocious, unpredictable companion that has yet

to be tamed. Yet we can take comfort from the many passages of hope and reflection, the celebrations of human spirit and sense of community, that offer us a means to stay buoyant through these uncertain times.

"Things didn't turn out the way they were supposed to, but what can you do? You must take life the way it comes at you and make the best of it."



Lisa Nettleton

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



Constable Andrew Murray and Constable Peter Robertson are the 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**. They 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 month, 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.

PUBLIC THANKED FOR COMPLYING WITH STAY AT HOME INSTRUCTION

Chief Constable participates in coronavirus briefing

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/whats-happening/news/2020/march/public-thanked-for-complying-with-instruction>

Police Scotland has thanked members of the public and businesses for complying with a new law designed to slow the spread of coronavirus.

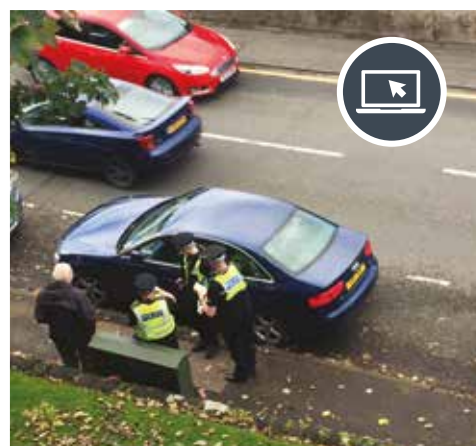
Officers were given the power on Friday, 27 March, to fine people who refuse to stay at home and only go outside if they have a 'reasonable excuse'.

Police Scotland is still compiling data from the weekend, but initial indications show that officers had to issue penalty notices on only 25 occasions across the country. Deputy Chief Constable Malcolm Graham said: "We've had high visibility patrols in place right across the country since we were given these enforcement powers.

"But it's clear that the vast majority of people are complying with the measures. They know the message is to stay at home, and by and large, they're doing that."

ROAD SAFETY

- > Are your tyres, brakes, windscreen wiper blades and windows free from defects and clean?
- > Make sure all your lights are in working order
- > Be aware of changing road conditions. In severe weather increase your stopping distances
- > Drive too fast and you'll put yourself and others at risk.
- > Prepare for longer journeys
- > Before setting off check local weather forecasts and heed warnings regarding bad weather
- > Don't use a mobile phone or any device which could distract you whilst driving.
- > Drink driving – don't risk it.



TO CONTACT THE POLICE...

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

Alternatively you can email westlothiancommunityeast@scotland.pnn.police.uk or pop into the police station at the library (Partnership Centre) and ask to speak to our Community officers, **PC's Murray and Hunter**.

Your Local Community Police – Linlithgow
Website: www.scotland.police.uk
Twitter: @policescotland
Facebook: www.facebook.com/policescotland

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCOTLAND

Police Scotland is one of many partnership agencies who are working alongside Neighbourhood Watch Scotland in order to develop and promote the Alert system.

This system allows users to receive alerts from Neighbourhood Watch and Police Scotland. The idea being that if there has been a recent crime trend, then officers from Police Scotland can send an alert to all users who may be effected or who may have an interest in the crime.

The alert would normally be received by means of an email, however in urgent situations it can be sent by text message and / or voice message. The scheme has numerous uses but from

a police point of view it can be 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 and the registration process is very simple. You can register as an individual or an association such as a residents association or community council / community group... Or both!!!!

The key to the Neighbourhood Watch Alert system being a success is YOU, we require the public to register online; the more people who register the better. You can register at www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk

SIT AND WATCH THE BUDS BREAKING, THE BLOSSOM UNFURLING

I was sent out as delivery boy several times during the last few weeks and driving through Linlithgow I was struck, not just by the absence of litter in the deserted streets, but mainly by the fantastic planters and hanging baskets. If you can take your daily socially distanced exercise around the town do get out and admire our Burgh Beautiful.



If you have your own garden in which to escape, spring is such an exciting time to sit and watch the buds breaking, the blossom unfurling and the busy antics of our visiting wild birds. Lesley keeps sneaking onto our new swing between gardening jobs. It was six o'clock and

the sun was over the yardarm when I returned from work and found furloughed her and the cat unwinding at the end of the day and delighting in being in the garden.

There are lots of little projects that she has been undertaking in the garden. She might have more access to seeds and plants than many folk but its amazing what there is to do with what you can find in the shed or garage or in the garden itself. Shrubs really grew strongly last summer and many could well be cut back to stop them spreading beyond their allotted space. Most shrubs can be cut back very hard at this time as they really want to start growing and will burst from old wood after several weeks. It does mean that you will have a bit of a gap while they regrow, but then you will have a beautiful well behaved shrub to enjoy!

You can find several **Purple Piglet Projects** like **Morag's Trousers** and **Herb Towers** on our website with instructions and lists of what you will need (www.newhopetoungardens.co.uk).



Why not use something a bit different as a planter this summer? Morag's trousers have just managed to survive two different plantings over the last year – quality denim!

Creating a tower of different sized pots like these herb towers is so simple. You can use temporary summer patio plants as well as the herbs we have used.

I have been tested on my plant identification skills when I sit down for a glass of wine in the evening. We always say that all gardens should be able to provide a flower or some leaves to bring indoors every week of the year. Lesley has been filling our little posy pots each week and testing me on the names of the flowers. It does make you pay a lot of attention to the intricacies of each flower and delight in the fragranced ones.



Hope you are keeping well and managing to keep gardening.

Dougal Philip and Lesley Watson, New Hopetoun Gardens

**so much more
than just a
garden centre**

www.newhopetoungardens.co.uk

**NEW
HOPETOUN
GARDENS**

**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!



Linlithgow Academy Young Enterprise Team, Tartan Texts, had great success, and took home a number of awards at the Young Enterprise Lothian Finals in April. The team were competing against 27 teams from other schools in the Lothian area, but came out on top, receiving the award for “Best Overall Company” for their performance in the competition so far. The team also received a number of other awards, including “Best company Interview” and “Best company film”, alongside individual awards for some team members. Calum Ireland and Oscar Milne received the “Best Lothian Marketing Directors” award, for their collaborative efforts in the Tartan Texts team, Ciara Benson received the award for “Best Lothian Operations Director” and Holly Mayland came in 2nd place for the “Best Lothian Company Secretary” award. The team tell their story here.

Our Young Enterprise journey began back in September 2019 when we, seven S6 pupils with a passion for business enterprise and a shared desire to succeed, came together to form Tartan Texts. In the beginning we knew very little about the Young Enterprise Competition process, or about what it takes to set up and run a business. Over the past 7 months we have learned from our experiences and have had to overcome many challenges to get us to where we are today. When we first formed our company, we set out our aim: ‘to encourage reading amongst children from a young age’ and since then have devoted our Young Enterprise journey

to getting our book “Harris The Haggis: Adventures in Edinburgh” into the hands of as many children as possible in order to help us achieve this aim. This has involved us attending numerous sales events in both Linlithgow and Edinburgh, getting involved with World Book Day celebrations, doing readings of our book at local nurseries and playgroups and selling our book in two local bookshops. By doing so, we have managed to sell over 300 copies of “Harris The Haggis: Adventures in Edinburgh”, and we hope to continue increasing this number as we progress to the next stage of the competition, the Scottish Final, which is being held virtually on the 2nd June.

Our success in books sales, and winning these awards, could not have been achieved without everybody who has supported us. We would like to take this opportunity to say a huge “thank you” to everyone who has purchased our book and helped to make this success possible. Throughout the competition we have been overwhelmed by the amazing support and encouragement that both our company and book have received within the Linlithgow community, and would like to say thank you to all of the primary schools, nurseries and individuals who have purchased and promoted our book. Additionally, we would like to thank both Far From The Madding Crowd, and A Wee Mindin’, two local businesses, who have helped us to sell our book on Linlithgow High Street, and also JMK printers in Linlithgow Bridge who have done an incredible job printing over 400 high quality, colour copies of our book. All of this support reflects perfectly the great community spirit that we have in our town, and we feel very honoured to be able to represent not only Linlithgow Academy but also the wider Linlithgow community as we progress in the competition.

Looking forward, as we approach The Young Enterprise Scottish Final we hope to continue promoting reading amongst young children and we aim to get our book into the hands of as many more children as possible. Although we can no longer go out into the community to attend sales events, we still plan to continue spreading awareness about reading and we will be happy to offer home deliveries of our book providing that you live locally.

Finally, to anybody who has the opportunity to get involved with the Young Enterprise programme in the future, we would highly recommend that you do. By taking part we have learned many valuable skills including team working, resilience and problem solving to name just a few, and we strongly feel that these skills will not only help us in our future careers but will also allow us to become well-rounded individuals beyond the competition. Not only this, but the experience has also been incredibly fun and has allowed us to form great friendships with one another and so we are delighted to be able to continue to the next stage of the competition as an even stronger team.

If you would like to find out more information about our company or purchase a copy of “Harris The Haggis: Adventures in Edinburgh”, contact us at:

@TartanTexts on Instagram

@TartanTexts on Facebook

We are still continuing to sell our book and if you live locally we can have it delivered to your door.

BURGH BEAUTIFUL SPRINGS INTO ACTION

**“All in the April evening when
April airs are abroad”** Hugh Robertson

The year has turned to April and Burgh Beautiful is putting into place some of its plans for 2020 now that the days are longer and there is warmth in the sun. After the storms of February much work needs to be done.

Having drafted this article some time ago our world has now changed. The Beautiful Scotland competition which we had entered has now been cancelled. Our summer programme has also taken a knock with Inviting Gardens 2020 having been cancelled. The same will most likely be true for the plant sale but keep an eye on our Facebook page for updates about that. On a more positive note we did manage a litter pick which attracted a lot of help with a considerable amount of litter being collected in the Peel area from the Vennel car park to the Water Yett car park.

As you will see from the pictures accompanying this article the early spring beds, planters and beehives are all looking well thanks to the care dispensed by our volunteers.

