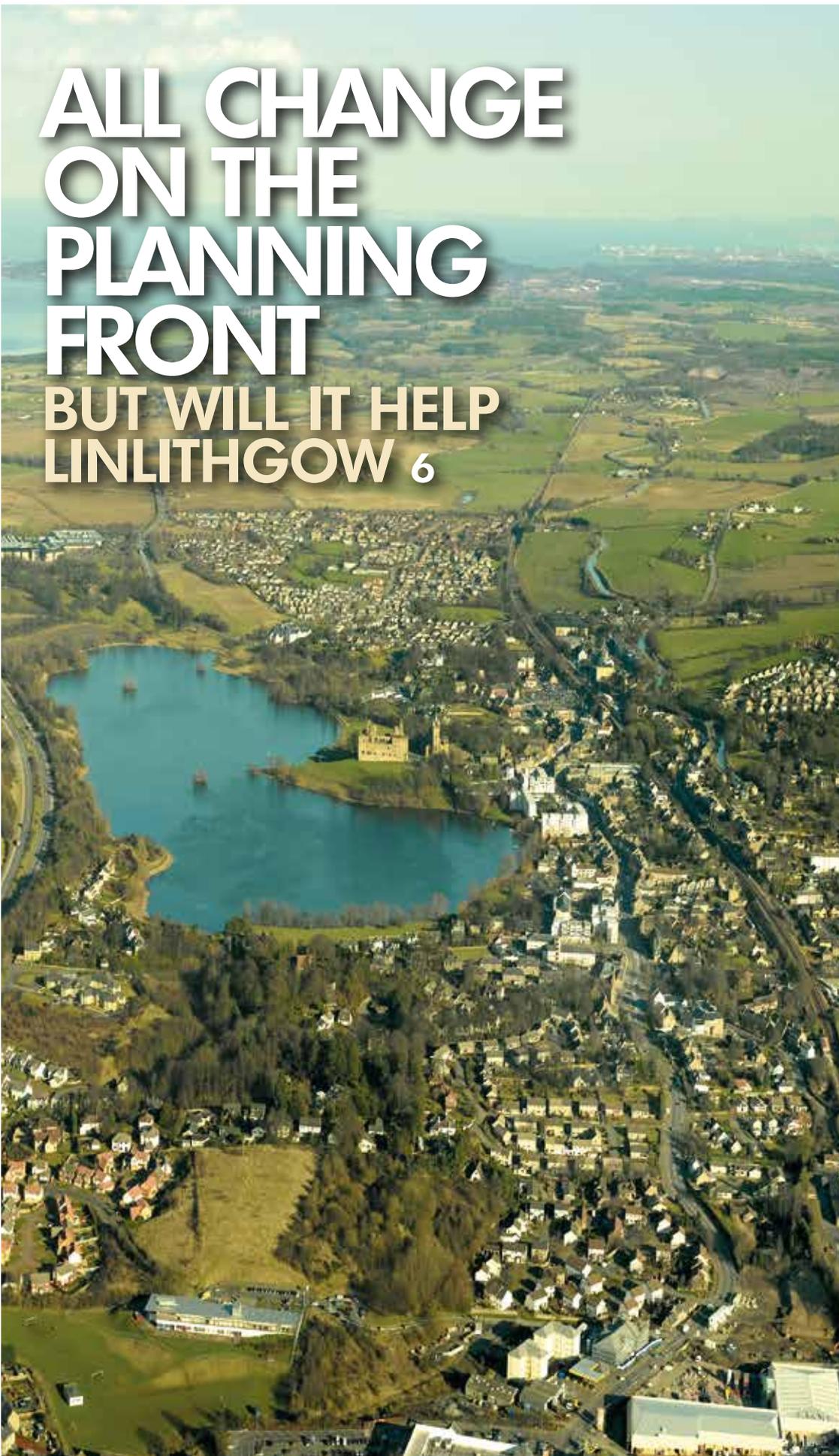


# ALL CHANGE ON THE PLANNING FRONT

BUT WILL IT HELP  
LINLITHGOW 6



ONWARDS & UPWARDS  
LINLITHGOW DIY ARE MOVING  
ALONG THE HIGH STREET 9

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LINLITHGOW COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

# BITZACK



ANNIVERSARY

# BITCH

LINLITHGOW'S NEWS BY LINLITHGOW'S PEOPLE

ISSUE NO. 88  
MARCH 2022

Linlithgow  DIY



# OPENING SOON

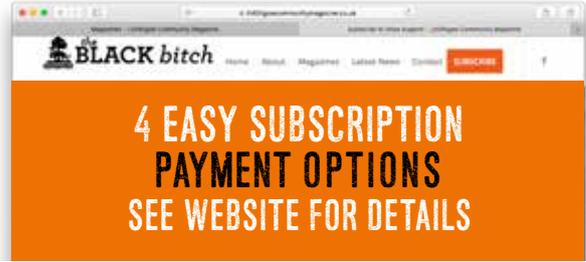
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**DAVID TAIT**  
**EDITOR**  
**THE BLACK BITCH MAGAZINE**



## PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

*Planning legislation never makes for light reading but ambitious plans are now well advanced in Scotland to give communities a more meaningful opportunity to make constructive contributions to local development plans (LDPs) – that is to say to have a role in deciding where house building should – and should not – be permitted.*

*Much needed many would say!*

However, if the town’s opinions are to be taken into account this time round, then time is of the essence. There is only a limited window of opportunity for a community to engage in the process and once missed that opportunity will not come around again for 10 years.

That is why we have put an aerial photograph of Linlithgow on the front page of this issue to emphasise the critical importance of planning in advance. The photograph shows very nicely the most obvious location, just above centre right, where any future development should be centred.

On pages 6 & 7 of this issue you will find an article by Linlithgow’s **Planning Forum** explaining what happened last time, the changes in legislation designed to promote community participation and the early consultations required in order to be well prepared when the call comes later this year for the community to engage in the planning process.

