



Linlithgow's news by Linlithgow's people

the BLACK bitch

LINLITHGOW COMMUNITY MAGAZINE ISSUE 81 APRIL 2021

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WHAT NEXT?



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PLUS Linlithgow Distillery Competition, Police Scotland, Burgh Beautiful, Local Arts Review, Lisa Nettleton Book Review, Bruce Jamieson - Artist JMW Turner visits Linlithgow

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COMMUNITY FOOTBALL CLUB RETURNS TO TRAINING

Linlithgow Rose Community Football Club returned to training in late March following a near 4 month absence from playing football. It's great to be back, albeit some of our older age-groups have had to wait a little bit longer to return to contact training. Through the SFA, we have implemented all of the guidance including a one way system, Covid officers for each team and a cleaning process to ensure all equipment is cleaned after each session.

We've not been quiet during lockdown. Many teams have continued to keep all players occupied with charity quizzes and online fitness challenges just to ensure we kept the broad sense of community alive and well. One of our teams raised £500 for the Doddie Weir foundation and for a Mental Health charity.

A few volunteers from the Committee also gave up some of their time to clean up the 3G facility at the Leisure Centre and put up some new nets ready for the new season. We are delighted to see the 3G look at its best ready for the full return to playing at some point in the near future.

It's been great to see our coaches also continue with their own coaching development attending online qualifications being run by the SFA.

Our club continues to go from strength to strength despite lockdown, with the return of the Linlithgow Rose Community Football Club Ladies team. Interest in the team has been significant and the newly formed team recently had their first training session on the 3G in preparation for the competitive season starting.

We are delighted to see the Walking Football team train on the 3G and with Linlithgow Rose FC also training there during the week, the 3G really feels like the centre of football in the town.

The younger age groups continue to focus on having fun with small-sided games and the emphasis being on



having fun and just letting the kids play with minimal instruction or coaching from the coaches - easier said than done!

We have also been working with the SFA as one of a few clubs in Scotland trialling an updated online PVG (Protecting Vulnerable Groups) process to ensure we could continue to welcome new coaches without falling foul of any social distancing guidance.

We remain hopeful that a return to games will follow soon, but in the meantime, we'd like to thank the parents and players for their patience and our partners at Xcite for all they have done to help with the return.

Alistair Paton
LINLITHGOW ROSE
COMMUNITY FOOTBALL CLUB



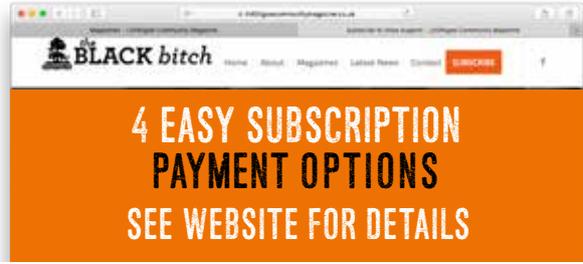
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**DAVID TAIT,
EDITOR**

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In our previous issue we touched on the precarious position at Low Port Centre. This time John Kelly of Linlithgow Community Council picks up the story going into more detail following increased interest in its future.

Hopefully good progress is being made now for the future of the Centre but its past is an interesting story too. Low Port Centre, a dedicated outdoor pursuits centre opened in 1987. Built by Lothian Regional Council, it had been promoted by Mel Gray who was also a main driver in the campaign to reopen the Union Canal. Initially managed by a committee of local residents, ownership of Low Port transferred to West Lothian Council in 1997. John's article on page 4 brings the story up to date and provides some interesting insights and perhaps some lessons for the future.

The second part of the Community Council article also deals with an issue with origins in roughly the same time period - the 1970/80s. At the time Linlithgow was growing rapidly with the residential development in what is now the Springfield area. A shelterbelt of trees was planted around the southern perimeter of the estate ostensibly as a protective barrier between homes and railway line. At the time West Lothian District Council would have been the relevant Authority but much of the record of proceedings was lost on the transfer to West Lothian Council in 1996. The new Authority adopted ongoing maintenance obligations on inadequately defined terms in 1996 with the result that residents became increasingly concerned as trees outgrew their location. With ongoing cost reduction measures the question now is who pays for maintenance? The article on Page 5 sets out the detail and potential knock-on effect

across West Lothian of the decisions to be made for Springfield.

Still on the subject of trees, Phase 1 of the project to increase the number of trees on the High Street has been broadly welcomed by the community. Burgh Beautiful have submitted an article explaining the ups and downs of the project so far and answering some concerns in relation to the planting and maintenance of the new trees to ensure no repeat of the "shelterbelt" issues while adding a welcome uplift to the town centre.

Meantime, tentative signs of recovery from the pandemic can be seen in a number of indicators. Most obviously perhaps in the very significant drop in infection rates. With continued close observance of the rules perhaps we are through the worst and can hope for a return to the new normal in the short term.

Another good indicator of the return of confidence is the property market. As reported in this issue the first quarter of the year has shown a promising rise in the supply side to match unfulfilled demand for properties.

New businesses continue to defy the gloom and invest for the future looking forward to when visitors will return and the usual wide range of events can be organised in and around the town.

On heritage we are delighted to have Bruce Jamieson's commemoration of the visit made to Linlithgow in 1801 by the then "promising young painter" JMW Turner. Bruce includes in his article a selection of the sketches Turner had made on his one day visit to the town. Also on heritage Laurie Alexander produces a fascinating and thoroughly researched piece on changes in the High Street over time - not least the relocation of a complete building

stone by stone - 225 years ago - from a location on the High Street to become Burgh Mills House at Linlithgow Bridge.

These are just some of the highlights from this Issue but there are lots more to enjoy all celebrating the impressive range of talents and interests of the people of Linlithgow.

To finish, I'd like to thank again all our subscribers and in particular all the new ones since last time. Your contributions are vital now to our aim of encouraging readers to take an active interest in their home town. There are countless opportunities to take part in or support the activities of the very large number of groups that make a huge contribution to quality of life in Linlithgow. All sorts of opportunities present themselves from helping those who need help to encouraging young and old to keep fit and healthy, both physically and mentally.

Please think about subscribing to the magazine if you haven't done so already. Every contribution of whatever amount helps us to grow and improve too.

And one final, final point we offer condolences to the family of Gordon Wallace a.k.a. Kirk Gates, our contributor, who passed away unexpectedly in early March. Murdie Kennedy who collaborated with Gordon in the 80s pays tribute on page 21.

Murdie includes a poem written by Gordon based on Linlithgow street and place names. As always, ingenious, quirky and with a great sense of fun.



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TACKLING TWO MAJOR COMMUNITY ISSUES

LINLITHGOW COMMUNITY COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS THE ISSUES

Low Port Centre - what next?

Low Port Centre was conceived as a purpose-built outdoor pursuits centre, promoted by Mel Gray, constructed by Lothian Regional Council, and opened in 1987. Low Port Centre was initially managed by a dedicated committee of local residents to provide outdoor education facilities for young people locally, and from all parts of Scotland and indeed overseas. The centre provided catered residential accommodation for up to 36 people. It contains a games hall, an indoor climbing wall, lounge, general purpose room and café. Water sports on Linlithgow Loch and climbing at nearby crags and quarries were popular, with many courses run during school holidays. West Lothian Council adopted the ownership and the running of the centre in 1997.

In 2017 West Lothian Leisure took on the tenancy of Low Port Centre from West Lothian Council and continued to provide a more limited offering of outdoor education.

On 1st January 2020 the residential wing was closed and the centre became a day centre. In late February 2021, West Lothian Leisure announced their plans to give up their tenancy (which should run until March 2022) to vacate the site and provide outdoor learning and activities from other locations in West Lothian.



On 23rd February 2021, responding to a Facebook leak of West Lothian Leisure's intentions to close Low Port Centre, Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council included a discussion of the future of Low Port Centre at its monthly online public meeting. Representatives of Lochside Playgroup spoke of their concern at the sudden closing. **Councillor Tom Conn** stated that if a group wished to take forward an asset transfer then West Lothian Council had information on the condition of the building and running costs which would be freely available.

At the March monthly online public meeting of the Community Council, **Heather Begarnie, Community Development Manager for St John's Church and Manager of the New Well**, introduced the aspirations of St John's Church and the New Well to consolidate and expand its activities in new premises. Heather is currently at an early stage of discussions with West Lothian Council to consider the feasibility of using the Low Port Centre and the possibility of a Community Asset Transfer. St John's Church and the New Well are keen to consult with local organisations to determine the most beneficial ways to partner across organisations to share space and join up services and activities. They envisage any space being multiuse, supporting the local community whilst also meeting the needs of St John's church members. Heather emphasised their enthusiasm to talk with any individuals and/or organisations who are interested in being part of the conversation about the future of Low Port Centre.

The Community Council fully supports the proposal for a Community Asset Transfer with St John's Church being the lead partner and overall manager of the Low Port Centre.

Linlithgow Community Council

Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council hold a public meeting each month to discuss matters of interest to residents. Previous articles in the Black Bitch have described town planning matters on which a community council has a statutory right to be consulted. This article describes two other recently discussed matters which are of importance to the community.



Springfield Trees - Who Pays? Public Space - Private Cost?

A pilot for future management of public open space in West Lothian

Four times a year our three West Lothian Council councillors meet with West Lothian Council officers to discuss matters specifically concerning Linlithgow Ward, at a meeting called the Local Area Committee. In common with all Community Councils in West Lothian our Community Council has recently been granted a seat at the table to ask questions of officers and to make comments.



On 2nd March 2021, a paper was presented at the Local Area Committee regarding the ownership and responsibility for public landscaped open space in Springfield generally, distinguishing between grass, shrubbery, and trees. In the paper, West Lothian Council state that having concluded a review of council records for Springfield, it has been established that West Lothian Council is maintaining land and assets that it doesn't have responsibility for, and that West Lothian Council needs to consider the council wide options for ongoing maintenance of the Springfield estate and other residential developments within West Lothian adopted under similar circumstances. Further investigation of council records by West Lothian Council officers has determined that some maintenance agreements have been made with varying conditions. These details were presented to a West Lothian Council



meeting on 30 March 2021 at which it was stated that to better understand the complexity of the issue and to ensure that all historical records are considered, the council will engage with Springfield residents before considering options for future maintenance of the estate or determining a final position.

The consultation with residents is to take place during April/May 2021. If the resulting review results in a proposal for service changes then these changes will be presented for approval by the council executive probably in the autumn of 2021.

The Community Council has a number of concerns:

>> **West Lothian Council are embarked on a programme of cost cutting**, and all services are currently being examined to determine whether West Lothian Council has a legal obligation to provide particular services. The days of providing a service to the community because it has always been provided are unfortunately over.

>> **Ownership of public open space in Springfield remains with the developer, Wimpey Homes (now Taylor Wimpey), Wilcon Homes Scotland Ltd (possibly now Taylor Wimpey), Beazer Homes (now Persimmon) and Avonside Homes (current status unknown).** The current ownership has been confused by the ending of the Feudal System of land ownership on 28th November 2004.