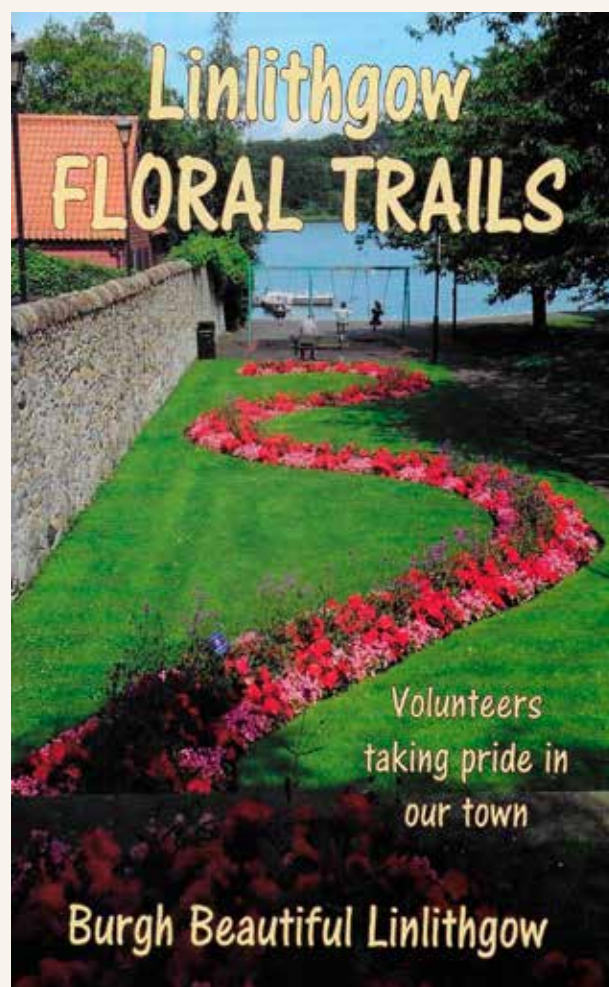
On the subject of volunteers we are always looking for more help so if you would like to join please contact Burgh Beautiful at bbl@lbt.scot



Burgh Beautiful does depend on the cooperation of various groups and individuals to help out. Previously shopkeepers in the High Street added to the floral theme with their own planting and we would very much like this to continue. Youth groups such as Guides and Scouts help with specific tasks. Other community groups also help out with practical support, such as the Rotary Club of Linlithgow Grange and staff from Calnex. Our community gardeners continue with their good work in various locations in the town. Sainsbury's donated bulbs so we look with keen anticipation to find out how well they flower. One planting location was Learmonth Garden. You can be led on a guided tour of our beds with the new edition of Floral Trails which can be picked up free of charge at the Burgh Halls or at various shops and pubs in the town or viewed on our website at www.lbt.scot.

Changes are always happening. Our summer plants are due to arrive in May and in early June when planters, hanging baskets and beds are given a makeover with some 20,000 bedding plants. We are continuing with our delivery of plants for hanging baskets with a much reduced team planning to do the planting fully in accordance with the government's rules about distancing, and washing hands. We have a new installation team in the pipeline so hopefully you should see hanging baskets being hung at the start of June as usual. The order for bedding plants for beds and planters is still under review as we depend not just on their delivery but on our host of volunteers to do the planting. Much will depend on government restrictions being eased by the end of May, beginning of June.

However it is not all bedding plants. The top bed to the west



of the Black Bitch sculpture will be planted with a selection of shrubs and perennials. The planting group within Burgh Beautiful has been working on a suitable selection of plants for the site. It is a windy spot and as the bed in question lies under trees the soil is dry with the trees sucking up water. So plants had to be carefully chosen. But like much else this project has had to be put on hold. If you are interested in finding out what plants were selected go to <https://www.lbt.scot/burgh-beautiful> and click on Planting at Black Bitch Statue.



The “Binny Bed” opposite the West Port Hotel is also shrubs and perennials. The bed to the east of Katie Wearie is being changed from annuals to perennials in 2021. The New Hopetoun Gardens bed on St John's Avenue is generously planted with insect loving plants. This year the theme of our Vennel bed is “gardening for wildlife”. The plants will be mostly permanent to give a long life to this bed. But how much we achieve depends on the trajectory of the coronavirus and the lockdown restrictions.

18th September sees our Autumn Fair at Cross House. Most certainly a date for your diary. Our Facebook page has a selection of photos celebrating nature and wildlife. Please take a look. You can contribute by sending photos of your garden or something which has caught your eye when out exercising to bbl@lbt.scot.

**“April is the kindest month. April gets
you out of your head and out working
in the garden.”** Marty Rubin



THE ARTS

"KEEP ART AND CULTURE IN YOUR LIFE"



These are strange times and my first thought was that perhaps there would be no point in writing an Arts Page this time round. However, it's clear how important Art and Culture are for many people and how helpful it can be to mental health, especially in difficult times. Perhaps now that some people have more spare time, they will indulge in creative activities that have been on the to do list for a long time. After this is all over, I hope some people may change their priorities and feature 'Art' in their life on a more regular basis.

Let's therefore celebrate the amazing variety of art and culture that can be experienced locally. With no Edinburgh Festivals to enjoy this summer why not stay in Linlithgow and support our local organisations, the bulk of which are run by volunteers? Why not research some of the groups in Linlithgow when you have time now, and plan to join them after the summer?

There will be no "art outings" for a good while I suspect, so I've focussed on how we can do "art at home" in the meantime.

I write often about the local organisations, but let me just list them here for those who may not yet realise what is on offer in or very close to town. Apologies if I miss anything, and I hope my very short summaries don't offend anyone!

VISIT OR ATTEND:

Linlithgow Arts Guild – world class music with a classical theme

Linlithgow Jazz – lively, informal music nights with BYOB

Red Door – diverse music in an intimate venue

Linlithgow Film Society – good value way to catch up on those films you meant to see

LAMP – amateur musical productions

Linlithgow Players – amateur drama group - productions and pantomime

Linlithgow Folk Festival – once a year folk extravaganza

Black Bitch Tavern folk nights – monthly pub sessions

Torphichen Summer Nights – a wee bit out of town but a great variety of music

St Michael's Parish Church – occasional music events

Comedy Club – monthly comedy events at The West Port or The Star & Garter

Book Festival/regular book events/literary lunches at Far From the Madding Crowd – award winning indie bookshop

Line Gallery – ever changing mix of affordable art

Burgh Halls Gallery – calm space to view international art

Public Art – enjoy street art around town

Art in the Garden @ Hopetoun – annual sculpture trail at the Garden Centre

Scotch Hop – summer Scottish dancing at the Palace

Forth Valley Art Beat – annual open studios event

JOIN OR ENJOY:

Linlithgow String Orchestra – age 13+ and Grade 5+ can join

Linlithgow Reed Band – reed, brass and percussion band

Linlithgow Ladies and RFC Male Voice Choir – sing your heart out

Embroiderers' Guild – inspiring textile art talks and workshops

Young Embroiderers

– for Junior stitchers aged 5 - 18

Floral Art Club – flowers make everyone happy don't they

The Thread Counter – varied classes for all, and lots of crafty supplies

Purely Patchwork – workshops and lots of fabric

Linlithgow Pottery – friendly expert tuition on the potter's wheel

Linlithgow Writer's Guild – if writing stories or poetry is your thing

The Art Room – monthly art classes for children aged 9-13

Linlithgow Art School – art classes for adults and children

What an amazing selection of opportunities for a town of our size! I can't list contact details for all of these organisations but most have an online presence, and I'm sure they will all be happy to hear enquiries at any time.

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 over the next few weeks.

Pat Swan

patswan@virginmedia.com.



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"the job of the artist is to always deepen the mystery"

ART AT HOME

MANY MUSEUMS offer virtual tours online. Stay home and tour the Vatican Museums with a tour guide. Sit on your sofa and look at the Sistine Chapel, have a coffee break and go back to tour the Saint Peter's Basilica. View the largest collection of Impressionist painting in the Musee d'Orsay and imagine you are in that amazing building in Paris. View the Guggenheim in Bilbao, a distinctive steel and titanium building designed by Frank Gehry, and imagine the sunshine and warmth if you were there. The Royal Academy "Picasso and Paper" exhibition is open, but only online. These resources could also be helpful to children studying at home.

THE NATIONAL THEATRE is offering free screenings of much-loved shows on YouTube. Andrew Lloyd Webber Musicals are being screened free online during the pandemic. Book the family in for the evening and imagine you are in London for the weekend.

THE EDINBURGH BOOK FESTIVAL is hoping to programme online events, but meantime there are free podcasts of previous events to keep readers amused.

MANY BOOKSHOPS ARE STILL OFFERING BOOK DELIVERY, and Audible have made many of their books free to download. Our local **FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD** are hoping to increase their online presence to help us through. Their new event series, Reading Allowed, is something different. It's a way for people to share stories - their own, or by a favourite author, fact, fiction, poetry or prose. They did the first session using Zoom and it was a great way to feel connected in our social isolation. The next session is scheduled for Friday 24th April and will be hosted by Richard Payne. Keep checking their website www.maddingcrowdlinlithgow.com for details. The Home Learning Zone on their website offers loads of activity packs that are free to download, linked to books suitable for children of all ages, and all provided by publishers.

If you want to get creative at home, there are so many free online art courses, and many artists are also offering discounts. Having previously done an online course, I can confirm it works, and many have Facebook groups so that you can communicate with other course participants and feel you are on a real course. Interacting with people who are doing the same thing as you and who are on the same wavelength is a pleasure, and will boost your spirits.

Ideas for children are everywhere but you might want to look at the **MUSEUM OF MODERN ART** for a chance to feature on their Instagram feed. Artist Louise Lawler has offered line versions of her photographs to colour in. Send them to MoMA and your picture might be seen by 5 million followers! Locally, **JUPITER ARTLAND** are offering fun and inspirational creative family activities online, and maybe they will encourage you to visit Jupiter when this is all over. I also hope the town continues to spread hope with the Rainbow Art being shown in windows everywhere.

There's **FREE OPERA, BALLET, DANCE CLASSES, MUSIC** - I can't list everything and more appears every day. Free screenings, courses and tours are great, but many of these organisations will struggle to cope financially, so if you can, a small donation from you may make a big difference to them.

LET'S LOOK FORWARD TO AN ART OUTING SOON, BUT TRY TO KEEP ART IN YOUR LIFE MEANTIME.

LINLITHGOW'S MOONDANCE



Many of you will have already heard that this year's Linlithgow Moondance is sadly cancelled. We are sure it will come as no surprise that social distancing measures imposed due to the Coronavirus have made it inevitable that this event cannot go ahead.

As a committee we are extremely disappointed but realise that this is vital for the protection and safety of our community.

This year's ticket sales had surpassed all previous benchmarks and we were well on the way to a third sell-out event. We had even hoped that this final year would have brought our three year fund raising total for Breast Cancer Now and St. John's Hospital Oncology, to in excess of £25,000.

Once shops are re-opened, refunds for all tickets sold will be available from the outlet you purchased your ticket (either The Thread Counter or Flowers by Carolyn). Just pop in with your numbered ticket to receive a refund.