For all those interested in Linlithgow’s future development and all those, in particular, who have been dismayed by some of the decisions taken in the past few years, this is a golden opportunity. Infrastructure improvements are desperately needed to ensure the town is best placed to face the future, confident in its ability to enhance its reputation as one of Scotland’s most attractive places to live and work.

Please take time to read the Planning Forum article on pages 6 & 7 and, better still, google “Linlithgow, A Plan for the Future” to understand the origins of the document and the serious long-term issues it is designed to address.

Also engaging in a great deal of planning at the moment is **Burgh Beautiful** which has been selected once again to represent Scotland’s “Towns” in the Britain in Bloom competition 2022 – see their article on pages 14&15. Bringing much colour and enjoyment, even on a dreich, damp Scottish summer’s day, Burgh Beautiful must be one of Linlithgow’s most popular community groups. A band of upwards of a 100 highly motivated and dedicated volunteers maintains standards all through the year, come hail or shine.

As past winners in their category they naturally have a reputation to maintain which requires that little bit of extra input at competition time. There’s all kinds of help required, much of it requiring little or no gardening skills so if you’d like to help win a gold medal for Linlithgow please see the contact details in the article or, if you personally know a member, ask them how you can help.

Many other aspects of community life are also covered - not least an

alternative origin story of the Black Bitch legend as well as an update on the progress of plans to promote Linlithgow’s heritage; the **One Linlithgow BID** looks forward to the Fiver Fest and other **Shop Local** initiatives encouraging shoppers to check town businesses not least in the run-up to Mothers Day; an attempt on a **Guinness World Record** for travelling from Land’s End to John O’Groats on a Kick Scooter; a message from **twinning partner Hochsauerlandkreis** to celebrate 50 years of successful exchanges; a look forward to the return after a two year break of **Children’s Gala Day** and a lot more besides.

*Also, a reminder that the magazine has been able to continue in publication during the recent tough trading period for our business advertisers and that in no small part is due to the support and generosity of our subscribers. Local news is now in short supply and likely to stay that way for the foreseeable future so if you enjoy keeping in touch with Linlithgow activities and interests please give some thought to making a subscription.*

**Finally, to all those who help prepare the magazine, advertise in it, subscribe to it and deliver it a very big thank you once again.**

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



>>> For details and events visit **what’s on** [www.mylinlithgow.com](http://www.mylinlithgow.com) <<<

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# LINLITHGOW POLICE NEWS

Constable Chris Ashley is the community Police officer based at Linlithgow Police station, which is now located within the recently refurbished Tam Dalyell House at Linlithgow Partnership Centre, High Street, Linlithgow.

Police have continued to receive community complaints regarding parking within Linlithgow town centre. The main areas are High Street, the Vennel and Station Road. Police will continue to monitor and issue fixed penalty tickets when offences are detected.

There has also been an increase in vandalism to the town, including the Palace and a local charity shop. Most enquiries have identified youths involved, so if your young one is out in the town, please consider what they are doing and who they are with.

## DSDAS – a message from Police Scotland

Police Scotland's Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse aims to prevent domestic abuse by giving people the right to ask about the background of their partner. It also allows concerned members of the public, such as relatives and friends, the right to ask about someone's partner if they are concerned that person has been abusive in the past.

You can submit a "Right to Ask" application, if you are concerned about yourself or someone else. Please visit [www.scotland.police.uk](http://www.scotland.police.uk)

## Online Scams and Fraud

Over the past couple of months reports of telephone, online scams and fraud have been on the increase.

These are becoming more and more sophisticated.

- >> 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.

## 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](mailto:westlothiancommunityeast@scotland.pnn.police.uk) or through Contact us Service

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

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

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**NEXT ISSUE COPY DEADLINE**  
**6 APRIL 2022**

**CONTACT THE EDITOR**  
[on.a.lead@gmail.com](mailto:on.a.lead@gmail.com)

# FOLK FAE LITHGAE LIZ PARK

I first met Liz Park – or Elizabeth Braithwaite as she was then - in April 1964, when we were both part of the P1 Easter intake at the old Linlithgow Public School at the West Port. Under the watchful gaze of the legendary Infant Headmistress, Miss Mary Baird, we embarked on our school career together and would remain classmates until we went to the Academy in 1971.

In November last year, Liz made history when she became the first woman to be installed as Provost of the Court of the Deacons of the Ancient and Royal Burgh of Linlithgow. This is the body that organises the historic Riding of the Marches, which has been part of the fabric of the town since 1542.

The annual inspection of the town's ancient boundaries has not taken place for the last two years and preparations are already well under way for a spectacular return this year. As Provost, Liz will be the figurehead of the festivities on the time-honoured date of 'the first Tuesday after the second Thursday in June' and she is raring to go.

.....

*“We are planning for a full-blown Marches,” she told me, “With all the usual organisations returning again and many new groups getting involved for the first time. The Marches belongs to everybody, and we would love to see as many people as possible taking part in the Deacons’ Nights and the procession itself. In the coming weeks, we are planning a ‘Getting to know you’ meeting,’ like we did in previous years, where people can come along and find out what is involved in taking part in the Marches.”*

*“I understand that local festivals all over the country will be back this year and it will give everybody a real lift.”*

.....

Born at 5 Hamilton Place, Linlithgow, on May 17th, 1959, Liz is a Black Bitch, the daughter of a Black Bitch and has been married to a Black Bitch for almost forty-two years. She was employed by the Royal Bank almost since leaving school but is



Photography: Martine Stead

now enjoying a very happy retirement. The Marches is a huge passion for Liz, and she has been a life-long enthusiast. She first joined the Deacons’ Court in 1996, as the Deacon for the Gala Day committee, and became a full member the following year. Fourteen years later, having chaired the two main committees, Liz was elected as the first woman Bailie and began what was effectively a nine-year apprenticeship to become Linlithgow’s First Citizen on Marches Day. The pandemic means that her elevation to the top job has been delayed by a year.