>> **During the 1980's developers were required to plant tree belts at the perimeter of their housing development.** These had little to do with reducing wind speed and more to do with camouflaging the housing estate from afar. The choice of forestry species was often inappropriate bearing in mind the closeness of planting and proximity to housing.

>> **West Lothian District Council acted as quasi-owner during its stewardship of the Springfield estate which ended in 1997,** maintaining and planting trees and shrubs on land it did not own without consultation. The quality of landscape maintenance was generally high; a factor not replicated in recent years.

>> **West Lothian Council has intimated that it will be seeking legal advice which implies a measure of legal interpretation.** If the position were legally clear, then there would be no need for legal advice.

>> **Clearly a public meeting cannot be held so it is likely that selected residents will receive a letter from West Lothian Council asking for sight of their title deeds to ascertain the extent to which the deeds convey a joint responsibility on residents of Springfield.**

>> **Maintenance of public open space must happen, the question is how and by whom** - individual residents, residents in groups, formal residents' associations, factors appointed by residents, West Lothian Council acting on behalf of residents?

The Community Council has made an offer to West Lothian Council officers to undertake a consultation of the Springfield residents but would need to discuss the questions to be asked.

If anyone receives a communication from West Lothian Council on this subject the Community Council would be interested to know the nature of the communication. Whatever happens in Springfield will have an impact on 49 other estates and 94 tree shelter belts across West Lothian.

If you are interested in contributing to the debate on the issues described above or indeed wish to join in the work of the community council please email John Kelly, the secretary, at john.kelly@llbcc.org.uk

John Kelly



ONE LINLITHGOW BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT



Aran

It may have only opened recently, but **Aran Sandwich and Coffee** has already established a reputation for the quality of its fare - and the unusual breadth of its vegetarian and vegan offerings.

In a prime location at Linlithgow Cross in the former Truly Scrumptious wedding cake supplier (now at Braehead), **Martin Pickersgill** is well placed to cater for both visitors and locals, and is delighted to be joining the town's burgeoning café culture.

Martin spent a number of years in banking in Leeds after training and working as a chef, and long harboured a dream to return to the profession.

He was transferred to Edinburgh a few years ago, and met his wife Laura from Falkirk, who was working with the same bank. When they were both made redundant, they looked for suitable premises to establish a café, and were delighted when the spacious premises in the heart of Linlithgow became available.

Said Martin, *"We have three young boys, Seth, six, Noah, three, and Zack, who's almost one. We always wanted to open up somewhere that kids are properly catered for. We have a small play area downstairs, with simple, healthy food for children, and board games, a train set, toy kitchen, and pens, paper and a chalkboard."*



Martin said that Aran, which was Gaelic for bread, had around a half-way split between sandwiches and bagels. They were not just offering "token" vegetarian and vegan options, but had a choice of up to 10 between the two, as well as gluten-free products. They could also make up sandwiches or bagels to meet special requests.

"Our guiding principle is high quality homemade food, locally sourced as much as possible. We make everything - from roasting our own chicken to making all our sauces, chutneys and cakes."

Martin said they had some "brilliant" suppliers, including Puddledub Farm in Fife for high-welfare bacon and ham, Unorthodox Coffee in Kilsyth for single-farm coffee from Brazil, and Clarks Foods in Penicuik for high quality cheeses.

He continued, *"We also aim to be sustainable - we don't use any single-use packaging for takeaways. All our coffee cups/lids, food packaging and cutlery is recyclable or compostable, and we only sell drinks in glass bottles or cans. Only one-quarter of our waste goes to landfill, and we use 100% electricity from renewable sources."*

Added Martin, *"We can't wait to open as a café, offer a wider menu and have people inside. But overall we've really enjoyed operating as a takeaway, and have been blown away by the support and feedback we've had!"*



DIGITAL MARKETS

One Linlithgow's online Easter Market went down a treat!

It was the fifth such market hosted on the town website mylinlithgow.com, in collaboration with Linlithgow Community Development Trust, and saw the usual excellent variety of products and services on offer, with a distinctive Easter twist.

All told, over 50 sellers (both established local businesses and local crafters) have made an additional £7,000 since the inaugural Christmas online market, offering a choice of over 1,000 unique goodies.

The Crannog Café was a particular favourite at Easter, whose afternoon teas, Mars crispy nests, and Mini Egg stuffed truffles were runaway successes.

Owner Shonagh Brown said:

"I was surprised but delighted to be the top seller at the Easter market! The online markets are great for keeping local businesses going. They've been well-organised and it's been a welcome bit of extra trade. The Crannog is too small for us to cater for properly 'distanced' walk-in customers, but we can't wait to welcome our customers back in person over the coming weeks."



Following the markets' success, **One Linlithgow** has been looking into a more permanent online shopping portal for Linlithgow businesses to use. There are a few options to explore, so watch this space! There will certainly be another online market in June, with further details to follow.

We're also investigating options for a localised gift card. We're expecting an announcement from Scottish Government in the coming weeks about financial support towards doing that, but we've done as much background work as we can before the announcement, so will be ready to take full advantage as soon as the terms are announced.

You can keep informed by following **One Linlithgow** on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. If you're a business in Linlithgow, you should already be on our direct mailing list, but if not, just ask to be added by sending an email to office@onelinlithgow.com.

LINLITHGOW'S GRAND REOPENING



All going well, Scotland is on course for a reopening of non-essential retail, with gyms, bars and close-contact businesses to follow soon after.

This time, we sincerely hope it's permanent, and to keep it that way, we must continue observing the usual preventative measures against the virus. To that end, **One Linlithgow** will be continuing to supply unlimited sanitiser and masks to businesses across town, including new "Linlithgow Loves Local"-branded antimicrobial pens, reusable masks and refillable personal sanitiser bottles with belt clips.

We're also preparing some brand-new lamppost banners, encouraging locals and visitors to use Linlithgow businesses and advertising the fantastic events in the Linlithgow calendar when they resume later in the year.

The summer months will see a 2021-22 update of the Linlithgow Visitor Guide, too, and we're looking forward to getting on with the real-life events, tourism focus and networking activities from the original Business Plan as soon as we can.

At time of writing, proposals are for shops, and close-contact services like nail salons, as well as indoor gyms and pubs with outdoor areas, to reopen on 26th April. Restrictions will still apply, such as numbers of people in shops at one time, and contact details taken by close-contact businesses, so please be patient and remember that the independent businesses you're visiting really appreciate your support.

By June 2021, it's hoped that virtually all events and businesses, both private and commercial, will be allowed with minimal restrictions, marking a return – almost – to normal. Fingers and toes crossed, then, that everyone remains vigilant and observes advised measures, so we can continue on this positive path back to unhindered living in our beloved town. See you there!



The Story of Peter Common's much-loved Flower Bed

In 2007, in response to a request from local residents, Burgh Beautiful created a bed of shrubs and herbaceous plants in ground dug for them by the West Lothian Council NETS Land and Countryside Services team. Two founding members, Liz Burrows and Kirsty Leonard were involved in the design which included a patch of culinary herbs for residents' use. The bed was maintained by local residents, led by a retired professional gardener - Peter Common - and hence the name which has stuck.



Why would a retired man take on such a project you might ask?

Well, Peter Common was raised in the hamlet of Arniston near Newtongrange, Midlothian where his father was the gardener. On leaving school at 14 Peter became apprenticed to the nearby Arniston Estate and moved there to live in a Bothy with three other apprentices under the direction of the head gardener. After the apprenticeship aged 19, Peter joined the RAF and a year after being demobbed, he moved to work at The Craigs where there were plans to develop a market garden. On retiring from this position the bed at the West Port was a gift, right on his doorstep.

Kirsty and Peter recall the support given by NETS and Jim Saunders of West Lothian Council in creating the bed. Peter remembers Burgh Beautiful bringing plants and him setting to work.

Asked how much time it took up Peter said,

"It didn't need much attention, it was on my doorstep and half an hour here and there kept it up to scratch, but it could stretch to a couple of hours before you knew it. People stopped to chat, ask advice and admire the garden but sadly no one really wanted to help or take over from me."

The bed was looking particularly colourful for Keep Scotland Beautiful's Judging Day in August 2014.



At the outset of the garden project Peter had said he would work at it "for as long as I am able" and he did so faithfully until he moved house.

Was he sad to leave the garden, I asked.

"Yes, I was, but not to leave the berberis behind!" he quipped with a twinkle in his eye. (Berberis is a colourful shrub but has very prickly stems.)

"I hope the bed will be kept up. It's ready for a change of style. Maybe a rowan tree, some azaleas and miniature rhododendrons would make a lovely display."

When Peter moved, the bed although still colourful, began to look overgrown. Regular grass cutting by Alan Agnew helped improve the overall appearance. Volunteers cut back and planted annuals but it was a shadow of Peter's days.





More recently the bed has been given a radical clearout with pruning and removal of the sharp thorned berberis bushes under the watchful eye of Peter himself.

Gifts of an evergreen azalea and skimmia shrubs take their place! Thanks to **Ricky Kerr of Champfleurie** for donating woodchip mulch and to the hard work of **Kian and Sally as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Community Challenge**, the bed is ready for some more planting and new volunteers to give that TLC.

So, is there someone, or a couple, or a family out there who would give care and attention to this well loved bed?

Burgh Beautiful would love to hear from you and would offer help and encouragement on an ongoing basis.

Please contact bbl@lbt.scot if interested.



Dianne Lamont

Burgh Beautiful Linlithgow

Burgh Beautiful Linlithgow is part of Linlithgow Burgh Trust.

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TURNER IN LINLITHGOW

Bruce Jamieson



black chalk and what were later to be called his “Scottish pencils”. He spent all day in the burgh before returning by horse drawn gig into Edinburgh. While in town, he sketched many details of the Palace and of St Michael’s Church and, on a walk around the loch, quickly drafted several views from different angles. One result was an atmospheric drawing showing what he called “The melancholy but noble Palace of Linlithgow.”



Beneath the crescent moon, is that royal residence - its ruined state the product of the fire which had engulfed the building fifty-five years earlier. To the left, is the medieval stone crown atop the Church of St Michael – one of only four in Scotland, the others being in Edinburgh (St Giles), Perth (Trinity Church) and Aberdeen (King’s College).



Joseph Mallord William Turner (His friends and family called him ‘Bill’)

The ancient stone crown of St Michael’s Church was removed 200 years ago last year and one of the last people to see that 400-year-old structure was the artist J M W Turner.

In the year 1801, at the age of 26, the promising, young painter, J M W Turner visited Linlithgow for the first time. He had just been made an associate of the Royal Academy and arrived, looking for inspiration, complete with pocket sketchbook,

The general acclaim for the work, and other exhibited paintings, saw him elected as a full Royal Academician and he duly opened a gallery in Harley Street, London. Turner used his sketches of Linlithgow on several occasions, notably when, in 1807, he produced a large oil painting (3 feet X 4 feet) clearly showing the Palace, St Michael’s and, to the right, the tower and pointed steeple of the 17th century Burgh Halls.