We are extremely grateful for everyone's support this year and previous years. We are so sorry that this event cannot go ahead. If you have any questions or need to get in touch please contact us via our Facebook message page or via one of the committee members. Who knows maybe, just maybe, we can look to 2021!

The Moondance Committee

BIG THANK YOU

**PHOTOGRAPHER
JOHN BUCKLEY**

for the fabulous front cover photograph of Ron Smith at the recent black bitch statue unveiling - as featured in issue 72.





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Wear sunscreen, even if you're inside all day! Sunscreen should really be called 'Daylight Protection' or 'Light Protection' because it protects you from the light you're exposed to between sunrise and sunset. Even when it's snowing, raining or cloudy, daylight still gets through and is harmful to our skin.

Daylight exposes us to ultraviolet (UV) radiation. **UVA** and **UVB**.

UVA rays are responsible for long-term skin damage and can cause skin cancer.

- > UVA rays cannot be felt. Approximately the same strength all year, they penetrate through windows. If you can see day light through your window of any building or mode of transport, UVA rays can still reach you. Sunbeds give out greater doses of UV radiation.
- > UVA rays penetrate to the deep layer of our skin, the Dermis, where proteins called collagen and elastin are found. As we get older there is a natural depletion of these proteins causing sagging and wrinkles. UVA rays accelerates this ageing by breaking down these proteins.

UVB rays are responsible for burning and can cause skin cancer.

- > UVB rays do not penetrate windows, they damage your skin when you are outside. They are absorbed by the outer layer of the skin, the epidermis, causing a suntan or sunburn.
- > You can feel the effects of UVB rays through sunburn.

Three tips for great skin.

1. Cover up daily. Use a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 30+ with a UVA 5-Star rating and UVB protection. Preferably one that contains Titanium Dioxide and/or Zinc Oxide which reflects UV rays away from the surface of the skin. Use SPF as your moisturizer and re-apply regularly.
2. Drink plenty of water to keep skin cells hydrated, making them nice and plump which in turn gives you an anti-ageing affect and a nice glow.
3. Keep up a good skin care routine. Make it a life-time commitment and not just in the summer or a one off.



For more information contact Tina Arnot:

Skin Happy, 42 High Street, Linlithgow Tel: 01506 888138
info@skinhappy.co.uk www.skinhappy.co.uk



SkinHappy



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You could say we saw it coming. As soon as Ireland announced they were closing schools, the social area felt a bit more special, looked a bit more nostalgic – even classes seemed a bit more interesting. As if Mrs Jarvis's wish had come true, sixth year attendance reached an all-time high, fewer McDonald's trips in free periods and more social area chit chat, everyone sitting tight for the lurking announcement. A few weeks previous the thought of schools closing seemed whimsical and barbaric. I remember my biology teacher prepping us 'just in case' we had to resort to online learning. Teachers began to frantically gather evidence, squeezing every timed essay out of us before it was too late. Sure enough, Wednesday came. Everyone gathered round a phone screen in the social area at the end of lunch whilst Mr Swinney pronounced: Schools are closing.

As if by instinct there has always been a glimmer of glee and giddiness when schools close, like snow days or polling days – it's a day off school! Yet, this time it was a bit different. It wasn't unusual to see tears in the corridors, hugging of people you thought would never make amends and photos being taken left, right, centre to capture the last glimpses of each other's faces. The excitement of the proper last day we've been promised since S1, vanishing; no yearbooks, karaoke machine or photo booth. The infamous day, slipping out of our close grasp.

Schools closing was one thing, but the announcement of the SQA exams being cancelled was a whole new level of emotion for teachers and pupils alike. I've never seen a corridor like the one I saw ten minutes after the announcement. The 'ugh they're only prelims' mantra became suddenly twisted, the painstaking hours spent re-writing notes or completing hundreds of past paper questions became quickly meaningless, conditional university offers or meeting entry requirements instantaneously jeopardised. To put it frankly, it was devastating, despite the deceiving 'no exams!'.

So quickly, everyone's devastation was shoved to one side and what was meant to be a bog-standard Friday, became a mish-mash of makeshift pranks, shirt signing and goodbyes.

It was not what we wanted, but it was something. Of course, in reality, all decisions were the right thing to do, and everyone understood our sadness was trivial in grand scheme of things.

My friend **Erin Livingston** writes,

"It was a big shock to the system, making it perhaps much more emotional now as my time together with friends was cut shorter. Although we ended it the best way we could, it's still very sad that we couldn't have done it all as planned."

Another of my friends, **Jacey Cunningham** wrote,

"Leaving our last year at Linlithgow Academy earlier than expected was a mix of emotions. not getting the last day full of activities, prom and even just a proper goodbye was emotional. With it being landed at our feet so suddenly we lost our chance to sit our last set of exams and for some, get themselves into their further career confidently. Due to the circumstances, it was best for everyone's safety to leave early, however it was not the ending any of us expected. Wouldn't wish this type of school ending on any future leavers."

I don't think it's really hit everyone, I myself still can't accept the idea of school being a fond memory. Gladly, for me, those memories are fond and I suppose it will be an interesting story to tell of how our time at Linlithgow Academy came to an end.

Alice Ferguson

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CHILDREN AND RAINBOWS AND BEARS... OH MY!



We are a world in limbo – all held as one in the grip of a global pandemic. A nation on lockdown, unable to see our loved ones and friends, unable to travel, unable to participate in our favourite sports and past-times. It would be so easy to feel isolated – self-isolated – each home an island in this sea of world-wide uncertainty.

Yet all over the country, as we venture out each day for our one permitted local perambulation, there are signs everywhere that we are not alone. Households are reaching out to one another – sending signals of community spirit and caring from their windows – that cast beacons of friendship and neighbourliness for all to share.

While the media have largely been responsible for promoting a movement now affectionately called the Rainbow Trail, this trail has captured the minds and hearts of children, parents and educators everywhere. Thought to have initially started in Italy, the Rainbow Trail has spread to other countries of the world. It has provided many children with a mini art project and is a nice way for them to connect with one another. The symbolism is

clear and the message is perfect in its simplicity – spread a little colour, cheer and happiness for others to see at this time of international crisis.

Another world-wide ‘outbreak’ that is growing in popularity at this time is the Teddy Bear Hunt. There are reports on social media and in the mainstream news of people placing teddy bears – sometimes even elaborate bear-themed tableaux – in prominent places in windows and gardens providing a safe, fun activity for children to discover on their daily walk with family. The hunt is inspired by popular children’s story book “We’re Going On a Bear Hunt”, written by UK author Michael Rosen. The story alone is uplifting in this current climate. It tells the tale of a family journeying together over uncharted (and often hostile) territory, working together and helping each other over obstacles and outpace a scary, fast-moving beast.

The messages behind these community trails are simple, unwavering and clear. They can be conveyed through pop culture slogans. United we stand. All you need is love. In a world where you can be anything – be kind.

Lisa Nettleton





A public meeting was held on the 4th March 2020 in the Linlithgow Burgh Halls to present the background to the proposal to create a PEACE GARDEN in the area of the existing Rose Garden. It was attended by 40 members of the public from the town and chaired by Stuart Rennie from Kirkcaldy.

First stage Public Consultation 4th March 2020.

SUMMARY

A public meeting was held on the 4th March 2020 in the Linlithgow Burgh Halls to present the background to the proposal to create a PEACE GARDEN in the area of the existing Rose Garden. It was attended by 40 members of the public from the town and chaired by Stuart Rennie from Kirkcaldy.

The Members of the Peace Garden team were introduced to the meeting and were joined by Chris Rankin and David Muir of Rankin Fraser who have been selected as Landscape architects. Their task is to develop a proposal for a garden for the 21st century while recognising the historic position and heritage of the existing Rose Garden.

Chris Rankin explained the history of the garden from the original gift of the whole area to the town in 1903 through to the creation of a New Garden stretching east from the Burgh Halls and down the terraced area to the bandstand and the back wall of the Victoria Hall. The New Garden was opened in 1950 by The Ministry of works and the council as a joint project and included a Rose Garden and water feature.

By 2008 the upper section of the garden, running from the Burgh Halls as far as the east wall and the top of the terracing was transferred back to the council. This area is proposed to be leased from the council by the SCIO on behalf of the town.

TIME FOR AN UPDATE?

Times have moved on from the 1950s when the current garden was laid out. In many areas of life our understanding of the importance of gardens has developed enormously; for example in providing havens for wildlife, especially birds and insects, physical and mental health and access for all. Most aspects that could be significantly improved in the current garden.

It is believed that there is now potential to update and refresh the garden without insensitively altering its essence to provide;

- >> *Improved access for all including ambulant and non-ambulant disabled users.*
- >> *Improved planting for bio-diversity and to encourage pollinators.*
- >> *Introduction of year-round seasonal interest and colour in the choice of plants.*
- >> *Planting that reflects the history and heritage of the site.*
- >> *Improved sensory planting.*
- >> *A garden for quiet reflection*

Chris Rankin showed a number of slides with various ideas for planting, none of which suggest firm ideas for Linlithgow but demonstrate the colour and form that might be considered.

The meeting was then invited to comment on the ideas for the future garden and to complete a feedback form based around 4 key questions.

1. *Do you visit the garden? The majority responded yes.*
2. *How would you describe the garden? A considerable variety of responses were received ranging from Beautiful to dismal and neglected.*
3. *Do you agree the garden could be improved? The majority expressed a wish to improve the area.*
4. *Would you be interested in joining a workshop to explore further the potential of the Garden? 50% said they would.*

A key feature of the discussion and the analysis by Rankin Fraser was the thoughts of the meeting on the name of the garden with a significant number requesting that the Rose Garden name not be lost.

Following that analysis by Rankin Fraser and a delay due to the current pandemic, approval for Rankin Fraser to proceed with the next phase of the work was given on the 14th April.

The proposal now is that Rankin Fraser will respond to the consultation, based on the feedback responses, with some thoughts for potential designs ranging from the most minimal to a more complex proposal. It is expected that these will be available by mid-May. Given the current lockdown and closure of most places to meet, the team will look for the best way of showing the plans and discussing the next stage.

UPDATE FROM VIRTUE MONEY



Virtue Money

Well, that's us into another week of lockdown and I'm guessing that we're all starting to feel the effects of staying at home and only venturing out for essential food, medicines and our allowed daily hour's exercise.

I can honestly say that our house and garden hasn't looked this good for a number of years,

usually I have to convince (he would describe this as nagging) my husband to tackle the jobs round the house opposed to him partaking of his numerous hobbies on his days off.