.....

*“I didn’t join the Deacons’ Court to become a Bailie or the Provost,” she declared, “I joined it to do what I could for the Marches and to keep it alive for future generations. I am very honoured to be the first female Provost and still can’t quite believe that it has happened. It’s a terrific honour and I am amazed at the*

*number of people who address me as Provost when I meet them on the street.”*

.....

Now, the main priority is on ensuring that the Marches goes ahead on Tuesday June 14th and detailed planning is well in hand. Fundraising events will be taking place over the coming months, starting with a prize bingo at the Rose Social Club on Wednesday March 23rd. The popular Town Dance will also be returning, and a venue is currently under discussion.

Liz can’t wait for the Marches. *“It will be great to get people back on the High Street again,” she said. “The Deacons’ Court might put it together, but it’s the folk who make it.”*

**Murdoch Kennedy**



# IT'S ALL CHANGE ON THE PLANNING FRONT, BUT WILL IT HELP LINLITHGOW?

The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 is skeletal legislation which makes possible the adoption of subsequent regulations to make significant changes to the administration of Town and Country Planning in Scotland. At a Scotland wide level, the National Planning Framework 4 provides the policy agenda for the next West Lothian Local Development Plan (LDP) which must reflect Scottish Government priorities including the move towards net zero emissions, '20 minute neighbourhoods,' (living and working within 20 minutes of home), improved health and wellbeing and a better natural environment. At a local level the Town & Country Planning (Local Place Plans) Scotland Regulations came into force on 22 January 2022, with the objective of "giving local people the opportunity to engage meaningfully and have a positive influence in the future planning of development in their areas." This short introduction gives the why and how this is important to Linlithgow.

## THE PLANNING FORUM: PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

In 2013, it was agreed by the Community Council that a subgroup, called the Linlithgow Planning Forum, be formed which would comprise at least two members of the Community Council plus other representatives of community groups with relevant skills, knowledge and willingness to participate. An early action of the newly formed group was the production of the first edition of the document Linlithgow: A Plan for the Future. The inspiration for this document was Linlithgow Civic Trust's vision for Linlithgow, dated 2005. The first edition of the Plan for the Future was launched at a full day exhibition held at Low Port Centre, in November 2015. Comments and completed questionnaires from many people who visited the exhibition during the day were incorporated into an objection to the proposed draft of the West Lothian Council LDP.

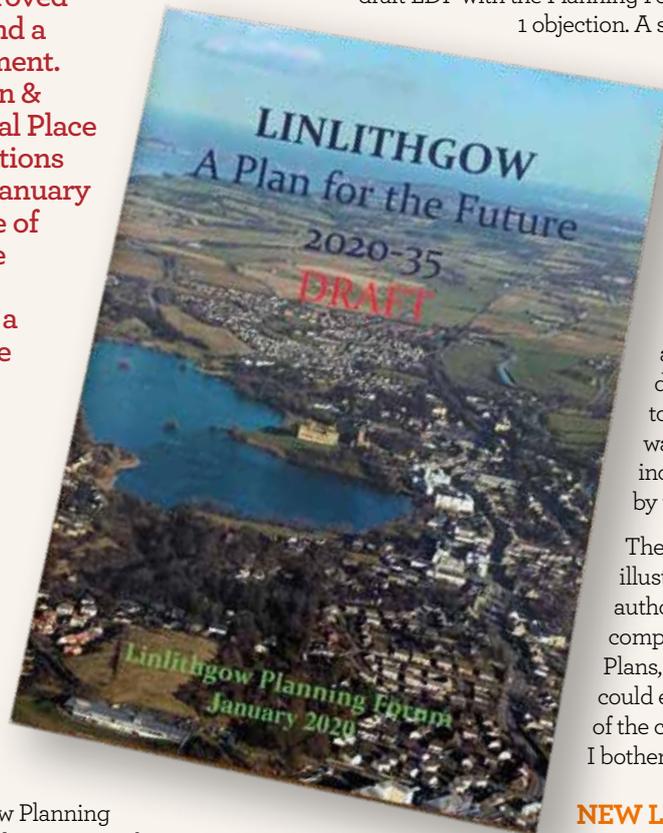
## LINLITHGOW'S EXPERIENCE OF LDP PREPARATION 2015

A principal step in the 2015 LDP process was an invitation to landowners entitled "a call for sites." Local landowners were

invited to suggest fields which could be developed principally for housing. This field-by-field approach to a change to Linlithgow's settlement boundary ignored factors such as topography, areas of great landscape value, proximity to the town centre, and impact on existing infrastructure. The view of the Planning Forum, and most people attending the exhibition, was that the Linlithgow settlement should not be determined by development opportunity and land ownership but should delineate Linlithgow in terms of the best settlement area conducive to the landform and proposed new and existing infrastructure, principally that which might relieve the High Street of constant through traffic. West Lothian Council received 262 objections from Linlithgow to its draft LDP with the Planning Forum submission counting as 1 objection. A substantial number of these