However, in order to give his work a “classical” feel, he included an imagined copse of trees and three naked bathers with another, semi-clad figure sitting on a sandy shore. The painting is now on display in the Walker Gallery in Liverpool.



Below: Turner’s painting of Linlithgow Palace. It can now be bought on a facemask!





Turner returned to Scotland in 1820, commissioned by the newly knighted Sir Walter Scott, to record Scottish views for a volume called "Provincial Antiquities of Scotland".

Again, in this view, some imagination has come in – in the form of a theatrical "Scottish" foreground with a kilted fisherman and a dramatic, mountainous setting – Cockleroy is not that striking! A poignant footnote to Turner's visit and the resulting painting is that the condition of St Michael's stone crown had been the subject of much anguished debate regarding its precarious condition. The year after Turner sketched the crown, it was decided that it was dangerous and that unless it was removed, the whole church tower would collapse. Consequently, two hundred years ago, in the summer of 1821, the stonework was dismantled, and St Michael's would have no crowning glory for 143 years.

How much time Turner spent in Linlithgow is not known. Had he the opportunity to look at some of the buildings in the only occupied street which stretched for a mile alongside the Loch? Did he spot how many dwellings were showing signs of age and decayed grandeur? Was he aware

of the town's main employment – boot and shoemaking, a trade which was recovering from the economic depression which followed the Napoleonic War and was employing well over 200 locals who worked from 6-00am until 6-00pm?

It is interesting to speculate who Turner might have met in Linlithgow during the 1820 visit. Although he cut a somewhat unprepossessing figure (the 45-year-old artist was described by an observer as "a funny, little, elderly gentleman") he was a famous painter whom many wanted to meet. Did he perhaps get welcomed by the Provost, the lawyer John Boyd, a man who was constantly complaining about the dilapidated state Linlithgow Palace was in? Did he come across the minister of St Michael's, the Rev James Dobie, who was equally concerned about the condition of his church? Well, I can use my imagination too!

Turner would have headed back to Edinburgh, past the site where St Magdalene's Distillery would be set up some 14 years later. He may have noticed the construction work going on along the Union Canal. The project had started some two years before his visit, but the waterway didn't open until 1822. He would have paid his toll at the St Magdalene's Turnpike and travelled for some miles along a well-kept, if unmetalled, road before hitting the less well-maintained public road whose upkeep depended on Statute Labour – where the local farmers were obliged by law to spend so many days a year working on the byway.

A steel engraving by Augustus Callcott shows St Michael's stone crown. The unfinished Union Canal is on the left.



Using his artist's eye, he would have seen the countryside in the process of changing from small scale, strip farming, called runrig, into larger fields, enclosed by hedges and fields. Few sheep grazed the pasture in those days, but beef and dairy cattle were gradually being selectively bred. The Rev. Andrew Bell of St Michael's, writing some 20 years later, commented that, "The mongrel race of nondescripts (cows) are all but extinct." Turner would undoubtedly have passed other traffic on the road – mostly farm carts pulled by Clydesdales, while the Edinburgh to Stirling Fly was pulled by four horses. A new stagecoach service had just started in 1820 – the Soho, owned by J Croall and Co. It left Sawyers Inn in Port Street, Stirling and, via Linlithgow, arrived 4 ½ hours later in Princes Street, Edinburgh. Fares cost 8 shillings for an inside seat and 5 shillings to sit on the roof.



An Edinburgh to Linlithgow coach – bought and restored by an American collector.

Turner did return to Scotland in 1831, staying for a time with Sir Walter Scott at Abbotsford, after which he began an exhausting, two-month tour to sketch scenes for some of Scott's works. He argued that he did not need to revisit Linlithgow as he had already compiled enough sketches of the burgh. The closest he got was when he caught a ferry at South Queensferry and sailed up the Forth to Stirling, sketching as he went places such as Blackness, Bo'ness and Grangemouth. And he was right – he left us with some memorable views of Linlithgow's bygone age.

'DIPPING' AROUND THE AVON



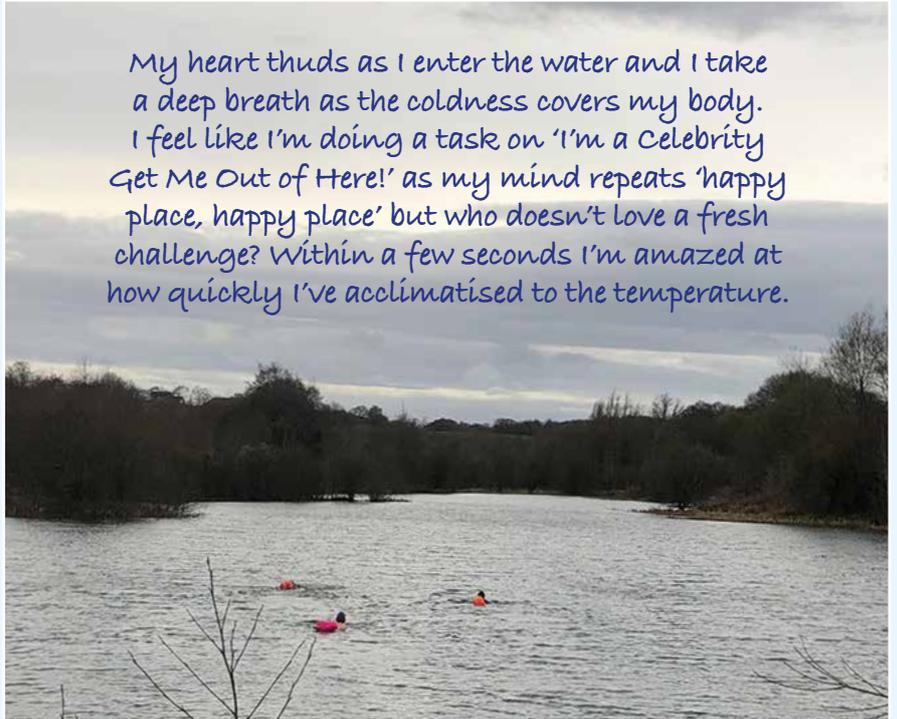
My memories of the Avon were walks with the dog along the river with the shrill sounds of JCB machines digging up the quarry for gravel. 20 years on I stumble across the Avon lagoon while out a run. It's true what they say, you don't know what's right on your doorstep.

I spot something pink bobbing in the water. I may be overdue an eye test and slightly delirious from months of lockdown but surely flamingos in a lagoon in Scotland is as preposterous as it sounds? On closer inspection I see that these pink shapes are tow floats being dragged along by swimmers. It's the middle of January, it's 2 degrees, it's blowing a hoolie... how do I get involved?

After a quick online browse I come across **West Lothian Dippers (WLD) Facebook page**. I contact one of the founding members, **Christeen**. She and **Victoria** set up this group over a year ago in order to attract other wild swimmers. Christeen explained it's not necessarily about the swimming aspect, it's more about the sense of community which the group brings. There has certainly been a surge in interest during the lockdown and the group stands at approximately 500 members for West Lothian of which there are around 50 regular dippers at the Avon Lagoon. It's a very inclusive group and people are welcomed of all ages, shapes and sizes which is refreshing in a sport nowadays. Some members just enjoy a leisurely dip while others may be training for events but, either way, everyone enjoys getting together. Obviously lockdown has restricted large groups meeting and social events taking place but with the power of Zoom not everything's come to a standstill.

Within the last month there has been an online social and charity night

My heart thuds as I enter the water and I take a deep breath as the coldness covers my body. I feel like I'm doing a task on 'I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here!' as my mind repeats 'happy place, happy place' but who doesn't love a fresh challenge? Within a few seconds I'm amazed at how quickly I've acclimatised to the temperature.



with a quiz and a raffle. There's also been a newbies night to welcome new faces and to answer questions for people who are considering taking the plunge. It's extremely important to highlight that even though wild swimming is fun and has many physical and mental benefits you have to be aware of the potential dangers. You must respect the water you're in and be aware of who owns it. Just because there's a body of water doesn't mean it should be swum in. Doing your research is key and WLD shares up-to-date information on different places to swim. The water at the **Avon Lagoon has been tested by SEPA and is deemed safe to swim in**. WLD has a buddy system in place as swimming solo, no matter how experienced a swimmer you are, is not advisable.

I get buddied up with the lovely **Dot Jamieson** and a date in the diary is set before I lose my nerve. After a brief shopping spree on Amazon I'm all kitted out and ready to dip my toes in the water, albeit with thermal swimming socks on. I'm told the water temperature is mild today, a

tropical 7 degrees. I'm relieved I'm wearing a wetsuit but some brave swimmers choose to swim in just their swimsuits or 'skins.' My heart thuds as I enter the water and I take a deep breath as the coldness covers my body. I feel like I'm doing a task on 'I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here!' as my mind repeats 'happy place, happy place' but who doesn't love a fresh challenge? Within a few seconds I'm amazed at how quickly I've acclimatised to the temperature. I feel the heat of the sun on my face and the calmness of the water and, at the risk of sounding clichéd, I can't help but feel at one with nature. During lockdown I've been trying to practise meditation in order to be in the moment but being present in the open water is the best form of mindfulness I've come across.

As I come out of the water my skin feels tingly and I feel more energised than I have done in a long time. As I sit on my camping chair sipping my peppermint tea I feel a sense of achievement and am pleased that

I've found a new hobby and made new friends too. WLD is in talks with Forth Rivers Trust to potentially build a pontoon, bench and bin at the lagoon which would benefit not only swimmers but the wider community too. Hopefully by the Summer there will be even more activity down at this beautiful spot for everyone to enjoy post-lockdown.

Amy Cornock

OAKWELL ALLOTMENT 10TH ANNIVERSARY



It is now ten years since Oakwell allotments near Philpstoun were established. In normal times we would be planning to have some sort of gathering to celebrate this milestone; we still hope to do this, probably outdoors, later in the year.

In 2008 The Linlithgow and District Allotment Society (LADAS) was formed to campaign for new allotment sites in and around Linlithgow. Many potential sites were considered, mainly on West Lothian Council owned land, but none were found to be appropriate for fruit and vegetable growing or were unsuitable in other ways.

Frustrated by not being able to secure a site, in December 2009 LADAS wrote to local landowners suggesting they might consider hosting allotments and received a positive reply from Oakwell Children's Nursery at Philpstoun. Planning permission to change the

land use of the proposed site from agricultural to allotments was granted in February 2011, with some conditions.

LADAS were lucky to obtain half of the required funding through **Transition Linlithgow from the Climate Challenge Fund (CCF)**. This is Scottish funding which is made available for projects such as ours because growing your own food promotes a healthy lifestyle, reduces energy consumption in production and transport and contributes to greater general sustainability. **We secured matching funds from LEADER, which provides EU monies for rural development in Scotland via the Scotland Rural Development Programme.** We were extremely fortunate to achieve construction work within the conflicting pressures of funding deadlines and planning permission deadlines of the funders.

Lesley Nock from Oakwell Children's Nursery gave us our first five-year lease on Sunday 3 April 2011 and work started the following day on the Oakwell site. Plot holders were finally able to get digging on 1st May 2011.