The telephones have been diverted to our mobile phones and we are still very much contactable via email at susan@virtuemoney.com.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with us if you have any questions in the meantime relating to your pensions or investments; our advisers would be delighted to have a chat with you personally and allay any concerns you may have.

On behalf of everybody at Virtue Money - stay home, stay safe, save lives.

TO CONTACT VIRTUE MONEY

EMAIL: **Susan Ralston:**
susan@virtuemoney.com.

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

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LINLITHGOW RFC MALE VOICE CHOIR

When the lock-down kicked in, the Rugby Club choir could no longer meet to practise. Like many others they resorted to Zoom, but to keep things manageable met in sections rather than as a full choir. The Baritones were lucky to include Rod Aird, who arranged Caledonia (by Dougie McLean) for 4 baritone voices.

The baritones then went off to their bedrooms to practise – since they normally have to master only the one part among them all - before recording themselves on

their smartphones, each from the corona-security of his own home.

Rod then spliced the whole sound together and, even better, managed to add photos from his own family collection to produce an evocative result, which you can enjoy in full colour at <https://youtu.be/StSelH8DF4k> Even better with headphones.

You can contact the choir via their Chairman Peter Russell on prrussell@blueyonder.co.uk or on 01506 843062.



The Baritone section of the Linlithgow Male Voice Choir have recorded this 4 part version of Caledonia during lockdown using their smartphones.

>>>>>> CLICK ON LINK: <https://youtu.be/StSelH8DF4k>





LINLITHGOW RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB CELEBRATES ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Bruce Jamieson

Linlithgow Rugby Club will celebrate its 50th birthday in November this year. In this first of a two-part feature, Bruce Jamieson looks at the early days of the Club. In November's edition of the "Black Bitch", the story will continue with a focus on the Club today, as it looks forward to the next 50 years.



An early training session in 1971

November 17th 1970 was a momentous date in the long history of the Royal and Ancient Burgh of Linlithgow. On that day, in the confines of the back bar of the Star and Garter Hotel, there was formed the Linlithgow Rugby Football Club. The impetus for the creation was a desire by the West Lothian Cricket Club to utilise their facilities at Boghall over the winter months and it was their chairman, Cecil Kerr, who called the meeting at which nineteen of those present pledged the sum of 5/- each to fund the embryonic organisation. A constitution was written, based largely on that of Hawick RFC, a rugby ball was purchased, strips were obtained from the Grangemouth ICI club and the first game took place later in the month against another new club, Currie – not yet at Boghall playing field but at Bridgend. Linlithgow lost this first game but rugby was back in town and the new club was under way.



A 1920s aerial view showing the Boghall site behind the Territorial Army base at Baronshill.

The original 1st XV of the newly established rugby club read: Bathgate, Neilson, Cotton, Oliphant, Watson, McNicoll, Berridge, McTavish, Hardie, Forrest, Laurie, Westwood, Hastie, Sangster and Carmichael.

Many of those characters are shown here in an early club photo:



The newly formed Linlithgow Rugby Club went from strength to strength - attracting membership from local players who were now being coached at the local school, and incomers to the town who came from rugby playing backgrounds. The first captain was a Lancastrian, John Cotton, with the vice captain being local baker, David Oliphant.

Various difficulties were overcome, including the problem of finding a training ground and the inexperience of the squad, but success came at last with victories over Edinburgh Northern and Livingston 2nds. A successful first season saw Club Treasurer, Charlie Pomphrey, declare that there was £33-16s in the club's accounts - and that next year's subscription fees would be raised to £2-00 for playing members. The AGM declared that a red strip was the favoured option and a set was duly bought from Thorntons - with the players themselves paying for their shirts!



A training group from the early 1970s.

On September 18th, the club, for the first time, fielded two teams; the Firsts winning against Old Augustinians with Gerry Keating scoring his first club try. (Three teams were first sent out in 1975 and a Colts team, captained by Bobbie Bennie in 1977). Encouragingly, many local lads joined the organisation including club stalwart, Ronnie Hastie.

Harmonising the different requirements of the Cricket Club and the Rugby Club were always going to be problematic and following some difficult situations, Tom Berridge and Wallace Lockhart, the club's first two presidents, set about trying to find replacement facilities. Attempts to play on the Glebe, at the top of Manse Road, proved fruitless and offers of pitches outside the town were considered detrimental to the club's community ethos. Eventually, an agreement was reached with Mr Gardiner of Springfield to use a field to the west of his mansion house - and this became the infamous 'Cow Park'.



An early game on the 'Cow Park'

Many a crashing tackle on the field saw players sliding through the unwelcome deposits left behind by previously grazing cattle! The use of the park was always considered a temporary solution and Provost Fergus Byrne, calling the club "a decided asset to the town" promised to look into more suitable playing facilities - perhaps, he suggested, at Mains Park. It took several years for this to come to fruition but eventually, in 1978, the club decided to make the break from the Cricket Club's HQ at Boghall. Tentative enquiries were made about the possibility of buying "The Swan" as a clubhouse but eventually it was decided to take up landlord George Bain's offer and "The Unicorn" was adopted as a base.



The 1st XV in 1976 with President Mike Williams, Coach Alan McNish and Captain Craig Loudoun.

After a couple of seasons, "St Michael's Hotel" became the unofficial Clubhouse, to which players and spectators retired after games played at Bo'ness, Grangemouth and Springfield. On account of sustained pressure, West Lothian Council eventually agreed to lease to the club just over four acres of Mains Park on which the members were permitted to create a pitch and build a clubhouse with changing facilities. The first game at the new venue was played against Portobello on September 12th 1981 – the ball being ceremonially kicked off by Provost David Cook.

An incredible effort saw over £95,000 being raised within the first year and KR Joiners of Auchterarder set about completing the new facilities, to a design by the architectural firm of the David Lee Seur Partnership. The build was made possible by a loan of £35000 from Tennent Caledonian Brewers and contributions from West Lothian District Council and the Sports Council. The new clubhouse was officially opened by George Thomson, President of the Scottish Rugby Union.

In 1982-83 the club's 1st XV topped their division and won promotion – an event celebrated at the official opening of the clubhouse and an exhibition game played on the park between President Colin Wells' select and a Co-optimist side which included such Scottish international players as Finlay and John Calder, Ivan Tukalo, Gerry McGuiness, John Jeffrey and Brian Gossman.



LRFC full playing squad outside the new clubhouse in 1983.



Scrum half Gerry Keating in action at Mains Park. Gerry hung up his boots, along with Scottish captain Douglas Morgan at a celebration match played on April 30th, 1984.

The mid to late 1980s were heady days for the Club with five teams being occasionally sent out to the field, in addition to the Peelers – a group of keen but marginally ageing members who were finding it increasingly hard to keep up their speed, or their knowledge of the new laws coming into the game. Mini Rugby also flourished.



The 1983 Mini Rugby Squad.

1987-88 saw promotion to Division IV with end of season victories over St Boswell's and Madras – a feat that saw the club winning both the McEwan's Brewery and the Smith's Menswear Club of the Month.

In 1992, the club were granted permission to use the lower Mains Park pitch – a result of football being moved from the ground

to new playing areas next to the Kettilstoun Sports Centre. Two years later, an extension was added to the Clubhouse, largely masterminded by Ian Gibson, and this brought improved changing facilities, a larger lounge and improved kitchen facilities.

In 1996/7 floodlights were placed around the lower pitch which helped to facilitate evening training sessions for both club players and for the youth teams, the organisation of which had been amalgamated with Linlithgow Academy under the guidance of PE teacher Fraser Mackenzie.

A highlight in the Club's history came in season 1997-98 when the Reds became Division 3 champions after beating front-runners Ross High in a memorable, final game at Mains Park.

The following year, the Young Reds U14s defied all the odds and created history by being the first state school to win the Scottish Schools U14 Jubilee Cup at Murrayfield, beating Hutchesons Grammar in the final with only a Mark Dixon conversion separating the teams and earning the Young Reds the trophy and the top spot in Scotland.



Young Reds' U14 Jubilee Cup Winners at Murrayfield

The Club today is in good heart with two senior teams, five school teams, four mini rugby teams, three micro rugby squads and the "Tiny Reds" – a pre school group. They boast an excellent indoor training facility - and the only Rugby Club Male Voice Choir in Scotland. Come on the Reds!

TO BE CONTINUED.

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A wild self-isolation

I hope this finds you all safe. Life as we know it has completely ground to a halt. Yet nature has continued, oblivious - and perhaps that's a good thing. Because a constant as wonderful as nature is just what we need to distract ourselves.

For those of you lucky enough to be able to leave the house, having an awareness of your surroundings whilst out for a walk can really enrich the experience. Even on a street you've walked a million times before, you might spot a fox slink past or hear buzzards mewing overhead. Wee beasts especially such as butterflies and bees can also make a visit to the outside world come alive.

Even if you aren't able to leave home, I do recommend taking the opportunity to show the garden a little love. Now is a great time to plant up some flowers for bees and butterflies, and remember to keep feeding the birds too. In fact, why not put aside half an hour each day to watch the birds in your garden? It's a great way to improve your ID skills and if you record your sightings, you might be really surprised by your findings. Bird feeders are also a great way to get

kids to try some science experiments too - try seeing if the birds prefer certain foods or which species feed from the ground or on feeders.

There are also loads of ways to check on wildlife around the world. Social media groups such as The Self Isolating Bird Club on Facebook can reduce that feeling of loneliness by allowing us to share sightings and experiences. Live camera feeds at nature reserves can also be fantastic to keep an eye on - I particularly recommend the Wildlife Trusts and the Shetland Web Cams, which show some incredible wildlife.

Bizarrely, us staying in is actually a really good thing for wildlife. Fish have returned to Venetian canals and pumas have been sighted in the centre of Santiago, Chile. The lack of disturbance and pollution is allowing some species to flourish. There are however animals which are struggling without humans - ducks unable to find enough food without people feeding them for example.

If we can use this time right it won't just be humans who heal but nature too. The more love and understanding we can gain, the better a state our planet will be in for us to live on.

LUCY PURBRICK

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Blue Tit on feeder



Fox



Puma in Santiago, Chile



Logo for self-isolating bird club



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“SELF ISOLATING - WHAT’S NEW?”

“Of course, you could say I’ve been doing this social-isolation stuff for the best part of eight years now,” Munro says “that’s how long it’s been since my wife passed away. People don’t realise how much something like that changes your life, knocks it right off the tracks, it just slowly dawns on you that things aren’t ever going back to what they used to be. They’re saying that about the coronavirus too.”