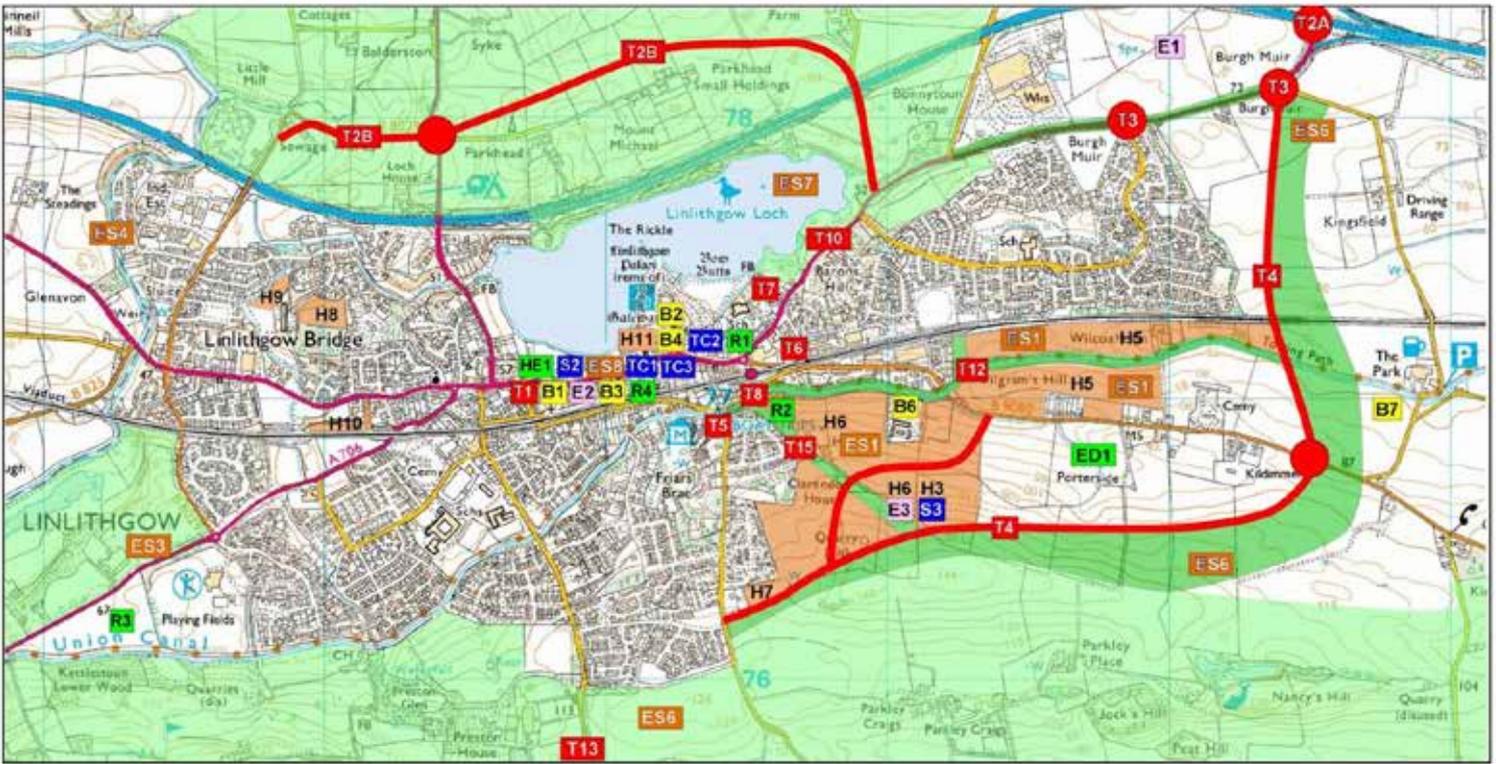
objections opposed the inclusion of the Deanburn site into the LDP. West Lothian Council summarised the objections and stated, "the council does not propose to change the LDP in relation to these matters." Those subsequently objecting to the planning application by Cala for the development at Deanburn, were told that an objection to the site was invalid since the site was included in the LDP adopted by the council.

The Linlithgow experience illustrates a problem with planning authorities' approaches to the compilation of Local Development Plans, and in Linlithgow, at least, could excuse the attitude of members of the community "why should I bother?"



## NEW LEGISLATION

The Linlithgow Planning Forum is optimistic that the new legislation gives power to properly constituted community bodies to become more influential. Scottish Government guidance defines local place plans as describing the community's aspirations for the future development and use of land within its area. Once completed and then registered by the planning authority, the local place plan must be taken into account in the preparation of the LDP. Whilst "taken into account" might be considered weak, a properly constructed local place plan, which has been the subject of consultation within the local community, must be seriously considered by the planning authority, and if refuted in whole or in part, then the planning authority must "provide clear reasons behind their decision, so that where possible the community body can rectify any issues and resubmit the local place plan." To say "the council does not propose to change the LDP in relation to these matters" will no longer be permitted.



**Map Legend and Colour Key**

- Areas of Great Landscape Value
- 'Green Wedges', Wildlife Corridors and Development Free Areas
- Hx Housing Proposals
- ESx Proposals for Environmental Sustainability
- Bx Proposals for Built/Architectural Heritage and Tourism
- Ex Proposals Relating to Business and Employment
- Tx Transport/Accessibility Proposals
- Road Links
- Sx TCx Proposals for Retailing and Town Centre
- Rx Community/Recreation Proposals
- ED1 Education Proposal
- HE1 Health Facility Proposal

*Above: Of particular note on the Proposals Map (January 2020) is the focus of potential development in the south east quadrant and, labelled T4, an Eastern Local Distributor Road to carry traffic away from the congested town centre.*



*Much of Linlithgow's Town Centre roads infrastructure dates back to when the Canal (1822) and then the railway line (1842) were constructed - adding to the town's character but not necessarily to the ease of movement of today's traffic.*



*Of particular note on the Proposals Map (January 2020) is the focus of potential development in the south east quadrant and, labelled T4, an Eastern Local Distributor Road to carry traffic away from the congested town centre.*

**PREPARE TO ENGAGE**

So, as the Linlithgow community, how do we proceed? To our advantage is the fact that the current Plan for the Future has been widely cited in government debate and discussion papers as an excellent example of a community-led plan. The Planning Forum proposes that, by the end of April 2022, it will have completed a revised draft of the Plan for the Future, reflecting input from the Linlithgow community which will be launched and available for further consultation at an exhibition with a similar structure to the successful 2015 exhibition. Multimedia methods for commenting on the Plan for the Future will be provided. A final version of the Plan for the Future will be published after considering and acting on comments received. Also of importance is the statutory requirement that, in the preparation of a local place plan, all councillors within the local place plan area must be contacted during the pre-submission stage. It is anticipated that those councillors elected in May to represent the Linlithgow Ward will enthusiastically engage with the local place plan process. Worth a question, if you are approached by a candidate for election.