We were not allowed most of the huts until the hedge had been planted (Oct 2011), so the first year there were very few structures. Watering was an issue, as without huts we could not have butts, and water pipes were not connected until around March 2012. A rabbit-proof fence (later found to be too low) was erected. We had not realised how windy Oakwell would be – something we

found out during our first storm in December 2011!

The official opening of Oakwell allotments was on Saturday 27 August 2011. Lesley Watson from New Hopetoun Gardens cut the ribbon on the gate, and others present included Fiona Hyslop MSP and the three Councillors Tom Conn, Martyn Day and Tom Kerr, as well as a happy band of plot holders.

There were many people involved in making Oakwell happen. Supporters included the Scottish Allotment and Garden Society, funders Climate Challenge Fund and LEADER, Alan Brown and other members of Transition Linlithgow, LADAS Committee members, Lesley and Chris Nock, Ken Ralston for drawing up the plans, our local Councillors, and many others along the way.

A tremendous amount of time and effort was put into finding a suitable site for the allotments, obtaining the necessary funding, overcoming many obstacles along the way. **Kirsty Leonard and Mel Evans (formerly McEwan)** deserve special thanks for staying the course for the three years it took to get from the desire for allotments to the reality of a new site. Having an active Committee, volunteers for site management and a community of dedicated plot holders have all proved essential over the last 10 years to help make Oakwell the thriving allotment that it is today.

If you are interested in having a plot, please contact us on our website on <https://linlithgowallotments.org.uk> and ask to be added to the waiting list.



Paul Taylor
Chair, Linlithgow and District Allotment Society



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THE WYNDS AND BURGH MILLS HOUSE

Today there are four wynds on the south side of the High Street, but originally there was only one. It was known as the Easter Wynd (later renamed St Michael's Wynd) and it was on the access road to the town from the south. The wynd led up to a port in the wall and this can be seen (right foreground) in John Slezer's 'Prospect of Linlithgow' shown below.

At this time burgesses had plots (rigs) outside the south town wall, which was convenient for those on the south side of the street, as their plots had a gate in the town wall. However, it was different for those on the north side of the street; their only access to their rigs outside the wall was via the Easter Wynd and its port. How additional wynds were formed in order to improve access to the back of the town is examined below, and the connection with the Burgh Mills is explained.



The only wynd to exist prior to the early 17th century was the Easter Wynd, or St Michael's Wynd as it later became known. This was the main route south from the town, which explains its importance. At the top of the wynd there was a Port [gateway], which survived until 1771. Unless you happened to have a private gate through the rear wall of the burgh, you had to exit the town to the south via this Easter Wynd and its port. Some other route to the land south of the burgh was much needed. When a burgess plot at the Dog Well on the south side of the street fell into ruin, it was not long before it was being used as a shortcut to the road that ran along the south boundary of the town, outside the town wall. This road was known formerly as The South Vennel and later, more commonly, as The Back of the Town.

The burgesses were using the plot as a shortcut to their tailrigs on the hillside which overlooked the town. This was where they grew cereals and tended their livestock. In 1602 the council decided that the ruinous plot could officially be used for access; thereafter it became known as the Wester Wynd. In a minute dated 15 November 1794, the council referred to a site for a new wynd as 'lying betwixt the Duck Burn, opposite to the Mussel Stone' which may have been a standing stone on the north side of the street. This became the New Well Wynd and opened in 1795. The former West Wynd, no longer the west-most, then took the name of the Dog Well Wynd. The next wynd to be opened was in 1803 at the Lion Well (council minute 26.3.1803) and this completed the complement of wynds on the south side of the street.

The decision to create a new wynd at the New Well (built c.1690) was influenced by the fact that the council needed to rebuild the miller's house at the Burgh Mills, in Linlithgow Bridge. It was in a poor state of repair, so wouldn't it make sense to replace it with the house that was being demolished to form the new wynd. The minute of a council meeting held on 11.7.1795 confirms that plans had been made to demolish the house in the town and rebuild it on the mill site. The minute gives the house dimensions as 'Thirty Nine feet in length by Sixteen in breadth' which would be a 'proper House for the Tacksman'. This was the internal size of the house, and agrees with what was built. The work was to be done per an estimate provided by John Gibb, mason, in accordance with a plan that had been laid before the council.

We can now examine what is known about the site, beginning with the following extract which comes from the burgh roods for 1687. The plot number is 34, which is the two rood wide house that was demolished to create the New Well Wynd.

**33. Wm Bill now as Jas Bill (merchant)
Rood 1 / Half Rood 1 / Quarter Rood 0**

**34. John Peibles, maltman
Rood 2 / Half Rood 0 / Quarter Rood 0**

**35. WJohn Hioggen (merchant)
Rood 2 / Half Rood 0 / Quarter Rood 0**

The earliest photograph (c.1946) of these buildings is shown top right. The 'gable-on' building on the right was built to form the west side of the wynd - note that the

first floor house was entered from the new wynd.



The next image shows the same view on which a photograph of the house that was removed and rebuilt as Burgh Mills House has been super-imposed. This is how the site would have appeared prior to demolition.



It is incredible to think that, 225 years ago, a house was simply transported to a new site at Linlithgow Bridge. All of the materials were reused in the construction of the new mill house (even the old timber stair survives). Imagine how many cartloads of materials would have been required to move the roof structure and its finish, the stone for the walls and the windows. Gibb would have numbered the stones of the window surrounds and made drawings that could be referred to in the re-building.



Laurie Alexander

THE YOUNG TEAM

GRAEME ARMSTRONG

the streets of North Lanarkshire, "The Young Team" projects a narrative that is strong, descriptive and reflective of the logic of a life lived surrounded by violence, drugs and gangs. Armstrong's words are raw and unfiltered – not for the faint-hearted – and his skill as a writer is captured in the authenticity of the first-person dialogue of the novel. This novel is often bittersweet and never shies away from capturing the harsh realities, ironies and juxtapositions of this life.

In many ways Azzy is a symbol of a broken, post-industrial system where poverty is high and life chances are few and far between. Azzy has a clear sense of community identity, loyalty to his family and upholds strong moral values for himself and others in his team. He is a unique, well-defined lead character for the novel and, as he matures, it is interesting to follow his inner reflections as he struggles with his changing identity, relationships from his past and burgeoning knowledge of life beyond his hometown.

"Slag the way A speak, make a social presumption n judge me. Judge ma family, ma prospects, ma financial status n ma intelligence. Yi know wit they say about assumption."

It is documented that Armstrong has overcome his own struggles with addiction and alcohol abuse, adapting to leave behind a life lived in the shadow of gang violence. Armstrong himself defied expectations and studied English as an undergraduate at Stirling University before returning to complete a masters in Creative Writing.

In many ways "The Young Team" feels like the story of his life. It is the story of a life lived through adverse circumstances, making the best of choices available in the moment although often with bleak, destructive outcomes and tragic consequences. It is a story of friendship, loyalty, brotherhood and love, with humour found in the unlikelyst of places, set against a hard backdrop for real life. "The Young Team" is an authentic, interesting social commentary for those misaligned and underrepresented in society, ultimately leading us towards the path of redemption and reinvention with hopes for the future.

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

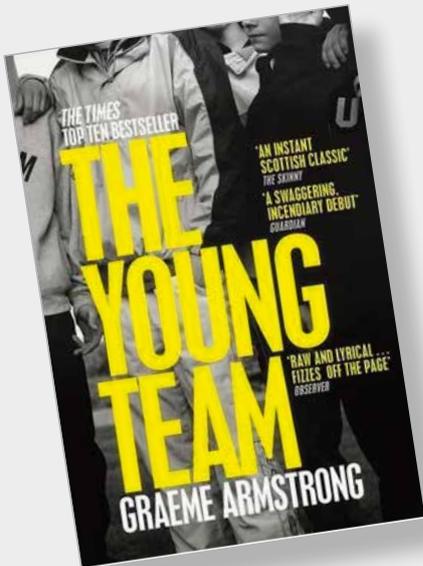


Graeme Armstrong is a fledgling Scottish writer from Airdrie who spent his teenage years caught within the gang culture of North Lanarkshire. Where life is lived for the thrills of the moment, a self-perpetuating 'do or die' ethos abounds and where duty and honour to one's friends is the epitome of valour. Armstrong's debut novel "The Young Team" is a product of this life; a gritty reflection of the characters, situations and culture of his youth.

The story unfolds through the eyes of the main character Alan 'Azzy' Williams who, as the novel opens, is a spunky fourteen-year-old emerging as ringleader of his own up-and-coming 'young team' posse at the start of the new millennium. They meet covertly in the ruined 'mansion' grounds drinking, listening to music and plotting ways to gain the upper hand over rival gangs from neighboring housing estates. Already with an abundance of street smarts, it seems Azzy has been watching and learning from his elders for years, waiting for his moment to enter the fray.

"Yir main man. Alan Williams. Azzy, A git called. Rangers daft. YT legend in the makin."

Written in the vernacular and evocative of the fast paced, spoken Scottish heard by Armstrong as he grew up on



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PICKING OUR WAY THROUGH THE TOWN

The rotating jaws of my yellow and black litter picker unearth a Monster Munch packet from beyond its grave which, judging by its expiry date, is almost as old as I am. We classify this as 'historic rubbish' which somehow doesn't make me feel any younger. Lying next to it is a faded Snickers wrapper which, from the name alone, I realise can't be quite as ancient. As I fill the last of my clear bag and leave the woods next to Linlithgow Leisure Centre I share a socially distanced high five in the air with my litter picking partner, who's also my friend that introduced me to the group, Lesley Williamson.



West Lothian Litter Pickers (WLLP) was founded two years ago by Jason Wilcox from Bathgate. Having worked in Germany, Jason was inspired by the recycling system there and made a pact to improve his local area on his return. Jason had been organising litter picks for a few years prior but after noticing the UK-wide litter pickers group, as well as regional ones on Facebook, he decided to start one for West Lothian. WLLP started off with five helpers including himself, his wife and some neighbours and gradually interest increased through word of mouth. Local businesses donated in order for WLLP to get equipment and funding was given from the National Lottery Community Fund. Its slogan 'Act Local, Think Global' is very much the ethos of this group.

Prior to the lockdown organised litter picks were a great way to bring together members of the local community and make a group effort to improve the environment. Sadly these gatherings

haven't been able to take place within the last year so it's been more important than ever for individual members to try and do their bit whenever they can. Beecraigs Country Park is one of the areas that has seen a huge increase in visitors in recent months and as a result there's unfortunately been more litter left there. There's a rubbish bin and a dog waste bin at the top of Preston Road which walkers may not be aware of.

WLLP is awaiting a new order of litter picking equipment from West Lothian Council in April. The group provides new members with a litter picker, a hoop for the bin bag and a hi-vis vest with WLLP logo on it. A requirement for litter picking is to use clear bags which, after your pick, you leave by a rubbish bin. You then send a quick email to the Council who will collect them within a few days. Clear bags can be collected from New Well Wynd Community Garden or you can contact one of WLLP admin team to get a batch.