I’m talking to Munro on a Skype connection, putting into practice my promise to keep in contact with vulnerable individuals during the health emergency. He looks fatter on my computer screen, more-jowly and pale than I remember from the last time we met in the street.

“You take the friends Lizzie and I had at one time,” Munro continues “people who always invited you to their parties, Christmas, New Year, anniversaries, that sort of thing. That all stopped when she died. For some reason I haven’t figured out yet, they stopped. Far as I know this is common, happens to a lot of people who’ve been bereaved. I’ve read about it, but nobody can say why it happens (laughs), of course maybe they liked Lizzie more and just put up with me because I was her husband.”

“But it kills me when they talk on the radio about looking out for the elderly, making sure they don’t sink into loneliness, get depressed and all that. What do they think we were like before this virus thing took hold? Do you know who my first-foot was this year? A delivery man asking if I would take in a parcel for a neighbour. And that was beginning of March (laughs). I spend most of my time here with a few hibernating spiders in the bathroom and a couple of crows who’ve taken to roosting on my roof. I’m like a naughty kid who’s been sent to his room and no one remembers he’s there.”

“Do you want to know what I really think – I think when this crazy epidemic is over, when things get back to normal, when it’s done with, we’ll go straight back to where we were before. You think that’s cynical? Well, maybe, but when I see them leaning out the window applauding the nurses,



and the paramedics, and the hospital cleaners, I think where were you when these workers were telling us how bad it was with the NHS? Why didn’t you do something before now, before it got overwhelming? We don’t think much about hospital workers, do we, till we need them, until we’re sick, then we start talking about them as being saints and angels. That kills me.”

“Of course, I appreciate everything people are doing for the likes of me. The pensioners, you know? There’s a lot of kindness out there, compassion, lots of worried folks who have their own problems but push them aside to help others. But there’s some who don’t give a toss for anybody but themselves. (laughs). I passed a woman the other day who ran herself into a hedge just to avoid me. Got herself tangled-up no end! I was about four metres away,

that’s how daft it was! I felt I should go around yelling “Unclean! Unclean!” the way the lepers did in Linlithgow, back then. I’d say that woman was close to being hysterical.”

Munro takes a mouthful of beer from his glass before continuing.

“Oh aye, I go out as much as I’m allowed. No use sitting around waiting for people to ring and ask how everything is going. They should know it’s the same for everybody. I was listening to a woman on the radio telling me how to make Dorset apple cake, and poppy seed and cinnamon bread (laughs), can you imagine me trying something like that! I make for Tesco’s, get in the queue and buy what’s left on the shelves. I’ve always got on well with the lassies there, I’ve always appreciated what they do and how low-paid they are. I don’t have to applaud them, they’re polite and helpful and I’ve not been backward about telling them that.”

“You were saying what I thought would come out of all this? (Shrugs). Well, the world has to change that’s for sure. Everybody’s saying that. But change to what? People have to decide, not just the politicians. It should come from the bottom up, the grassroots, the localities. Only if they want to, of course. But often they turn their backs on things because it makes life easier that way. Just ride out the problems and somehow they’ll go away. They think other people, political parties, should solve their problems for them. “That’s what they’re paid for,” is the attitude. Maybe that’s one of the good things that’ll come from all this, make people face reality instead of just girning. Fact is, they can do it. I know they can do it. I’ll add my tuppence-worth. You see people know more than they let on. They can be knaves, but rarely ever fools...”

Kirk Gates

*Illustration: Sandra Gibson.
E: sandrajgibson2004@yahoo.co.uk*



LINLITHGOW GRANGE ROTARY

These are strange, troubled times. But one positive from this Coronavirus Crisis is that we really appreciate our social interaction – taken for granted until now.

Loneliness is a dreadful experience which, in the weeks ahead, many will experience acutely. Various Linlithgow organisations work tirelessly to help combat this feeling of isolation. For this reason, Linlithgow Grange Rotary supports such organisations with its **Tree of Light** initiative at Christmas time. Six organisations were selected for the 2019 campaign: **Linlithgow and Community Day Care Centre**, providing short-term secure environment and entertainment for frail elderly people whilst at the same time giving relief for the family or carer; **Linlithgow Link** whose activities include the monthly Caring Café for people with dementia; Link also provides transport to and from hospital or health-related appointments when public transport proves difficult; **Carers of West Lothian**, a charitable organisation that has developed a support service for carers, many of whom are carrying out their role in some isolation; and **The Cyrenians** who give one-to-one support and encouragement through befriending and telephone.

There can be no more traumatising sense of loneliness than losing someone dearly loved. **Sands, The Stillbirth and Neo-Natal Death Society** now appropriately renamed **Held in our Hearts**, works both to help reduce infant mortality and to ensure that anyone affected by a baby's death receives optimum care and support for as long as required.

No magic formula will take away the pain of bereavement but, by listening and sharing with others, we often lessen the sense of isolation, chaos and despair felt after the death of a loved one. **Positive Pathways Bereavement Support** – a group of bereaved people who meet informally with a support team, sharing thoughts and feelings in looking forward.

Rotary Club members have been delighted to raise money on behalf of these organisations which function through the valuable contribution of volunteers, while largely dependent on public funding.

Linlithgow's Rotary Tree of Light is now in its fourth year. We use a dedicated tree, illuminated at Christmas, as a focus for people to commemorate lost members of family and close friends or to celebrate a significant event in their lives. Tree of Light donations generously made direct or online in the 2019 campaign have now been disbursed to the charities and will be put to good use at this time or as soon as things get back to some equilibrium as their needs dictate. Originally, we used the tree outside the old Library in the Vennel, but for 2019 the town's Christmas tree at The Cross played the role. Now placed in the very heart of the community, with new

lighting partly sponsored by generous grants from Alan Steel Asset Management, RGM Solicitors, Stewart Electrical, Cala Homes and individual donations, our tree proudly displayed the community spirit of the town.

We must commend our three councillors for their encouragement and support in permitting the Tree to be allocated for this purpose. As a result of its higher profile, the 2019 Tree of Light received 50% more dedications, doubling the previous year's income. Rotarians were in attendance each December weekend until Christmas answering questions and providing dedication forms. We were humbled by the warm praise for our initiative from passers-by.

One tableau to remain in the writer's memory is driving past the Cross one December evening and seeing three couples intently reading the dedication cards below the tree. For a brief moment, the names of the many loved ones were spoken, albeit silently, once more. As the old African proverb states, "As long as you speak my name, I shall live forever."

The Tree of Light provides comfort and solace to many and the Rotary Club of Linlithgow Grange is proud to be of service in this way.

Rotary Club of Linlithgow Grange

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THE GODLEY FAMILY LOCKDOWN

Local podiatrist, **Martin Godley**, has advertised in the Black Bitch Magazine since its inception in 2011.

Since the beginning of lockdown, Martin and his wife **Mairi** have been home schooling their boys, **Johnny and Luke**.

Mairi told us: "The boys' school, St. Joseph's Primary, has been sending us a daily plan for their classes with activities and online links which has been great. They do some literacy and numeracy but also some fun games, music, sport and a bit of craft thrown in too. It has given us a structure to their day. We discovered 3D pictures via google which coincided with Luke's school book, 'The tiger who came to tea'. Wee sister Aimee has enjoyed having us all at home, singing, dancing and dressing up."

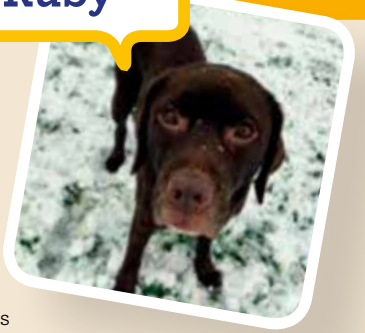
"Over the last two weeks it has been a restful time during their Easter break. We have played in the garden, build dens, completed a Easter hunt and

enjoyed lots of chocolate and tasty meals. Our street has a Sunday 5pm drinks catch up which has been lovely. We have all been out with many others at 8pm every Thursday to applaud our fantastic NHS."

"We are ready to get back into a routine when the holiday period ends and to home school until the lockdown restrictions are lifted. Technology has been great to keep in touch with family and friends."

Mairi is a modern languages teacher, so this has helped, and Martin has been volunteering in the community by delivering prescriptions as his clinic has temporarily closed.

Hello I'm Ruby



Ruby was rescued through Labrador Rescue Scotland 4 years ago.

When Ruby arrived to live in her forever home, she was very scared, anxious and reactive towards certain people, mainly men. The family worked with Lothlorien Dog Services to help them with her fear and reactive behaviour using games, cues and commands. Since then Ruby has quite simply been a different dog!

Ruby is quite small and very cute so is often mistaken for a puppy, although her muzzle is going a little grey now. She is incredibly affectionate and has the shiniest coat. She gives her family the biggest welcome home even if they've only been out for 10 minutes! When she's excited, she slides along their wooden floors and given the chance she would eat absolutely anything, a typical Labrador, so her owners must make sure the kitchen door is kept firmly shut!

Although traits are very much a stereotypical Labrador, she doesn't like water or retrieving things! Her happy place is snuggled up on the couch as close as she can to her Mum. Ruby likes to sleep with a pillow and will carry it around instead of toys and takes all the cushions off the couch and takes them

upstairs where she'll lie on them - she likes to be comfy!

"Read to Ruby" was introduced to Low Port Primary School last session where the P1 children were challenged to read their books aloud to Ruby and try to make her fall asleep, they all succeeded and Ruby's snoring made them all laugh! Ruby sometimes comes into school during staff training sessions which is a boost for staff health and wellbeing!

Pets can suffer from anxiety, just like we do. The PDSA Animal Wellbeing (PAW) report 2018 reports that in the UK, 82% of dogs and 89% of cats are reported to be 'scared of something'.

It is vital that things which make our pets anxious are identified early on. This may be at any age throughout a pet's life. It is never too late to deal with these things no matter how old your pet may be!

Seeking help from professionals like your vet and a certified dog trainer or behaviourist can result in the best success to work on, even overcome, the things which worry our pet.

If your pet's behaviour changes, we recommend that your pet is checked by your vet in case this may be an indicator or result of an underlying health condition. Pain is a major

factor which can affect our pet's behaviour. It's important to keep a note when you notice changes and it helps to look for any patterns -

If certain behaviours become common after exercise; are behaviours more pronounced in the morning or evening and if you are more likely to see these behaviours after a longer walk at the weekend rather than a shorter one during the week.