**The regulations and guidance for communities is complete. Scottish Government regulations and guidance for local planning authorities on how to manage local place plans is expected later this year. We as a community will be ready!**

**Linlithgow Planning Forum**

*For the current draft of the Plan for the Future, Google: Linlithgow a Plan for the Future.*



## ONE LINLITHGOW

As we spring into March and the weather starts to behave better we look forward to a busy town full of visitors and locals rediscovering some of the amazing things Linlithgow has to offer. One Linlithgow has been busy reopening the office and giving it a good old fashioned spring clean! We are delighted to be back in the town with our doors open again and hope to remain open Mondays to Fridays 10am until 2pm at least! (appointments can be made outwith these hours too!)

We have added to our team with Sarah based in Mill Road, mainly on a Tuesday, busily gathering information to renew signage and working on other Mill Road based projects too. Sarah has worked in Playbugs for many years now and can usually be found working hard (and sometimes having a shot on the rainbow slide!). She is a well known face in the area and we are pleased to have her on board.

Also added to the team is Jennifer, another local face, who has been working outwith Linlithgow for some years and is excited to be in the town she calls home and getting to know all the fabulous businesses and groups we have here. She is supported by the wonderfully waggy Indy pup who has welcomed every visitor to the office with a happy waggy tail (and her favourite stuffed pink dragon!) Jennifer comes with a wealth of knowledge and is working to revamp our communications and project delivery. We are excited to be planning ahead with some really great tangible benefits to the town.

We were so pleased to see the art competition going ahead and the lovely Black Bitch silver trophy being presented recently. We are so lucky to have such wonderful works of art and talented people in the town. We are looking forward to the official unveiling of St Michael's statue at the Low Port, especially even more so now he is so strikingly lit up at night.



## FIVER FEST IS HERE AGAIN!

Fiver fest is a national campaign introduced to support and show off the brilliant independent businesses in the town. It is run by a company called Totally Locally and One Linlithgow is proud to be the official partner in Linlithgow for this initiative. Over 100 towns and thousands of independent businesses are taking part. Did you know... if every adult in Linlithgow spent £5.00 locally each week it would mean £3.7 million per year goes directly into our local economy!! This can lead to more jobs, more businesses, a strong local economy and a lovely place to be.

Fiver Fest happens three times per year, and it is now a big part of our promotions for Linlithgow. The independent shops and businesses are what makes our town special and unique. The community support for local businesses has been amazing during lockdown, but it is easy to slip back into old shopping habits now

that things are returning to normal. So this is a little nudge to say *'Our local businesses are still here, we are still serving our community and we appreciate your support. And of course we are great value!'*

To help you rediscover your town some of our local businesses are putting on Fiver Fest deal from the 12th to the 26th March. Just in time for Mothers day! Take the chance to wander the town and see what bargains you can find! Keep an eye on social media for more information, special offers and who is taking part! Businesses will be displaying Fiver Fest posters and signage to help you spot the great deals.



## MOTHER'S DAY

27th March is Mother's Day. Are you organised for that special lady in your life? Did you know in Linlithgow you can find everything from the traditional flowers, chocolates, gin, balloons and cards to the more bespoke gifts, treatments, makeovers, great meals, afternoon teas, boxes of edible goodies, fruit baskets, fabulous homewares, accessories, jewellery, kitchenware, books and everything in between!



Use [www.mylinlithgow.com](http://www.mylinlithgow.com) to find a business directory to get something really special this year and show all the mums that you can find a thoughtful gift without travelling too far! The online marketplace can be found there too if you want some out of hours shopping or gifting the best of Linlithgow without stepping outside!

## LINLITHGOW'S LOYALTY LOTTERY

Have you taken part yet? It's so easy! Win up to £50 in vouchers to spend locally by collecting stamps from participating local businesses and entering a prize draw. Collect a stamp card at any participating business and once complete drop it in the collection boxes at the One Linlithgow office (the letterbox), Lilypond Crafts and Gifts or in Playbugs at Mill Road Industrial Estate. Look for the Loyalty Lottery logo or ask your favourite businesses the next time you pop in.

If you are a business in Linlithgow and want to join the scheme, pop an email across to [office@onelinlithgow.com](mailto:office@onelinlithgow.com) and we'll get you set up



## LINLITHGOW DIY – ON THE MOVE ON THE HIGH STREET

It may be only a short move along the High Street for Steven Wilson, but it's a big leap of faith for the owner of Linlithgow DIY as he prepares to transfer his popular store from its present home at number 167 in early April.

They say that moving house is one of the most stressful things in life. Steven will undertake the mammoth task of shifting 6862 items - not all in his trusty wheelbarrow! - but is facing the challenge with the same trademark enthusiasm customers have come to appreciate since he took over Linlithgow DIY in 2014.

Steven said, *“When the chance of taking over the former Jersey Bean Cafe opposite The Cross came up, I grabbed it with both hands. If I hadn't, I know I would have regretted it for the rest of my life.”*

*The location is great, but it's mainly because of all the extra space we'll have. Customers will still get the same welcome and knowledgeable service we've become known for, but I hope to add that extra 'wow' factor.*

*I want to offer a real browsing experience, which is difficult to achieve in the present store. There are two attractive large windows, and I intend to greatly extend our kitchen and homeware range, and make a real feature of it as you come in.”*

Steven said that he intended introducing a number of eco-friendly measures, and other features in the light and airy space that would make customers feel comfortable about spending time in the store. But equally nothing would change for customers calling in for a particular size of screw, virtually any type of light bulb, or a tool from their extensive range.