Due to the lockdown there are currently only six Council workers collecting litter in the whole of West Lothian highlighting the need for citizens to help out where we can. You can join WLLP Facebook group for more details of how to get involved. Litter picking doesn't only help keep the area tidy but it also helps local wildlife. There have been too many occasions where field mice have drowned after being caught in plastic and sheep have ingested tiny pieces of plastic in the grass. So far this year 221 bags have been collected by Linlithgow members of WLLP but unfortunately there's still a long way to go.

As a newbie to the group I was keen to get involved to make a difference but I never expected litter picking to be so much fun. Once you start it becomes rather addictive and you end up wanting to pick up litter anytime you see it. I'm pleased to say I've never been a litterbug but now I've definitely caught the litter bug. I look forward to the day we can meet in organised groups and can combine cleaning the local environment with a good old blether. It gives you a great sense of wellbeing when people walk by thanking you for your hard work.

It has sadly become apparent that whilst litter picking is helping our community pull together to make Linlithgow look

beautiful again, it is not addressing the root cause of the issue. WLLP Education and Awareness Group was recently set up with the aim to develop and deliver an educational presentation around the importance of waste management. The target audience will initially be all school ages from primary to secondary.

The more volunteers that can get involved the better to spread the message. As the sign says along the High Street we all have a duty to 'Keep Linlithgow Tidy.'

Amy Cornock



ANCIENT RELICS FOUND IN MUSEUM...

It's not what your thinking



Hello from Linlithgow Museum. We wanted to pop into this issue and give a little update about what we've been up to during this time of closure. The museum has now sadly been closed for a full year. The Board and staff have continued to meet virtually once a month and we have been working hard to make sure we can reopen safely when the time comes. We have really missed being in the building, meeting visitors and running events but some of our activities have kept going. So here's an update.

We ran a talks series on Zoom from September till April. This was a completely new world for us but it's been brilliantly positive and really fun. We had logins from all over Scotland, the rest of the UK and as far afield as Australia and Canada which is exciting. We have tried to put on a varied programme, mixing local topics and broader themes. If you would like to view the talks, you can receive any of the links for a donation of £3 to the museum. For more info email: enquiries@linlithgowmuseum.org

The available talks are: "Saints Alive" by Gillian Paterson, "Heritage of the Union Canal at Redding" by Danny Callaghan, "Plague and Pestilence: A History of Pandemics in Linlithgow" by Bruce Jamieson, "The Battle of Nechtansmere, 685AD" by Eve Boyle and "Scotland's Cinemas on Screen" by Gordon Barr.

We've tried to keep active on our social media channels and we were delighted

to present some long read articles by Bruce Jamieson, Thom Pollock, Norman Dowie and Bob McMillan. These can still be found on our Facebook and website. We also had a storytelling advent calendar on Facebook in December with a new, slightly creepy, Christmas tale being released each week from storyteller Gillian Paterson. The work on social media is mostly done by volunteers and we are always looking for interesting things to post about the town and about more general heritage topics. We hope that people find things on the page that inspire them to have a read and to visit us when we reopen.

We have been trying to make the most of our website. Our communities' coordinator, Julia, put together a great virtual Doors Open Day last September. We also launched a digital exhibition about that well known Linlithgow son, Scotty from Star Trek. If you haven't visited the website then check it out at www.linlithgowmuseum.org

In our last article we launched our "Linlithgow in Lockdown" collecting project. We asked people in the town to contribute any photos, written memories or recordings of living here during this unprecedented period. We've had a good response to this collecting and when we can get back into the building, we will make sure we are recording everything for the future residents of the town. The collection is ongoing and if you would like to contribute, please email: forthefuture@linlithgowmuseum.org

During 2020, we discovered a lot more about two of the items in our collection. They are funerary figures called shabtis, made to accompany the deceased to the after-life, and while they were originally thought to be modern copies, they have now been confirmed to be genuine Egyptian antiquities over 3,000 years old. Excitingly, thanks to research by Dr Dan Potter of the National Museums of Scotland, we actually know who the shabtis were made for - a person



named Nespautilawy. The name dates the pieces to between 1186 and 945 BC, and intriguingly, there are coffins in Vienna that belong to someone with the same name. It would be hard to say if it is the same person though. Thanks to this research, we can now confidently say that these pieces form the smallest officially recognised collection of authentic Egyptian antiquities in Scotland - another unique feather in our museum's cap! Come along and see them when the museum reopens.

We have missed everyone and we hope to be open again soon so please keep an eye on our social media and website for details. Thank you to everyone who has supported us during this year with donations, items for the collection, engaging with the social media posts or attending the talks. It's been greatly appreciated.

Alison Train Trustee



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GARY CLINTON, MUSIC TUTOR

At the time of writing over 31.5 million people in the UK have received their first COVID-19 vaccination and whilst it's still too early to consider ourselves near the end of the pandemic, it did get me thinking, has there been any good things that have come out of lockdowns and the 'new normal'?

In a nutshell - no. It's been the worst public health disaster since the 2nd World War however last March CO2 omissions were down 17%; between April and June 2020 UK households saved a whopping 29.1% of their disposable income (£54.6billion) and last month Scottish post-rock legends Mogwai made it to number 1 in the UK album charts for the first time in their 25 year career.



'As The Love Continues' is a beautifully constructed record containing heartfelt piano melodies, ethereal synthesisers, 80s inspired synth drum loops and their trademark mountainous guitar driven soundscapes that build from simplicity to epic and immersive musical pictures. The sadness that has always been prevalent in their music has struck a chord in a nation who are themselves feeling reflective and nostalgic as we yearn for our old lives back. If you like this album, why not whizz back to 1999 and listen to 'Nick Drake' from their 2nd studio album 'Come On Die Young'. It's a masterpiece in beautiful guitar melody and what I often try to teach my students who compose music... 'space'.

Student Diaries

Talking of beauty in music, this month I am featuring a S4 Linlithgow Academy student with a stunning voice and guitar skills that have exponentially increased since she began lessons with me in August 2019. **Emma Crawford** (15), who stays in Linlithgow, could be the next Amy MacDonald, Katie Melua or Adele. Not only does Emma have a very versatile left hand allowing her to clearly execute new and more challenging chord shapes she is an incredible vocal talent.



Her pitch perfect, soothing and at times Celtic tones gave me goosebumps when I listened to her covering 'Can't Help Falling In Love' by Elvis Presley on her YouTube channel and what is also impressive is her versatility. Emma manages to beautifully interpret 'Weird!' by Yungblud - a very different vocal and musical style - yet her own musical identity is consistent over both.

In her lessons Emma has recently learned 'Isn't She Lovely' by Stevie Wonder as I wanted to her to try something she wouldn't normally plus it contains a lot of the new 'seventh' chord shapes Emma has been mastering. We needed to transpose the key to suit Emma's vocal range and I asked her not to just 'cover' the piece but put her own musical mark on it by changing the underlying rhythm and attempting to re-invent it slightly as a soft ballad.

Perhaps one of the most exciting things about Emma is she is far from the finished article. She started out on ukulele and has aspirations to maybe one day be in a band and I plan to help Emma increase her 'chord vocabulary' as in my opinion, too many established singer-songwriters just use the same old boring first position chords. Whilst a song is much more than the chords that are used, the ability to include more musical interest and 'colour' can only be a good thing and when I hear artists using these musical tools, it draws me in. **It will be interesting to see if any Black Bitch readers can pick up on this harmonic colour when Emma posts the song on her YouTube channel 'Emma Sophia'. (There will be a clickable link on my social media and Black Bitch website). <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSjUCoekye8qjkaPBh6AZoA>**

Learn Guitar With Gary

This month we are moving onto chords and for anyone who has been using it, check out lesson 2 and 3 from my free 'Complete Beginner Guitar Lessons' playlist on my YouTube channel. We are going to try 'Wild Thing' by The Troggs which uses 3 major chords: A, D and E.

Gary's Tips

Strumming Pattern: 'Tea' represents one beat and 'Coffee' (Co-fe) splits the beat in 2. Think of 'We Will Rock You' by Queen and clap the drum beat: **'TEA TEA CO-FE TEA'**. Next we need to 'rest' on the 'CO' part like this: **'TEA TEA (CO)-FE TEA'**. Now use a plectrum and practice strumming the chord progression using 'downstrokes'.

'TEA TEA (CO)-FE TEA'.

A A D D

'TEA TEA (CO)-FE TEA'.

E E D D

Beginner: Before trying the excerpt, firstly fret each of the 3 chords and strum each one 4 times using downstrokes focusing on where your fingers are, and where they are going to be next. Keep fingers pointy.

Intermediate: Begin to loosen up the right hand and include more strumming and subtle muting on top of the basic rhythm, alternating your strumming pattern and apply some energy and excitement.



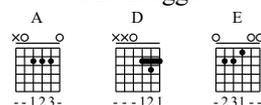
New Releases

'**STAY ODD**': The Magic Of Everyday Things' by Stanley Odd (Handsome Trap Records.) Intelligent Scottish hip-hop hailing from Edinburgh featuring insightful lyrics from Scottish Alternative Music Award winner Dave Hook AKA Solareye.

'**WL**' by The Snuts (Parlophone) These young West Lothian lads are poised to take over the world in a raucous and angsty fashion with their raw guitar driven indie rock.

Wild Thing

The Troggs



Rock ♩ = 110

A A D D E E D D



TRIBUTE TO GORDON WALLACE

We were very saddened to hear in recent weeks of the passing of Gordon Wallace, who wrote regularly for the magazine under the name "Kirk Gates".

His sudden and unprepared-for death came at a time when he was enjoying life, refurbishing his home, recovering from eye surgery, dealing with lockdown, writing and looking forward to a happy new year.

Gordon was a very private person and didn't feel easy with showing signs of vulnerability or weakness. He never let anyone know the seriousness of the health risks that affected him, nor did he perhaps fully appreciate their danger himself. His family is comforted by the fact that he died suddenly after a normal, peaceful day at home.

Hailing originally from Springburn in Glasgow, Gordon was a Grammar School boy, but left school at 15 to become an apprentice painter and decorator. He moved to London during the 'Swinging Sixties'. He had a fierce desire for self-development and while working on building sites during the day, he studied in the evenings, eventually doing a degree in civil engineering.

As his intellectual confidence developed, he became involved in radical Marxist politics and Trade Union activity and it was in these circles that he met Mary-Louise Coulouris, an art student from a privileged background, who decided that politics and activism attracted her. They married in 1971 and were only parted by her death in 2012. At this time, they built lasting friendships and links with a wide range of people, including creative individuals in the Primrose Hill area where they had settled and had two children, Saro and Duncan.

After a civil engineering contract brought Gordon back to Scotland to live, he obtained a teaching post at Glasgow College of Building and Printing. He moved to Linlithgow in 1976.

I first knew him and Mary-Louise in the early 1980s, when we were all involved in setting up a Linlithgow branch of CND. I was aware of his reputation as a writer and contributor to the Scotsman and other publications. In 1986, I approached him to ask if he would like to be involved in a collection of local writing I was helping to put together. The result was Streetwise Boy, which you can see below. It makes clever use of local placenames to tell an engaging story.