Ruby is a wonderful example of how, with a lot of time and training from her family, and the help of a professional trainer, these things which create a lot of anxiety can be overcome. So much so she is a confident dog who is now able to help others with her 'Read to Ruby' programme!

If you are worried about your pet or notice any changes in their usual routine or behaviour, please contact the Westport Vet team 01506 844165.



During these uncertain times we are providing the best care

for your pets that we possibly can whilst working within government guidelines.

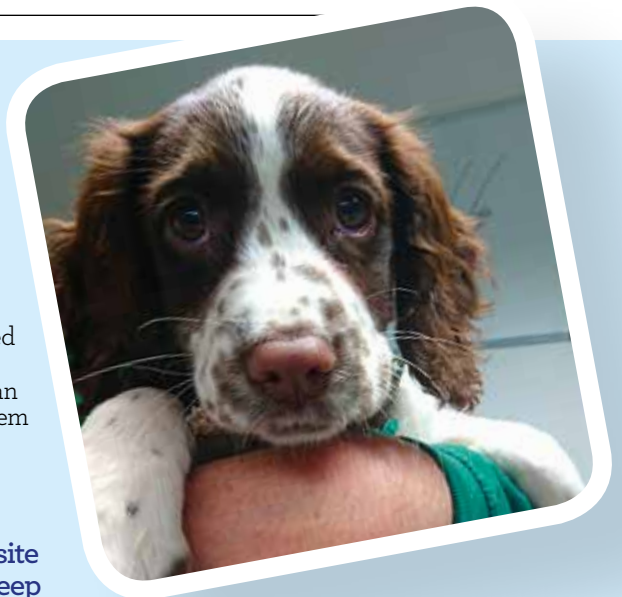
We still have staff at Linlithgow and South Queensferry to deal with emergencies and any telephone or email queries. If you have any concerns please contact us on 01506 844165. It is a strange way to work but our staff on the frontline are working incredibly hard to support you all at this time.

Your pets will be mostly enjoying having the family at home but it can be a stressful time for some as it is a new routine and many are not used to having people at home all day. Make sure they have plenty of places that they can choose to go to get time away from the hustle and bustle. Cats in particular will require plenty of hiding places.

One person can go for an hours exercise each day so if there's more than one of you it's possibly best if one of you takes the dog out in the morning and one in the afternoon.

Many families might be struggling to keep kids occupied so why not combine the two - get the kids involved in training your pets. You can talk to the kids about training, or setting up an obstacle course which should keep them all entertained.

Check out our Facebook page <https://m.facebook.com/WestportLinlithgow/> and website westportvets.com which will keep you up to date with all the relevant advice on the Covid-19 situation.



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.



Needless to say, the Covid 19 outbreak has had a huge impact on the property market in so many different ways.

House sales have virtually stopped completely. In the first instance when Registers of Scotland closed, this prevented solicitors from lodging advance notices with the register, and without this happening, lenders would not advance mortgage funds. The advance notices act as a marker that a particular property transaction is due to complete, and prevents other parties laying claim to that property. Subsequently an electronic filing procedure has been introduced to cater for transactions where there is an underlying urgent reason a transaction should complete.

Secondly, BAR, the British Association of Removers, has advised its members not to carry out removals until further notice. This does not stop people hiring vans and carrying out moves themselves, but this step will likely significantly delay the vast majority of planned house sales.

Thirdly, regardless of whether either sellers or buyers are happy to carry out a property viewing, the government advice is that this is deemed in contravention of the social distancing guidelines.

Issues affecting the private rented sector are broadly similar, but not exactly the same as in the house sales sector.

Guidance to Letting Agents is that property inspections should be suspended until further notice. The exception is exit inspections, where these could be conducted by professional bodies provided the property is no longer occupied and it is more than 72 hours since the tenants vacated.

In theory essential or urgent maintenance work can be undertaken provided tenants are willing to allow this and contractors are prepared to attend a property. In such cases Letting Agents have been advised to seek specific confirmation from tenants

and contractors alike that neither are showing any symptoms of Covid 19, and that they are fit and well.

The requirement for scheduled routine property safety checks, such as electrical system checks and gas safety certificates has been temporarily lifted, as has the proposed requirement for improving minimum energy efficiency standards.

Tenants who are struggling to pay all or some of their rent will now enjoy enhanced protection from eviction proceedings. Not only have many of the notice periods to be given by a Landlord been extended considerably, depending upon what grounds a Landlord is giving notice, but until the 30th September, a date which may be changed again, all evictions will be discretionary.

This means that the First Tier Tribunal, that body which administers eviction applications, may decide to apply a reasonableness test. In simple terms, this means the tribunal will decide based on the circumstances of each case, whether the tenant's need or right to occupy a property is outweighed by a Landlord's need or right to repossess a property.

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ONE LINLITHGOW LOCAL BUSINESS UPDATES: “LOCKDOWN IN LINLITHGOW”

WEDNESDAY 15TH APRIL

We’ve compiled a list of businesses in Linlithgow, which are still trading despite lockdown, whether that’s by delivering or taking classes online. We encourage everyone to support local businesses through this. We’re delighted to include more businesses this week than last. If your business isn’t here, but should be, please contact us: office@onelinlithgow.com.

If your favourite business isn’t on this list, have a look at our bespoke One Linlithgow section of TideOver (tideover.co/product-category/one-linlithgow), where you can buy vouchers to spend when they reopen. They’ll receive 75% straight away, so they can keep afloat in the meantime. Many have taken the decision to close until lockdown is lifted, but of all the hundreds of businesses across Linlithgow, whose updates we checked, none said they were closing permanently. They’re all looking forward to opening their doors to you again when this is all over!

The best way to keep up to date is to check the Facebook (FB) page of the business you’d like to use. We’ve included contact details with each entry (where available) and divided the list up as follows:

1. ESSENTIALS

2. HEALTH/FITNESS

3. FOOD & DRINK

4. RETAIL

5. SERVICES

6. BEAUTY

7. EVENTS

**PLEASE CHECK DIRECTLY WITH THE BUSINESS
FOR UPDATES**

**THE INFORMATION IS A GUIDE ONLY
AND WAS PRODUCED BY ONE LINLITHGOW
CONTACT:**

OFFICE@ONELINLITHGOW.COM.



1. ESSENTIALS

This section includes supermarkets, for everyday essentials, but also banks (there's only one left in Linlithgow) and local suppliers (it's not just supermarkets stocking essentials... in fact, you might have better luck at the quieter, local shops. Complete Health have plenty of flour, for instance).

BUSINESS	ADDRESS	UPDATE	CORRECT AT	CONTACT
ALDI	31 Falkirk Road (Stockbridge Retail Park), Linlithgow, EH49 7AS	Reduced opening hours: 8am-8pm daily, except Sunday (9am - 6pm). This is to allow shelves to be replenished during period of increased demand.	10-Apr	0800 042 0800
BANK OF SCOTLAND	24-26 Blackness Road, Linlithgow, EH49 7JB	Reduced opening hours: Mon-Fri 10am-2pm.	10-Apr	01506 770201 bankofscotland.co.uk facebook.com/ bankofscotland/
COMPLETE HEALTH AT THE MILLSTONE	159 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7EJ	Delivery only, to ensure health of customers. Please continue placing orders, ideally the day before to allow preparation.	20-Apr	completehealthlinlithgow @gmail.com completehealth linlithgow.co.uk facebook.com/ completehealth atthemillstone
THE COURT RESIDENCE	1 Court Square (High Street), Linlithgow, EH49 7EQ	Open to key/essential workers in need of accommodation, or to assist locals unable to return to their permanent residence due to insurance claim damage.	15-Apr	01506 538687 info@courtresidence.com courtresidence.com facebook.com/ courtresidence
PETS AT HOME	Unit 3, 31 Falkirk Road (Stockbridge Retail Park), Linlithgow Bridge, EH49 7AS	Selling essential pet products (food and medications), please do not come to store unless essential.	10-Apr	0345 850 8868
POST OFFICE	266 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7ER	Reduced hours due to staff shortages. Open from Tuesday 14th April	10-Apr	01506 845775 postoffice.co.uk/ facebook.com/ LinlithgowPostOffice/
SAINSBURY'S	32 Falkirk Road, Linlithgow Bridge, EH49 7PE	Opening 8am-8pm every day. Priority to NHS ID holders 7:30-8am. Priority to elderly, carers and disabled customers Mo/ We/Fr 8-9am.	10-Apr	01506 845775
TD ANDERSON BUTCHER	165 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7EJ	Trading throughout and ramping up deliveries. Get in touch through the usual means!	15-Apr	01506 842140
TESCO	2 Blackness Road, Linlithgow, EH49 7JB	Open 8am-10pm every day, except Sundays (10am-8pm). Elderly & vulnerable priority Mo/ We/Fr 9-10am. NHS priority Mo-Sa 7:30-8am.	10-Apr	03456 779432 tesco.com/ facebook.com/tesco

2. HEALTH / FITNESS

These are also essential, of course, but more specifically to do with your health, or the health of your pets. If you can help unburden the NHS by contacting your dentist, optician or pharmacist for non-emergency queries, please do so. To keep your mind and body healthy during lockdown, why not join an online fitness session with Flex Fitness or Kinneil Fitness?