*“I'm also planning on introducing a variety of pet products, and a range of quirky little items of interest that might leave customers wondering how they'd managed to get through life without them. I'm sure a little gadget that easily removes the foil from a wine bottle might fall into that category! It should be fun.”*

While the weather might be a main topic of conversation for many, for Steven the weather and the seasons play a pivotal role in how he runs his business.

*“As we are heavily influenced by the weather, we change the shop from season to season. Moving into spring we are replacing our winter range of fireplace accessories, kindling, logs and snow shovels for gardening tools, compost, weedkiller and seeds.*

*Our lovely range of vegetable and flower seeds are thankfully on a stand, making transport nice and easy. We are extending our range of planters and plant pots, which, perhaps sadly, we're quite excited about!”*

Looking ahead to summer, Steven continued, they would be bringing in a new range of “brilliant products”. There would be a selection of treatments for feeding the garden in every area, including lawn feed, chicken manure, fish blood and bone, and tomato fertiliser.

*“Into autumn and it's time to keep the place nice and tidy. You've no*



*excuse not to - we'll have indoor and outdoor brushes, leaf grabbers, wheelbarrows, rakes and incinerators. You get the idea!*

*Before you know it we're into winter, traditionally the time for painting. But it's all the year round, and our range of Dulux paints, which we mix in-store in any colour or finish, will be available in the new store. Shifting our paint mixing machine, which is a really heavy piece of kit, will take the effort of the full team.”*

*Steven added that he would be continuing to provide home deliveries - a godsend to many during lockdown - and his tool sharpening service. He intended to empathise to customers he would like to hear about any ideas they have to improve the business, including stocking any new products.*

*Steven does have someone to bounce ideas off - and vice-versa! His wife Jennifer runs Bridge of Allan Hardware which they opened four years ago and is proving a real success with locals.*

# REED BAND'S RUTH WILL BE THE GALA QUEEN



a twinning visit to Hochsauerlandkreis in Germany and her Mum has photos of baby Ruth wearing a tiny Reed Band T shirt. She became something of a celebrity and was even featured in the local newspapers in Hochsauerlandkreis.

Ruth will be the very first member of the Reed Band to be chosen as the Gala Day Queen and she has already been inundated with offers of help from her fellow musicians.

In a double celebration, Ruth will be crowned by **Murdoch Kennedy**, who has been involved in the band for over thirty years. Well-known as a local community activist and one of the editorial team on the Black Bitch Magazine, Murdoch will be only the second man ever to have been given the honour of crowning the Gala Day Queen, following on from Peter Coleman, who crowned Laura Neary in 2001.

Queen-elect Ruth will be assisted by Chief Lady in Waiting, **Louise Thomson**, who attends Linlithgow Primary. Louise was due to be a flower girl and her sister a fairy in 2020, when the Gala Day was cancelled due to the pandemic, so she is delighted that things will be going ahead this year.

Defending the Queen-elect's title to the throne will be Queen's Champion, **Cameron Ford** from Linlithgow Bridge Primary. His younger sister, **Lucy**, will also be taking part as a fairy.

Full details of all the children selected for this year's festivities can be found on the Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Children's Gala Day Facebook page and other social media outlets.

**Sandy Macpherson**



Photography: Martine Stead

and Highland dancing, and helping her Mum **Seonaid** with the rail tours at the Scottish Railways Preservation Society in Bo'ness. Ruth also loves Star Wars, Doctor Who and Harry Potter. Her delight at being chosen as Queen is shared with wee sister

**Hannah (8)** who will be a flower girl.

Ruth's family are heavily involved in Linlithgow Reed Band, and she is an enthusiastic member of the Beginners' Band, where she is making great progress on the euphonium. The beginners meet every Sunday afternoon in the Longcroft hall, under the direction of Sarah Storrar. Ruth first started in January 2019, but then had a year out where she changed to violin at school, before coming back to the band last August.

In 2011, when she was only fourteen weeks old, Ruth travelled with the Reed Band on

Preparations for the return of the Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Children's Gala Day on Saturday June 18th have taken a massive step forward with the selection of the main retinue and other characters for this year.

The Queen will be **Ruth Scott**, who is in P6A at Springfield Primary School. Ruth will be eleven on March 31st and her hobbies include playing piano and euphonium, Scottish Country,

## Antique Fayre in Linlithgow

Linlithgow Heritage Trust is delighted to be holding another of our popular Antiques Fayres; the first of two we hope to hold this year. The fayre will take place on Saturday 19th March between 10am and 4pm at the Queen Margaret Hall on Blackness Road in Linlithgow. The cost of entry is £1.

We will have refreshments also available in the hall and there is free parking at the venue. Our Fayre in September was extremely popular so we hope to see folks supporting this great event again. And remember that once you've had a look round and enjoyed a hot drink and a cake, you can nip along to the Museum for a visit to round off your day. We're looking forward to seeing you there.

**Alison Train, Trustee LHT**

|   |   |
|---|---|
|  <b>Antique Vintage &amp; Collector's Fair</b> |   |
| <b>19th March 2022</b><br><b>10am - 4pm Admission £1</b><br><b>9am Early Entry £2</b>   |   |
| Refreshments available<br>Ample free parking<br>Covid Secure<br>Short walk to Linlithgow Museum - free admission                    | <b>Queen Margaret Hall</b><br><b>Blackness Road</b><br><b>Linlithgow</b><br><b>EH49 7JA</b> |
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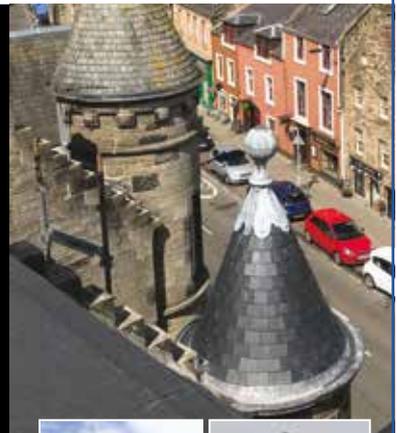


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## BLACK BITCH PUB NAME THE CAMPAIGN CONTINUES

Local people protesting at brewing giant Greene King's decision to scrap the name of the Black Bitch pub have vowed to fight on and have sent out a defiant message –

*“The Greene King bosses are sitting in Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk. We are in Linlithgow. We are not going away – and neither is our campaign.”*

The issue had been bubbling under the surface since the end of May and had

finally come to a head with an official statement by the Suffolk-based brewery on November 30th, announcing its intention to change the name of its tenanted pub as, they claimed, “the name now carries racist and offensive connotations”.