Gordon had told his family that he was really enjoying writing for the Black Bitch Magazine and we would like to reproduce his wonderful poem as a fitting tribute to him.

Murdoch Kennedy



STREETWISE BOY

(to wee Jock's Hill ...
and a'body like him)

*He cycled waldie doon
the High Street*

*As gleg as onie laverock
ower the peel*

*His wee legs justinhaugh
the pedals*

*His nether parkley
riccarton wi zeal.*

*"Noo mind the Rockville",
mither tellt him*

*"And nae listloanin
roun the cross*

*And don't come hame aw
burghmuir an' bormie*

*Or, jings, yer belsyde will
be merker wi the tawse!"*

*But, och, his burgess
eyes were avon*

*As moray a barkhill
whoop gied he*

*"Preston! Preston!" wis
aw that he could haver
.....his Kirkgate-hert wis
at high port, ye see.*

*He took a west port at
beinn castle*

*Withstaunin whitten auld
folk's vennel looks*

*And joukin dogwell
oan the pavement*

*He huntburn by the
entry tae the deuk's.*

*A stop for sweetsies....
chewy maltings*

*(the sort that lennox-up
yer jaws)*

*And some o yon whit gied
his granny deanburn*

*Whit were they cawed noo?
Oh aye.....deacons' baws!*

*Then tae the loch sae
royal-like and douglas*

*Aw rivaldsgreen and
acredales o space*

*He gied his bike its
parkheid tae the fiddlers*

*Like onie black bitch
doited wi the race.*

*He doocot up and doon
the drumlins*

*Till baith his cheeks ran
strawberry wi sweat*

*And near forgot the warnin
mither gave him*

*"By Goad... ye'll end up in
the water yet!"*

*So ower the flints, whaur
in the oatlands*

*Lassies went, their
braeheids fu o ploys*

*Tae tanners-court the
lads...but aye kingscavil*

*At onie priory thochts
o cockleroi.*

*He sped the longcroft tae
the station*

*As fast as onie engine
oan the line*

*But, man, tae see him
springfield up the union*

*Ye'd think he motored doon
the auld M9!*

*Then hame at last aw
boghall-black and Ashley*

*Tae meet the carseknowe-
glare in mither's eye*

*And monie a beecraigs-
look she stang him*

*He didnae need tae ask
tae telford why.*

*She biled the kettilstoun
for supper*

*And made him eggs spread
oot oan friar's bread*

*Then efter watching telly
wi his granny*

*He highfield up the stairs
and intae bed.*

*But aye his mind forbid
dark entry*

*Tae onie provost thochts
o sleeping soon*

*And carmelaws he
whispered in the blackness*

*"Linlithgow's sic a
bonnytown..."*

Gordon Wallace

*(Reproduced with kind
permission from the
booklet LITHCA LORE
TWO - published 1986)*

Illustration:

Sandra Gibson
sgibsonillustration@
gmail.com

PLANNING FOR A FRAGRANT SUMMER IN THE GARDEN



Most plants smell to some extent but there are many that we call 'smell-me' plants. These are ones whose fragrance is carried on the air with the most fragrant wafting their fragrance into the air so we can enjoy it without having to bend down to the flowers or rubbing the leaves to release the fragrant oils. Why not add some of these 'smell-me's' to your garden to bring the delights of fragrance to your patio for the long summer days we are all craving?

Here are four permanent perennial plants that will perform for several years... Lavender is an absolute classic and we have found that all gardeners love blue flowers with fragrance.

There are many different varieties to choose from, some more reliable than others so long as you plant them in a really sunny spot that is well drained. Look for the varieties **Hidcote**, **Munstead** and **Vera** which we have in our own garden.



There are lots of perennial wallflowers, **Erysimum**, in many different colours to tempt you.

The best known is **Erysimum Bowles Mauve** that starts flowering now and goes on for many weeks. It also needs a sunny spot and is generally shorter lived than the lavenders as it probably flowers itself to death in the end! It grows to about 450mm by 450mm across (18" x 18") and like the lavenders, makes a rounded evergreen bush.

Catmints are long lived perennials that die down in the winter and grow again every year.

They flower in early summer and then again in mid-summer. They come in various sizes, this one is **Nepeta Walkers Low** (450mm x 450mm) and is very popular with pollinating insects. After all the fragrance has evolved



to attract pollinating insects not us, we just benefit from this wonder of nature!

Border pinks (Dianthus) have a wonderful spicy scent, reminding both of us of our grandmother's gardens. Again they demand a sunny position but are a little less fussy about drainage and they will spread 300mm (12") across making an evergreen mound; they are short lived but easily replaced either by taking cuttings or buying a new young plant!



Perhaps your garden is full of lovely 'smell-me's' already so you might want to top up your scents with a few annual plants. Scatter seeds of **Night Scented**

Stocks which will pump out an early evening fragrance in the summer. The **white Alyssum bedding plant** has a generous honey fragrance and many of the **Lilies** have wonderful oriental spicy notes to delight your senses!

Dougal Philip and Lesley Watson

New Hopetoun Gardens



so much more than just a garden centre

www.newhopetoungardens.co.uk



FRAGRANT GARDEN

PICK UP YOUR FREE COPY OF OUR LEAFLET ABOUT FRAGRANT GARDEN PLANTS NEXT TIME YOU VISIT US.

Constables Andrew Murray and Peter Robertson are the community Police officers based at 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. Unfortunately due to the Covid Pandemic the Linlithgow Community Police Surgery has been suspended.



CALLING ALL PARENTS

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

Unfortunately some of these groups have been involved in the consumption of alcohol, drugs, setting fires, littering, damaging property and other anti-social behaviour.

Police and other partners are aware of these issues and will be conducting patrols in the area.

This behaviour is having a negative impact on the local communities and there are also concerns regarding the personal safety of those involved in this conduct.

The police would encourage parents in Linlithgow to have an open discussion with their teenage children, as to where they are going and what they are doing when out with friends in the evenings and check the contents of their rucksacks.

Also make them aware of the current Covid Government Guideline in relation to gatherings.

Their reckless behaviour is putting themselves, friends and family members in danger.

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

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCOTLAND

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 affected or who may have an interest in the crime.

>> **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.**

We require the public to register online. You can register at www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk



BOGUS CALLERS / WORKMEN IN LINLITHGOW AREA

“Rogue traders” usually cold call, claiming to be workers offering to make repairs or carry out work on your house, garden or driveway. They will charge over inflated prices for work that is often of poor quality or completely unnecessary. If you feel threatened, unsafe or suspicious of a caller then contact police immediately.

ONLINE SCAMS AND FRAUD

Over the past couple of months reports of online scams and fraud have been on the increase. These are becoming more and more sophisticated. Here are a few examples

- >> Courier Fraud
- >> Identity fraud
- >> Online shopping and auction sites
- >> Romance and dating fraud
- >> Ticketing fraud
- >> Scam mail
- >> Computer software service Fraud Banking and Card Fraud

TAKE FIVE is a national campaign that offers straightforward and impartial advice to help everyone protect themselves from preventable financial fraud. This can be found on the Police Scotland website.

SO WHEN ONLINE BEFORE YOU MAKE ANY DECISIONS OR INVESTMENTS... TAKE FIVE

STOP

Taking a moment to stop and think before parting with your money or information could keep you safe.

CHALLENGE

Could it be fake? It's ok to reject or ignore any requests. Only criminals will try to rush or panic you.

PROTECT

Contact your bank immediately if you think you've fallen for a scam and report it.



MY MONEY? MY INFO? I DON'T THINK SO!

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 through Contact us Service

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

Hopefully when we are through the pandemic the Linlithgow Community Police Surgeries will resume. We shall keep you posted .

THE ARTS

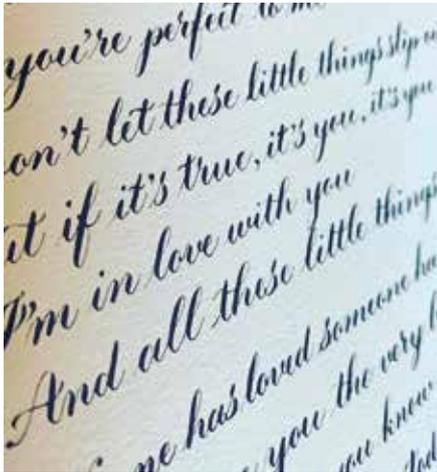
“WRITING AND READING – THE ART OF COMMUNICATION”

Pat Swan patswan@virginmedia.com.



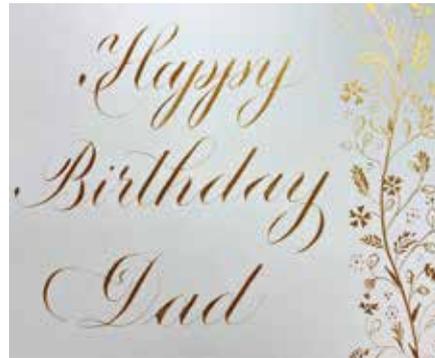
I have often admired the Art of Calligraphy, and have a friend who produces amazing birthday cards and other papery things with her inky skills. She has inspired me to play with ink and to try to use a pen and nib, but it's not as easy as it often looks.

I was therefore pleased when Ceri from Panda Scribes Calligraphy contacted me to ask if I'd like to feature her on the Arts page. She lives locally and loves to relax with calligraphy after working during the day. She says "calligraphy and art for me is a therapy where I can live in the moment and forget about the world around me."



Just as lockdown hit last year, Ceri had started running an 8-week course in the Old Pavilion but sadly it had to be cut short. She hopes to get back to running workshops in the future, but meantime works on producing cards and other small projects for people who appreciate her fine lettering skills.

She can be commissioned to produce a special and unique birthday or occasion card, and what better time to surprise someone you haven't seen for months with a very personal hand-made card. To make it even more distinctive get her to write the envelope too. Prices do vary depending on the amount of work involved, but for example the Happy Birthday Alice card shown in the photo here could cost as little as £4-£5. She would appreciate as much notice as possible, but can generally get your card to you in 2-3 weeks, and will deliver locally too.



If you are looking forward to or planning other events, then Ceri can help with personalising wedding and party invitations, save the date cards, menus and place cards. Your guests will have a handwritten memento of the event, even if it is just that first dinner party you organise after lockdown eases!

If you have often wanted to write a special love letter, but you don't like your messy handwriting, why not ask Ceri to write the words neatly and beautifully to send to that special person. If you are not good with words you could have song lyrics or a quote written for a unique gift. She also often adds the names to Certificates to add a personal touch.

Ceri is also a Scottish ambassador for The Modern Calligraphy Company. In the old days when shopping was possible, you may have seen her personalising gift bags or candles for the likes of Jo Malone or Molton Brown for Christmas or Valentine's Day. She's looking forward to such an event in the future, or even teaching for them when groups are allowed to meet.