BUSINESS	ADDRESS	UPDATE	CORRECT AT	CONTACT
ANDY'S BIKE CLINIC	226c High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7ES	Closed to normal customers/ priority to key workers. Distancing observed/bikes disinfected with isopropanol on collection/return.	10-Apr	01506 846371 boots.com/ facebook.com/ BootsOfficialUK
BOOTS	70-72 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7AQ	10am - 5pm. Contrary to some reports, Boots WILL NOT be selling COVID-19 testing kits, or performing tests in-store. Delivery of essential pharmaceutical items prioritised, others may be delayed. "Order & Collect" suspended in favour of direct delivery to your door.	10-Apr	01506 846371 boots.com/ facebook.com/ BootsOfficialUK
CENTRAL SCOTLAND BALLET SCHOOL	Unit 9, Block 3, Avon Mill, Linlithgow Bridge, EH49 7SF	Online classes and a comprehensive, successful YouTube channel, all accessible through the website.	10-Apr	01324 716425 info@centralscotland balletschool.co.uk csbs.dance
DEVINE DENTAL	24 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7AE	Dental emergencies only. Please call ahead. No walk-ins.	10-Apr	01506 842011 facebook.com/ devinedental1/
FLEX FITNESS	Unit 1-2, Braehead Business Units, 64b Braehead Road, Linlithgow, EH49 6EP	Virtual classes offered online to keep you in shape! Advice offered on how to build your own home gym. Contact by phone, email, FB or website to arrange.	10-Apr	07402 030321 info@flexfitnesspt.co.uk flexfitnesspt.co.uk/ facebook.com/ FlexFitnessLinlithgow/
FOOTCARE AT NATURAL THERAPIES	13 The Cross, Linlithgow, EH49 7AH	Footcare at Natural Therapies: emergency podiatry appointments/advice, please contact by phone or FB	10-Apr	07720 811420 facebook.com/pg/ footcare atnaturaltherapies linlithgow/posts
HENDRY OPTOMETRISTS	17 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7AB	Open for essential and urgent eyecare only	10-Apr	01506 842751 linlithgow@mmeyecare. co.uk mmeyecare.co.uk facebook.com/Hendrys Linlithgow/
KINNEIL FITNESS	6a Avon Mill, Linlithgow Bridge, EH49 7SF	Daily classes for members, via members page. Different types of workout. Stay healthy on lockdown! Exercise tips on Facebook page.	14-Apr	07775 622620 artisanpd@hotmail.co.uk kinneilfitnessandpersonal training.com/ https://www.facebook. com/kinneilfitness/
LINLITHGOW CHIROPRACTIC	39 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7ED	Emergencies only. Please call or send Facebook message.	6-Apr	01506 844488 / 07402 432587 info@linlithgow chiropractic.com facebook.com/ LinlithgowChiropractic .com

2. HEALTH / FITNESS

These are also essential, of course, but more specifically to do with your health, or the health of your pets. If you can help unburden the NHS by contacting your dentist, optician or pharmacist for non-emergency queries, please do so. To keep your mind and body healthy during lockdown, why not join an online fitness session with Flex Fitness or Kinneil Fitness?

BUSINESS	ADDRESS	UPDATE	CORRECT AT	CONTACT
LINLITHGOW DENTAL CARE	49 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7ED	Telephone advice services offered to relieve pressure on NHS.	1-Apr	01506 847923 facebook.com/linlithgowdentalcare/
LINLITHGOW PHYSIOTHERAPY	26C High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7AE	Closed, but will contact everyone, who had an appointment. Looking into offering online consultations.	29-Mar	01506 238189 contacts@linlithgowphysiotherapy.co.uk linlithgowphysiotherapy.co.uk facebook.com/LinlithgowPhysiotherapy/
LLOYDS PHARMACY	286 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7ER	Please only visit if you have to.	25-Mar	01506 670280 lloydspharmacy.com/ facebook.com/ lloydspharmacy/
MACKIE & BRECHIN	256 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7ES	Open for telephone consultations and examination of emergency/essential cases. Please phone in first instance. Reduced hours (see FB), out-of-hours operated from Kirkliston.	14-Apr	0131 333 3203 vets@mackieandbrechin.co.uk mackieandbrechin.co.uk facebook.com/ Mackie-and-Brechin- Ltd-363842633650761/
ROBERT CALLANDER OPTICIANS	61 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7ED	In case of emergency, call or email.	21-Mar	01506 670766 info@callanderopt.co.uk callanderopt.co.uk facebook.com/linlithgoweyewear/
SPECSAVERS	14 Blackness Road, Linlithgow, EH49 7JB	Open to deliver urgent care to those who need it most. Hours may vary, so please call ahead. Advice on eyecare on FB, e.g. avoiding eye strain when working from home.	11-Apr	01506 534484 facebook.com/SpecsaversUnitD1BlacknessRoadLinlithgow
WEST PORT DENTAL PRACTICE	261 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7EP	Surgery closed, but telephone advice line operating weekdays 10am-5pm (07709 608079).	25-Mar	01506 842748 facebook.com/pages/ Westport-Dental-Practice/ 147359515356972
WEST PORT VETERINARY CLINIC	8 Preston Road, Linlithgow, EH49 7AU	Restricted opening times due to reduced staff numbers. Check FB for updates/call ahead.	25-Mar	01506 844165 facebook.com/ WestportLinlithgow/

3. FOOD & DRINK

Please note that restaurants, which usually offer delivery, are largely still open and taking orders as usual. This list shows updates from cafés and restaurants that you may not automatically expect to offer takeaway/delivery services. Many cafés are closed, but some are operating reduced hours for takeaways/preorders/delivery.

BUSINESS	ADDRESS	UPDATE	CORRECT AT	CONTACT
ASHMAAN RESTAURANT	25a Mill Road, Linlithgow Bridge, EH49 7QJ	Open for delivery. Takeaway possible by arrangement but delivery preferred.	8-Apr	01506 845097 theashmaan.co.uk/ facebook.com/ theashmaan/
BAR LEO	50 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7AE	Takeaway/delivery available.	20-Mar	01506 846667 info@barleo.co.uk barleo.co.uk facebook. com/Bar-Leo- Linlithgow- 197680053575604/
CRANNOG	54 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7AE	Delivering wholesome food to the elderly/vulnerable. Mon/Wed/Fri 10am-12pm. To place an advance order the evening before, contact 07795 325064. New menu each week.	12-Apr	01506 843982 facebook.com/ thecrannogcafe/
DELHI'S WINTER	12 Blackness Road, Linlithgow, EH49 7DA	Delivery available (pay on phone when ordering).	31-Mar	01506 671611 delhiswinterlinlithgow@ gmail.com delhiswinter. co.uk facebook.com/ delhiswinter.linlithgow
GOLDEN CHIP	147-149 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7EJ	Reopening this week, with measures in place to ensure social distancing.	Verbal	01506 844523 hello@golden-chip.co.uk www.golden-chip.co.uk facebook.com/ goldenchiplinlithgow
LOCHSIDE CAFÉ	276a High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7ER	Keep an eye on their Facebook page. Open periodically for takeaway only.	20-Mar	01506 848599 facebook.com/ thelochsidecafe/
MASON BELLE'S KITCHEN	52 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7AE	Closed, but vouchers extended/rescheduled once normal service resumed.	19-Mar	01506 843867 masonbelleskitchen@ gmail.com masonbelles.co.uk/ facebook.com/pg/ masonbelleskitchen
OLIPHANT'S BAKERY	39 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7ED	Operating reduced hours but still trading – call ahead for update	Verbal	01506 842099 enquiries@oliphantbakers ltd.co.uk facebook.com/pages/ Oliphants-Bakers- Linlithgow/10116077
SWEET LITTLE CHEESECAKE CAFÉ	230 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7ES	Open for collection/deliveries. Please contact by mobile to order	17-Apr	07475 793239

4. RETAIL

Many of our wonderfully unique, independent businesses operate online, as well as from their bricks-and-mortar premises. Others, such as Linlithgow DIY, have simply adapted to lockdown with ease, taking orders by phone and arranging collection and delivery. In some cases, shops are closed entirely, but the owner wanted to get a message to customers, which we have included here.

BUSINESS	ADDRESS	UPDATE	CORRECT AT	CONTACT
2 FEET 1ST	73 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7ED	Keep an eye on their Facebook page. They're more than happy to discuss what you need over the phone. Payments can be taken over the phone and orders posted to you.	28-Mar	01506 847576 facebook.com/ twofeetfirstshoes/
A WEE MINDIN	48 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7AE	Shop closed, but gifts and cards delivered locally. Contact via mobile or FB.	10-Apr	01506 848313 / 07951 652813 aweemindin.co.uk facebook.com/ aweemindin
CENTRE STAGE DANCEWEAR	86 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7AQ	Free delivery on all items (call 07850 879743 to order/arrange). Contact-free delivery. Keep in touch on FB. Fun competitions run on the FB page.	9-Apr	01506 209916 centrestagedancewear. co.uk/ facebook.com/ Centre-Stage-Dancewear- 203603982987180/
ELEVATION CYCLES	103 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7EQ	Shop closed, but website operational for sales of new bikes. Emails monitored as always. Your daily exercise can be an adventure, too... maybe even the beginning of a lifelong passion!	26-Mar	01506 845390 elevationcyclestore@ gmail.com elevationcycles.co.uk facebook.com/ elevationcycleslinlithgow
FAIR TRADEWINDS	131-133 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7EJ	Offering digital vouchers on "TideOver.co".	15-Apr	01506 840348 fairtradewinds@yahoo. co.ukfairtradewinds.co.uk facebook.com/fair. tradewinds1
FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD	20 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7AE	Shop closed, but lots of free resources on the website: activity packs, recipes, craft ideas, puzzles and loads more. Just navigate to the "Home Learning Zone" of the website.	17-Apr	facebook.com/ FarFromTheMadding CrowdLinlithgow maddingcrowdlinlithgow. com
J. WALKER CARPETS	2(1F) The Vennel, Linlithgow, EH49 7EX	Local delivery service operational. Please call.	10-Apr	01506 670777 / 07773 345270 jwalkercarpets. co.uk facebook.com/ JWalker-Carpets- 154820067921262/
JEWELLERY BY DESIGN	121 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7EJ	Shop closed but very active on FB. Email with any queries/updates on existing orders.	26-Mar	01506 239292 info@jbdlinlithgow.com facebook.com/ jewellerybydesign
KAPITAL KILTS	114 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7AQ	Shop closed. Available by appointment only for kilt hire/purchase. Happy to move any hires affected by postponed events. Email with any enquiries.	23-Mar	01506 843658 info@kapitalkilts.com kapitalkilts.com/ facebook.com/ KapitalKiltsLinlithgow/