Company officials at the HQ in Bury St Edmunds further claimed that they had consulted on the name with a number of groups and organisations, both internally and externally, including the West Lothian Community Race Forum, and also undertook independent research, which showed many people would no longer feel welcome visiting a pub with that name, even if they knew where the name originated.

Greene King's controversial plans have been widely condemned in Linlithgow since they were first announced at the end of November and two well-attended campaign rallies saw local people of all ages taking to the streets, under the slogan of “Hands Off Our History”.

They said there had been no consultation in the town. The Black Bitch emblem has been used as a symbol of Linlithgow since at least the 13th century and those born here are very proud to call themselves “Black Bitches”. People were seething at the attempts to link the name with racism.

They saw the move as a direct attack on Linlithgow's heritage and traditions.

Opposition only hardened when the company announced on February 2nd that the pub at 14 West Port would be re-named ‘The Willow Tree’ and not ‘The Black Hound’, as originally intended. This led to another rally outside the pub and calls for a boycott of all four Greene King businesses in the town.

Now protesters are aiming to unite all the organisations in the town and send out a strongly-worded letter to the Greene King management, condemning their plans to remove the name from the pub and their continued use of the words ‘racist’ and ‘offensive’ in their public statements.

There are also plans to form a new organisation, possibly called “The Friends of the Black Bitch, to build a fighting fund and potentially look at a community buy out or a ‘White Knight’ landlord for the Black Bitch pub – somebody who would be happy to retain the name of what is now arguably the most famous pub in the British Isles.

**Murdoch Kennedy**



## ROSE ARE BACK ON THE TITLE TRAIL

A remarkable run of 21 straight wins has transformed the fortunes of Linlithgow Rose this season. The team were languishing in mid table and had already conceded a 13-point gap to rivals Penicuik and Tranent when the club made the decision to change the management team. Gordon Herd, already a legend with a string of honours to his name as a player at Linlithgow Rose, took up the challenge and immediately suffered a shock Scottish Cup exit to Banks of Dee before the next couple of matches were postponed as a Covid-19 outbreak ran through the playing squad.

After those early challenges, fortunes started to change with the arrival of several new players, giving the team a new look and shape. As confidence grew, the Rose found their scoring boots and several teams found themselves on the wrong side of a hammering, as they defeated Tynecastle 8-0, Dundonald

5-1, Musselburgh 6-0 and title rivals Penicuik 5-0. Whilst that brilliant 21 match run came to a halt recently, the lads remain right in the mix going into their last nine league matches.

The supporters have enjoyed the return to form and the consistency shown by the team. Crowds are on the increase and there is a real buzz around Prestonfield. Linking with their digital partners at Fanbase, the club has just started a promotion in primary schools across the area which will see the offer of free entry for accompanied kids extended to include a discounted entry price of just £5 for parents when they bring their children along to league matches through the remainder of this season. Anyone who buys one of these tickets will also gain free access to selected pre-season fixtures at Prestonfield and every ticket holder will be entered into a prize draw for the opportunity to win a match mascot prize, which will enable the winning child to meet the players and take the field with the team, before enjoying some complimentary hospitality with their

parents or guardians courtesy of Linlithgow Rose.

If you're new to Linlithgow, come along and get behind the team as they strive to win the league and three cup competitions open to them. Prestonfield is a great place to watch football and to bring youngsters along with the option of a seat in the stand, traditional terracing, or a grassy area where youngsters can let off steam if they wish. There's a social club right next to the stadium too where you can grab a pre-match drink or even consider taking a hospitality package starting at just £25 per person. As we fight our way back from the impacts of Covid-19, local support has never been more important – we hope we'll see you at a match soon!



**Jon Mahoney**

President, Linlithgow Rose Football Club

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# BURGH BEAUTIFUL IN 2022



Burgh Beautiful has received confirmation that Linlithgow has been selected as one of two Scottish locations to take part in the Britain in Bloom UK finals. Our competitors in the 'Town' category are Chatteris (Cambridgeshire), Upton (Dorset), Amersham (Buckinghamshire) and Denbigh (Denbighshire). The other Scottish town in the contest will be North Berwick and it is in the "coastal" category. The judging will be in late July or early August, and a good result would bring Linlithgow great benefits, strengthening civic pride amongst residents and increasing tourism.

Our floral displays are once again a principal part of the competition, but we are also judged on our care of the environment which includes tree planting, public art and general town cleanliness, as well as the involvement of the community which includes financial support. The balance in judging has shifted more towards the environmental and community aspects.

Burgh Beautiful has expanded its Competitions Working Group who are busy planning what needs to be done and by whom. All our members will be involved and once again we are most grateful for the involvement of groups in the town such as the Rotary Club of Linlithgow Grange, LUCS,

Family, Linlithgow Civic Trust, Scouts including Cubs and Beavers, Guides and Brownies as well as all our very generous sponsors, community gardeners and local businesses active in providing floral displays. West Lothian Council has promised to carry out some necessary tasks in time for the judging.

With spring round the corner, Burgh Beautiful has plans for seasonal planting well underway. With Linlithgow having been selected to represent Scotland in this year's Britain in Bloom UK finals competition, there is an added incentive to make the most of our floral displays.