She likes to keep improving and learning, so Ceri has been studying for more than two years with David Grimes to hone her calligraphy skills. "Dreaming In Script" is an online learning program that teaches the various disciplines of traditional American Penmanship and calligraphy. Ceri now has a Certificate of Merit for

the Engrosser's Script course, which is an early 20th century pointed pen style. She believes she is the only person in the UK with this qualification and is keen to put it into practice.

Ceri also draws, mainly with pencil and charcoal in black and grey. She's a busy lady!

If you are interested in what she can offer, Ceri is on Facebook and Instagram as Panda Scribes, her website is www.pandascribes.co.uk and she is on email at pandascribes@gmail.com.

Far From the Madding Crowd

Wonderful news! For the second time our local bookshop has been named as Scotland's Best Independent Bookshop! Owner Sally said "we are absolutely thrilled to have won the award again, particularly following such a challenging year. The award means we are now in the running to win the overall UK prize at the British Book Awards in May, and we've also been shortlisted for the UK Children's Bookseller of the Year in the same competition."



She also wanted to explain that the shop has changed a lot over the past year. You can now shop direct for lots of their goods and services online at www.maddingcrowdlinlithgow.com. Going forward, they'll still offer limited local delivery, as well as consultations over the phone or email to make sure they have what you're looking for in stock, or are able to order it in. They've also got a couple of new team members, guinea pigs Bathsheba and Gabriel, who'll be on hand to help out with story-telling sessions as soon it's safe to restart.

In terms of events, the online collaboration as part of Wee Three Indies continues, including events with Andy Griffiths, co-creator of the hilarious Treehouse series for kids on Saturday 24th April, a really special event celebrating The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy with author and illustrator Chris Riddell on Monday 26th April, and a book launch for Sixteen Horses with debut novelist Greg Buchanan on Thursday 29th April.

Details for all of these events can be found on their website, www.maddingcrowdlinlithgow.com, or on the Wee Three Indies Facebook page.

Sally finished by saying "we are so grateful for all the support our fantastic customers have shown us over the past year and we cannot wait to reopen our doors on 26th April and welcome everyone back properly. Nothing beats having people in the shop browsing at their leisure."

The Line Gallery

A date for the diary - the **Front Line Thank You** exhibition opens on 29th May. I expect this will be a heartwarming collection of lockdown work, and a must see.

With Galleries hopefully opening from the end of the month, I will soon be able to start writing about possible Art Outings again. Meantime you might like to know that The Louvre has put its entire art collection online and it's available free of charge. It's the world's most visited museum and houses one of the most famous paintings on the planet - Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa. **If you need a gallery fix, visit www.louvre.fr but be aware it could take some time to get through the 482,000 exhibits!**



Please do get in touch about any events you are planning for the summer.

patswan@virginmedia.com.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"creativity never goes out of *style*"



Linlithgow's Canal Trail

This spring, thanks to funding from **Sustrans ArtRoots**, an outdoor nature trail will pop up along the towpath of Linlithgow's Union Canal - National Cycle Route 754. The route runs between the Park Bistro in the East, and the Avon Aqueduct in the West. It's available for all to explore anytime, by foot or on wheels, and will be in place from 10th April until 9th May.

The trail features quotes - chosen by the people of Linlithgow via public nomination - that celebrate the joy of walking, cycling, and generally spending time in the outdoors. It's an opportunity to spend time exploring the canal as springtime arrives. Discover some new writing about the joy of the outdoors, and perhaps be reminded of some much-loved nature quotes too. **You'll find extracts from classic nature writers such as John Muir and Rachel Carson, quotes from well-known authors including Terry Pratchett, Sylvia Plath, J.R.R. Tolkien and L.M. Montgomery, and from contemporary writers like Elizabeth-Jane Burnett, Lynley Dodd, Pema Monaghan and Victoria Adukwei Bulley.** There are thoughts from **Hippocrates, Pythagoras and Albert Einstein**, and some from those you might not expect - such as quotes from **Robin Williams, and Doc Brown from Back to the Future!**

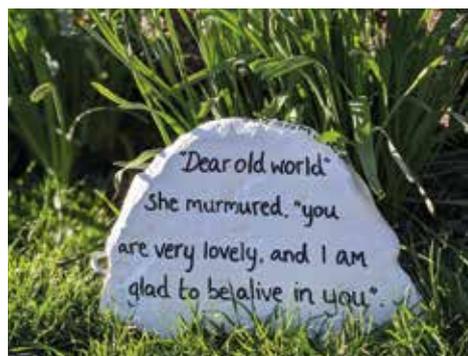
Readers may remember the similar trail created across Linlithgow for Book Week Scotland in November 2020, which proved hugely popular and laid the foundations for this longer project. This time, to help everyone get involved in creating - as well as exploring - the trail, 100 free 'paint your own' rock kits have been given away to people in Linlithgow. Each kit recipient will now be busy creating a nature-themed decoration for their rock, then bringing it along to join the trail for others to enjoy.

If you'd like to join them, hand-drawn instructions can be downloaded from Transition Linlithgow's website (www.transitionlinlithgow.org.uk), and printed at home on an ordinary printer.

This trail has been imagined and created by Kathryn Welch, delivered with ArtRoots funding from Sustrans Scotland, and supported by Linlithgow Community Development Trust. Thanks also to Linlithgow Library and Far From the Madding Crowd bookshop for their help in promoting and supporting the trail.

We very much hope you'll enjoy getting out and about and exploring Linlithgow's Canal Trail this spring.

Kathryn Welch



NEW PRACTICE - NEW SERVICES

Linlithgow Dental and Implant Clinic

A fast-expanding family owned Scottish dental group has taken over a Linlithgow practice operated for over 25 years by a well-known and widely respected dentist.

Dr Moira Murray has retired from Linlithgow Dental Care in the High Street, and transferred the practice to Scottish Dental Care Group, which is led by Dr Philip Friel and his brother Christopher.

The Glasgow-based group, which is continuing to expand across Scotland, from Oban and Inverness to Dumfries, has retained Dr Murray's entire team, and is investing in state-of-the-art equipment, as well as refurbishing the clinic. It is now named **Linlithgow Dental and Implant Clinic**.

Dr Murray told patients she had been considering retirement for some time, and had been waiting for the right opportunity, both for herself, and one which would ensure the practice would continue to thrive.

Thanking them for their "fantastic support" over many years, she acknowledged the huge responsibility in ensuring stability for the clinical team

in continuing to provide excellent care for the people of Linlithgow and the surrounding areas.

Continued Dr Murray, *"After careful consideration, I have passed the clinic on to the Scottish Dental Care Group to facilitate this ongoing care and progression. The dental group has grown steadily, with a fantastic management team and structure."*

"This has allowed the many and increasing compliance and governance elements to be taken away from the dentists, giving them the time to focus on what they do best - caring for and treating the patients under their care."

Dr Murray said that Dr Friel would be providing an implant service from the clinic, and would be very much a "hands on" member of the clinical team, involved in all aspects of the clinical operation in the practice.

She added, *"They (SDCG) bring fresh energy, new ideas, advanced technology and cutting-edge treatments to the practice. The team that I leave behind are encouraged and enthused with the infrastructure, communication, input and assistance from all of the management team, and I am confident*

that the practice will continue to go from strength to strength."

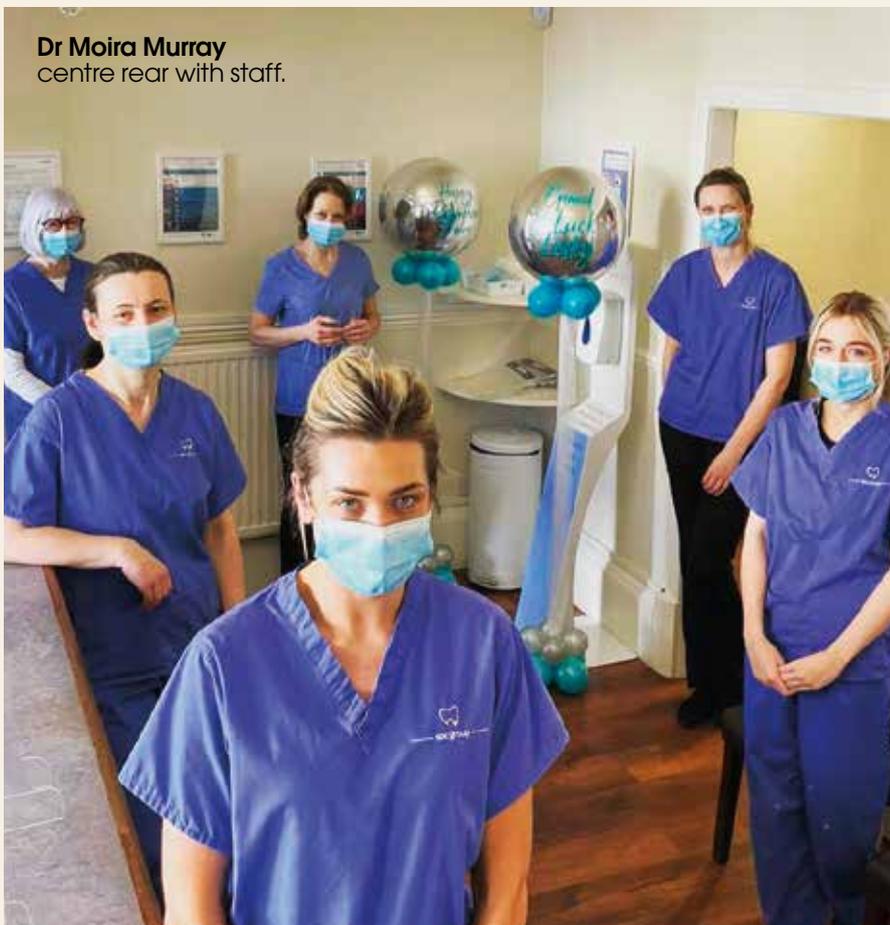
Dr Friel said that the group was delighted to be expanding into Linlithgow, and was fully committed to supporting the existing clinical team, and would do everything possible to help the local community.

"As a family-run business we understand the importance of maintaining the high standards that patients have come to know and expect, and will be introducing new technology, equipment and treatments to further improve patients' experiences at the clinic."

This would include a new CBTC scanner - being introduced to all of their clinics - whose many benefits would include greatly improving dentists' speed and accuracy, and a much more pleasant and comfortable experience for patients.

Added Dr Friel, *"We thank Moira for putting the trust in us that we will continue to provide the very best in dental care for patients, and to continue to support the development of the team."*

John Smith



Dr Moira Murray
centre rear with staff.



THE DOLLHOUSE

The Dolls are pleased to announce that we will reopen on the **26th April**.

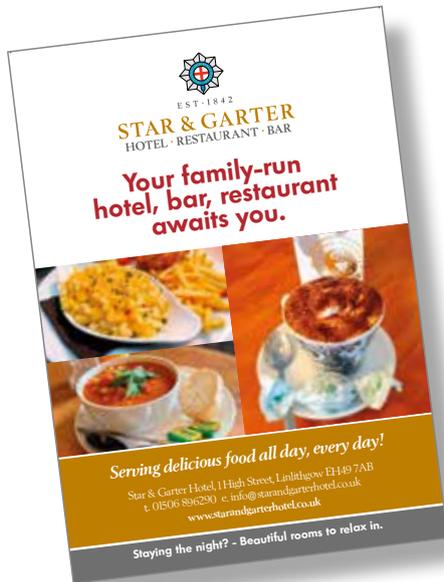
We are so looking forward to seeing you all. Due to guidelines can we please ask you to book your appointment using our fb page or call the salon and leave a voicemail. We will pick them up and get in touch.