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BUSINESS	ADDRESS	UPDATE	CORRECT AT	CONTACT
KÜTCHENHAUS	33 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7DA	Shop closed, but open for business! Offering a remote design service. Email plans/measurements, or discuss on the phone/Zoom/Skype.	23-Mar	01506 845400 Showroom@Linlithgow.kutchenhaus.co.uk kutchenhaus.co.uk/ facebook.com/ kutchenhausLinlithgow/
LILYPOND CRAFTS & GIFTS	25 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7AE	Shop closed, but fully functioning website allows browsing as well as purchasing. Free delivery to EH49/EH51. Board games to ease the lockdown boredom!	14-Apr	01506 840225 enquiries@lilypondcrafts.co.uk lilypondcrafts.co.uk facebook.com/ lilypondcraftsandgifts/
THE LINE GALLERY	238 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7ES	Gallery closed, but keeping you entertained by posting lots of local art on their FB page.	7-Apr	01506 670268 all@thelineonline.co.uk thelineonline.co.uk/ facebook.com/ linlithgowline/
LINLITHGOW DISTILLERY	15 Mill Road (E-Net Park), Linlithgow Bridge, EH49 7DA	Supplying hand sanitiser to frontline workers and available to buy. Range of gins is available individually and as part of the very enticing "Lockdown Survival Kit"!	10-Apr	01506 846873 contactus@linlithgowdistillery.co.uk linlithgowdistillery.co.uk/ facebook.com/ linlithgowdistillery/
LINLITHGOW DIY	167 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7EN	Collections from shop and deliveries available. Please allow time to fulfil existing orders (make sure you have FB Messenger). Contact for update.	13-Apr	01506 670924 linlithgowdiy@gmail.com facebook.com/ LinlithgowDIY
LINLITHGOW POTTERY	226a High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7ES	Studio closed but happy to discuss commissions. Offering digital vouchers on "TideOver.co".	15-Apr	07557 784020 linlithgowpottery@gmail.com facebook.com/ LinlithgowPottery
LINLITHGOW STOVES & GIFTS	228 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7ES	Shop closed, but coal merchants still delivering. Increase in orders following lockdown, but working to fulfil orders.	23-Mar	01506 842464 hastiestoves@gmail.com linlithgowstoves.co.uk/ facebook.com/ LinlithgowStoves/
LITTLE BEAU PEEP	71 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7ED	If you need anything from the shop and live locally, just send a Facebook message and they'll deliver free of charge!	22-Mar	01506 848196 info@littlebeaupeep.net littlebeaupeep.net facebook.com/ littlebeaupeep
MID-C-MOD	78 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7AQ	Shop closed, but items on sale on eBay under the seller name "midcmod". Keeping busy upcycling items, contact to purchase!	22-Mar	facebook.com/ Midcmod- 137202103577901/

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Many of our wonderfully unique, independent businesses operate online, as well as from their bricks-and-mortar premises. Others, such as Linlithgow DIY, have simply adapted to lockdown with ease, taking orders by phone and arranging collection and delivery. In some cases, shops are closed entirely, but the owner wanted to get a message to customers, which we have included here.

BUSINESS	ADDRESS	UPDATE	CORRECT AT	CONTACT
NETWORK PROMOTIONS	GF1, 22/1 Avon Mill, Linlithgow Bridge, EH49 7SF	Offices closed, but still open for business... just contact by email.	15-Apr	01506 847317 sales@network-pro.co.uk network-pro.co.uk
THE THREAD COUNTER	75 The Vennel, Linlithgow, EH49 7ET	Had offered a home delivery service, most recent post suggests full closure for the time being. Contact by email/ FB. The website will be updated with new products.	30-Mar	01506 842013 info@thethreadcounter.co.uk thethreadcounter.co.uk facebook.com/TheThreadCounter/
TRACEY VICTORIA INTERIORS	9 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7AB	Shop closed, but interior design, curtain making and room styling services, subject to social distancing. Website running as always. Contact for any gifts, which can be delivered.	14-Apr	0131 444 0285 traceyvictoria.co.uk/ facebook.com/pg/TraceyVictoriaInteriors/
TRULY SCRUMPTIOUS DESIGNER CAKES	1 The Cross, Linlithgow, EH49 7EY	Please contact to rearrange orders. Available by phone/ email for consultation and to save your date.	14-Apr	01506 671133 office@trulydesigner cakes.co.uk trulydesignercakes.co.uk facebook.com/TrulyScrum
WEST END GALLERY	112 The Cross, Linlithgow, EH49 7AH	Gallery closed, but website running and contactable by mobile.	29-Mar	01324 613100 / 07786 628892 linlithgow@ thewestendgallery.co.uk thewestendgallery.co.uk facebook.com/ WestEndGalleryScotland

5. SERVICES

Please remember that effectively all services, which don't inherently require close contact, are operating as usual, but usually not from their physical premises (e.g. solicitors). This list shows service providers, which have had to close due to lockdown, but which are adapting by communicating with their client base in new ways.

BUSINESS	ADDRESS	UPDATE	CORRECT AT	CONTACT
ANDER TAX	21 West Port, Linlithgow, EH49 7BG	Fully contactable by email and dealing with all business as usual. If you find yourself indoors more, get a head start on your tax return!	17-Apr	01506 846830 seonaid.anderson@ andertax.co.uk
BARCLAY & CO	40 Mill Road Industrial Estate, Linlithgow Bridge, EH49 7SF	Open for business - most staff working from home, skeleton staff on site. Please pre-arrange delivery of books by calling office beforehand.	17-Apr	01506 840033 info@barclayandco.co.uk barclayandco.co.uk

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BUSINESS	ADDRESS	UPDATE	CORRECT AT	CONTACT
DOGSTAR GROOMING	Unit 4, Braehead Business Units, 64b Braehead Road, Linlithgow, EH49 6EP	Closed but posting regular instructional videos, showing how to groom your dog at home until reopening.	1-Apr	01506 840671 karen@dstargrooming.co.uk dstargrooming.co.uk/ facebook.com/pages/ category/Pet-Groomer/ Dogstar-Grooming- 327250627289938/
EK:JN ARCHITECTS	129GF High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7EJ	Full team working from home, contactable by usual phone number/email. Construction suspended but still preparing designs, drawings, models, planning applications and building warrants, ready to resume normal service when lockdown ends.	15-Apr	01506 847151 mail@ekjn.co.uk ekjn.co.uk facebook.com/ EKJN-architects-LLP- 131407983582985
FONE REPUBLIC	Linlithgow, EH49 7EJ	Open for business by appointment (please call ahead): wait at door when arriving.	1-Apr	01506 847444 fonerepublic@outlook.com facebook.com/fonerepublic/
IM-PRESSED	Linlithgow, EH49 7ER	Delivery service available as usual (as of 18th March, call for update). Contact-free delivery available.	18-Mar	01506 840600 impressed-ironing.com/ facebook.com/impressed services/
KIDZ STOP	17 Main Street, Linlithgow Bridge, EH49 7PW	Linlithgow nursery closed, but Bo'ness nursery but Bo'ness nursery (151 Dean Road, Bo'ness EH51 0HE [next to Kinneil Primary]) open for children of key workers.	15-Apr	01506 239215 linlithgow@ thekidzstop.co.uk facebook.com/The-Kidz- Stop-Nursery- Linlithgow- 144268345761655
LINLITHGOW TRAVEL	3 The Vennel, Linlithgow, EH49 7EX	Premises closed but available usual business hours by email or by phone.	14-Apr	Mon, Tue, Wed: 07468 867102 or 07517 105983. Thu, Fri, Sat: 07772 5709323 or 07843 448190 sales@linlithgow travel.co.uk facebook.com/ linlithgowtravel/
LINLITHGOW TYRES & EXHAUSTS	29 Blackness Road, Linlithgow, EH49 7JA	Open Mon-Fri 9am-2pm. Customers are advised to make an appointment to limit number of people in the garage at one time.	17-Apr	01506 843000 linlithgowtyres@btinternet. com linlithgowtyres.co.uk facebook.com/pages/ Linlithgow-Tyres- Exhausts/320183394729641
LOTHLORIEN DOG SERVICES	Unit 6, Braehead Business Units, Linlithgow, EH49 6EP	Special lockdown deals available, join using your laptop, tablet, or smartphone. Sign up by email and quote "rock the lock" to apply discount.	26-Mar	07894 726600 lothloriendog services.co.uk/ facebook.com/lds1875/
MIKE'S TAXIS	Unit 3, 14 Mill Place, Linlithgow Bridge, EH49 7TL	Open for business	25-Mar	01506 848486

5. SERVICES

RGM SOLICITORS	19-21 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7AB	Telephone consultations, interactive property viewings, virtual house valuations, new wills, Power of Attorney and Family Law cases. facebook.com/RGM-Solicitors-Estate-Letting-Agents-538662569589448	22-Apr	01506 847070 linlithgow@rgmsolicitors.co.uk rgmsolicitors.co.uk
VEITCH SOLICITORS AND NOTARIES	12 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7AG	Predominantly working remotely, still open for business, progressing property transactions for when lockdown is lifted and handling Wills and Power of Attorney enquiries by video calls.	20-Apr	01506 842100 info@tsveitch.com tsveitch.com
WHOSE LAND SCOTLAND	Suite 8, Herkimer House, Mill Road Industrial Estate, EH49 7TL	Operating remotely and contactable by the usual means shown.	20-Apr	07867 387591 whoselandscotland@gmail.com whoselandscotland.co.uk

6. BEAUTY

Unfortunately, this sector has been hit hardest: as non-essential services largely impossible to deliver without physical contact, there's little we can do to support them until lockdown is lifted. Two such businesses have contacted their clients with offers of remote advice and digital content to keep them looking and feeling beautiful until then!

BUSINESS	ADDRESS	UPDATE	CORRECT AT	CONTACT
BEAUTIQUE BEAUTY SALON	222 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7ES	Closed, but contactable via Facebook. You can purchase vouchers to help tide Aimee over until she can open doors again. Send a private FB message for skincare advice.	23-Mar	01506 844002 aimeestenhous 1990@hotmail.com facebook.com/pages/ category/Beauty-Salon/The- Beautique-Beauty-Salon-Ltd- 424276597624308/
CHAKIR HAIRDRESSING	254 High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7ES	Online hair/make-up tutorials and other fun messing about (on FB) until reopening is allowed.	28-Mar	01506 671800 chakirhairdressing@ yahoo.co.uk facebook.com/Chakirs- 187260894630299/

7. EVENTS

Without knowing when lockdown will be lifted, businesses relying on events will be faced with even greater uncertainty than others. These three had messages for their clients – and you can still contact them using the details shown

BUSINESS	ADDRESS	UPDATE	CORRECT AT	CONTACT
BURGH HALLS	10 The Cross, Linlithgow, EH49 7AH	Closed. If you have an event booked, call or email to discuss.	14-Apr	01506 282720 burgh.halls@ westlothian.gov.uk linlithgowburghhalls.co.uk/ facebook.com/ Linlithgowburghhalls
EEEK! ESCAPE ROOMS	18a High Street, Linlithgow, EH49 7AE	Offering vouchers to anyone booked in and unable to attend during the virus outbreak. Existing vouchers expiring during lockdown will be accepted upon reopening.	29-Mar	07305 627750 gamesmaster@ eeekescaperooms.com eeekescaperooms.com facebook.com/eeekescape/
LINLITHGOW CANAL CENTRE	1B Manse Road, Linlithgow, EH49 6AP	Closed until allowed to reopen. Refunds for charters until end April. New edition of "Basin Banter" provides reading material until then!	24-Mar	01506 671215 marketing@lucs.org.uk lucs.org.uk/facebook.com/ Linlithgow-Canal-Centre- 127202347352969/