77 The Vennel
High Street, Linlithgow
T. 01506 847 222

The Dollhouse

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COMPETITION

LIN GIN

LINLITHGOW DISTILLERY
'Crafted with the spirit of Linlithgow'

COMPETITION

WIN A BOTTLE OF LIN GIN

Q. What's the name of our very first Production still ?

Email your answers to on.a.lead@gmail.com to be entered in

APRIL PRIZE DRAW

LIN GIN MARCH COMPETITION WINNER GAYNOR PARRY





As at the end of March new instructions in the first quarter of 2021 out of our Linlithgow office are approximately 10% down on the same period in 2020. However we are beginning to see an increase in the number of properties coming to market as lockdown restrictions begin to ease, but generally demand still far outstrips supply across the property market. Our own experience mirrors what Rightmove is reporting, that is new listings in February 2021 were 20% down on February 2020, but that by the first week in March this gap had closed to 5%.

Family Homes

Family homes, in particular, are attracting significant increases in requests to view, with 30 or 40 viewings per property being not at all uncommon. This is borne out by figures from Rightmove which show that the number of enquiries received for properties listed on Rightmove are 34% more last month than in March 2020.

This often leads to closing dates and offers well above home report valuations, and there is upward pressure on prices across the whole property market.

Scotland remains the fastest selling area in the UK, taking an average of 40 days to sell a property, compared to the UK average of 59 days.

Driving Improved Energy Efficiency In Residential Homes

The Scottish Government has announced that building regulations are set to be changed so that all new homes use renewable or low-carbon heating from 2024. The plans to increase energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions for new-build homes will run alongside a £30 million investment in renewable heat projects.

Energy minister **Paul Wheelhouse** said: *“We will ensure that new homes and buildings across Scotland meet the challenge of the climate emergency, combining the action we need to take on climate change with our ambition to provide affordable, warm homes.”*

This means that low carbon or renewable heating systems will need to be installed in new build properties from 2024, moving away from gas boilers to air or

ground source heat pump systems and other low carbon heating technology.

Presently 62% of existing homes in Scotland are owner occupied, yet only 38% of them have an EPC band rating of C or above, and the Scottish Govt are working on measures designed to see all homes achieve a minimum EPC band rating of C by 2040.

They want all homeowners to benefit from reduced energy bills and more efficient homes, where technically feasible and cost-effective to do so. To ensure that all homeowner occupied homes meet the standard in time, they will continue to focus on encouraging homeowners to improve their energy efficiency. They have proposed that, should voluntary progress not be enough, mandatory action may be required from 2030.



HOW IPL REJUVENATES AND IMPROVES MOST SKIN CONCERNS AND CONDITIONS.

Skin Rejuvenation is an umbrella word used to describe the result you get from skin treatments which restore the youthful appearance of your skin. These treatments generally involve controlled methods of trauma to the epidermis or dermis layer of the skin to stimulate cell renewal and fibroblasts into triggering the increased production of collagen and elastin. Treatments such as lasers, lights, radio frequency, and chemical peels etc are all methods of controlled trauma which rejuvenate the skin with next to no or minimal downtime.

WHAT IS IPL?

IPL is Intense Pulsed Light.

It emits wavelengths of light. Depending on which wavelength is used the light can target different (chromophores) in the skin such as Vascular lesions (blood), Pigmented lesions (flat brown age spots/freckles) and hair etc.

IPL is a quick, easy, and non-intrusive method of skin rejuvenation offering a variety of solutions for the skin which can reduce the need for long term oral/topical medication.

WHAT SKIN CONCERNS AND CONDITIONS CAN IPL IMPROVE AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

> **Acne.** The light targets overactive sebaceous glands, greatly reducing the number and severity of active lesions, lessening the inflammation and frequency of breakouts. The light also stimulates the production of new collagen to improve skin texture and can also reduce the appearance of red or brown areas of skin that are often associated with acne breakouts.

> **Vascular.** The light targets and is readily absorbed by blood vessels, heating them to a point where they are destroyed. Following treatment, the vessels quickly clear as they are reabsorbed by the body, leaving little or no trace of the original lesion. Red vein removal can provide a long-term solution to facial problems such as general red flushing and Rosacea, thread veins, cherry angiomas/red spots (blood spots), spider naevi and port wine stains.

> **Pigmentation.** The light targets and is absorbed by the high concentration of melanin found within pigmented lesions. The rapid absorption of light energy heats the melanin and causes the destruction of the melanin-rich cells. Flat pigmented lesions such as sun damage, age spots and freckles can be successfully removed creating a clearer, brighter, and more youthful appearance.

> **Rejuvenation.** For all the signs of visible ageing. The light is absorbed into the skin. It triggers the stimulation of the fibroblast cells, leading to increased production of new collagen and elastin. This improves the skin tone and texture of the skin, evening out lumps and bumps whilst reducing the appearance of lines and wrinkles.

WHO IS SUITABLE FOR TREATMENT?

Most people are suitable for treatment except for very dark skinned or tanned individuals.

If you are pregnant and with some medication it is best not to undergo IPL treatment.

Pigmentation that is large, dark, mottled or raised cannot be treated and may need to be checked by a dermatologist.

Large, dark moles should not be treated, nor should lesions covering a large part of the body.

EXTRAS:

IPL can be combined with other in clinic treatments such as chemical peels and/or Phototherapy treatments.

> Peels can be carried out immediately prior to treatment or on alternate appointments to enhance results. (Generally great for exfoliation clearing dead skin cells and pores to allow for better light absorption).

> Phototherapy can be an add on at the end of a treatment to supercharge the cell production and reduce any downtime.

At Skin Happy we always start with an in-depth consultation along with education that will help you to make clear and informed decisions.

We help you find solutions for your skin concerns that are non-intrusive and offer a more natural route to aesthetics that stimulate your body's own natural processes, improving not only the appearance of your skin but your confidence too.

We only choose clinically proven and medical grade providers.

Our Laser, IPL and Radio Frequency provider is Lynton Lasers Ltd, a specialist aesthetic technologies manufacturer made up of the largest team of UK-based doctors, scientists, and aestheticians. Lynton have over 25 years-experience in pioneering medical-grade devices for a broad range of cosmetic concerns and their Laser and IPL Medical Grade equipment is also listed on the NHS Supply Chain.

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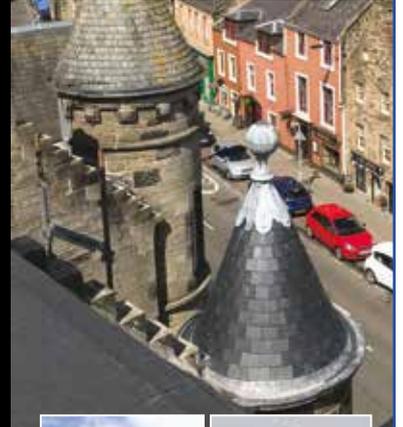
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Hello I'M BENNY

Benny is a 1 year old Cocker Spaniel, a very loveable but cheeky dog!

Benny gets so excited when he sees their grandkids and his favourite thing to do is to get out and play with other dogs. He is often found sitting under their grandson's highchair patiently waiting for dropped food. Benny is at his naughtiest when playing with other dogs and refusing to come back to his humans.

His favourite toy is a bunch of socks used to play tug with his owners and he loves to play 'ready steady go' where they race each other. Benny's happy place is lying on the couch, curled up on the cushion.

Benny's owner says:

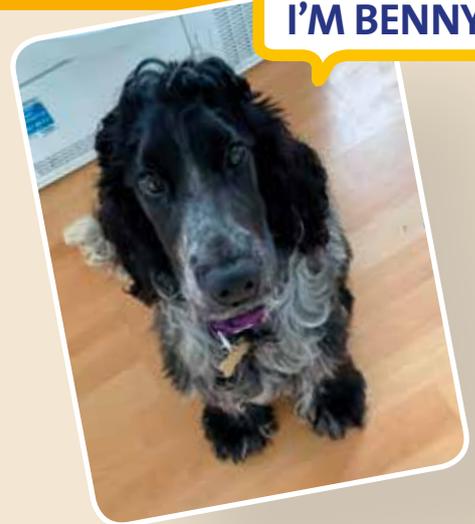
"Benny was my rock during lockdown as I had just lost my Dad in May after a stroke in January. I found I couldn't sit in the house but walking on my own was not the same as having a dog beside you. I was so used to having a dog but lost Dylan in October 2019. We rehomed Benny as the little boy in his original family had developed allergies."



After lockdown restrictions ease, Benny's owner is most looking forward to being able to go further with Benny taking him to see the beach to show him the sand and sea.

If, like Benny's owner, you are looking forward to having adventures further afield, it is worth ensuring you are aware how to best keep your dog safe in new areas.

1. Ensure your microchip details are all correct and up to date and have an ID tag on your dog's collar or harness. Having both forms of identification on your dog is a legal requirement.
2. Research the area - online maps and walking apps are a fantastic tool to help highlight areas of interest such as parking areas, picnic benches, public toilets. They also help to identify considerations such as free grazing sheep, high risk cliff edges, steep declines and bodies of water.
3. Check your route - the distance and terrain to expect, and if your dog can cope with this. For example, hill walking should be trained for, starting with small hills and gradually built up to ensure your companion is 'hill fit'.
4. Be weather aware - looking out for sun UV levels, heat, storms, snow, strong winds and if any extreme weather may be expected. Be aware of peak temperature times and visibility levels expected on the day.
5. Going to the beach - check high and low tide times to prevent any risks of becoming stranded. Check the beach is dog friendly.
6. If you have a dog who loves to scavenge it may be worth looking for a quieter area out with peak public times.
7. Always carry plenty of water for your dog. Drinking salty water can cause sickness, diarrhoea and in some make them seriously ill as they become very dehydrated. Stop them drinking from rock pools or puddles on the beach.
8. After swimming in the sea, rinse dogs with fresh water so they do not lick salt off their fur. Clean their ears to prevent any infections brewing.



9. Sand can cause stomach problems as it can compact in the stomach and cause a blockage.
10. Seek out shade to prevent heatstroke and ensure your dogs do not overexert themselves.
11. Consider the wildlife. Pay attention to signs for nesting birds, grazing animals, seals and jellyfish.
12. Areas where Blue Green Algae is present should be avoided, if ingested this can lead to liver damage or failure. Call your vet immediately if you suspect your dog has come into contact with algae.



We are extremely lucky to have so many beautiful places nearby to visit, it is always worth planning to ensure you can enjoy them the safest way.

The Westport Team is always here to help. For enquiries email surgery@westportvets.com. If you have any concerns about your pet or in an emergency call 01506 844165.

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