This means that some of the teams who look after the flower beds in the town do need extra help. The tasks include

planting up summer bedding where this is applicable, watering, weeding and dead-heading. Work is shared out between team members; there is the opportunity to meet people and you would be contributing to making the town look its best for residents and visitors, as well as the Britain in Bloom judges. Gardening knowledge is not essential as you would be helped with any tasks with which you were unfamiliar.

Please consider joining Burgh Beautiful to take part in the run-up to Britain in Bloom and beyond! Your assistance would be most welcome. Remember gardening is good exercise and improves your sense of well-being. If you are interested, please email us at [bbf@lbt.scot](mailto:bbf@lbt.scot)



## AN ARBORETUM IN THE MAKING

Are you familiar with Rosemount Park? It is to the west of the Canal Centre. It is gradually being planted with specimen trees by Burgh Beautiful's Environment Working Group.

These are for the most part native species such as elder, rowan, ash, oak, field maple, and silver birch, but also some less well known natives: great willow, white poplar, white willow, osier, hornbeam, black poplar, and aspen. Labels have been attached to many of these trees giving their common name, Latin taxonomical name and country of origin.



The black poplar was once a familiar part of the British landscape with their wide, rounded crowns and straggly outline, but it has been in decline for the past 200 years. The tree is naturally found on flood plains and was the species painted by Constable in "The Hay Wain." Our small specimen can be found in the damp area below the well head.

Another important tree for conservation is the aspen. It is only in the north and west of Scotland that the aspen grows in significant numbers. The tree requires hot temperatures to flower and the last significant flowering in Scotland was in 2019 following a 23year gap since 1996. Tennyson makes reference to aspens in "The Lady of Shalott" when he writes "aspens shiver". The colony of aspens in Richfield, Ohio is called Pando or the Trembling Giant, echoing Tennyson's image of its movement. Aspens propagate by underground suckers to form a "clone" of connected trees that are all part of the same single organism.

A number of well-known non-natives such as the giant sequoia from Western USA and a cedar of Lebanon, have also been planted although it will be many years yet until they reach their full maturity. Specimens of these trees along with a dawn redwood hailing from China were in the original park attached to Rosemount house. The lovely line of ornamental cherries, which originate from East Asia, now have as a neighbour a monkey puzzle tree, native to the Andes. The park will continually evolve as new specimens are added to the collection to form

Linlithgow's own arboretum. Linlithgow's own arboretum.



Planting the monkey puzzle in Rosemount



## IF YOU GO DOWN TO THE WOODS TODAY...

A marshy piece of ground to the west of the leisure centre - known as the Triangle - has been undergoing a transformation into woodland over the last three years. During that time Burgh Beautiful, along with many volunteers from Linlithgow, has planted one thousand trees which were donated free of charge by the Woodland Trust, to whom we extend our thanks. Over the next few years the growth surrounding these trees will require cutting back to allow them to develop, and they will require protection from marauding deer. The land, owned by West Lothian Council but leased to Linlithgow Community Development Trust, includes meandering paths along with the trees which will develop over time to give a mixed broadleaf woodland.

One of the paths, planted with hawthorn, has been designated the May Walk, in recognition of an alternative name for the tree. Its blossoming marks the point at which spring turns into summer, and the old saying 'Cast ne'er a clout ere May is out' almost certainly refers to the opening of hawthorn flowers rather than the end of the month.

In addition, hawthorn can support more than 300 insects and is the foodplant for moth caterpillars. Its flowers provide nectar and pollen for bees and other pollinating insects. The haws are eaten by migrating birds, such as redwings, fieldfares and thrushes, as well as small mammals, and the dense, thorny foliage makes fantastic nesting shelter for many

species of birds and is a major contributor to Triangle Wood.

Rowan trees have been planted along the northern path leading from the sports ground to the wood. Common in Scotland, rowan was once widely planted near houses as a protection against witches. The colour red was considered to be best for fighting evil, and so the rowan's bright red berries have long been associated with magic and cutting down a rowan was considered taboo in Scotland.

Trees such as the hawthorn, rowan and the many other native species planted on the site will enhance biodiversity over the area, as well as help combat climate change and compensate for deforestation and urban growth.



For further information, please contact [lbt.scot@burgh-beautiful.com](mailto:lbt.scot@burgh-beautiful.com).

## IS THIS THE ORIGIN OF THE BLACK BITCH LEGEND?

*Found hidden in the wall of a residence in West Port, Linlithgow during renovations, and translated from the original Scots. (Date unknown)*

*My candle splutters as I write this. It won't last the hour, and I must make haste if I am to save my betrothed.*

*I cannot bear the thought of never seeing Andrew again although I fear it may be the most likely outcome. He was taken from me three weeks past by Sir Douglas Keening, the local Sheriff at Arms. His men dragged Andrew from his bed to the cells and then, in the morrow, in front of the magistrate. His crime? Poaching. But how can feeding your family be malfesance?*

.....

The trial was a farce; the magistrate in Keening's pocket. Along with my father, I watched in horror as Andrew was found guilty and sentenced to death. Barely able to comprehend what had happened, my legs buckled and I fell as they led Andrew away in chains and onto the cart. Andrew's dog Meg, forever faithful to her master, circled the cart frantically and howled our collective agony. I will never forget the look of hopelessness in my love's eyes as the wagon trundled by, or the baying of the bitch as she trotted by its side. Holding me fast against him, my father forbade me follow for fear of attracting the attention of Keening's men. I wept in despair as I watched his final journey from the court to Linlithgow Loch.

I begged my father to tell me what fate awaited Andrew but he would not say. Only later did I learn his punishment was to be tied to a tree on an island in the loch and left to starve. My mother, fearing I would go mad with grief, implored my father to fetch Meg in the hope we would console each other. He found her whimpering by the loch opposite the island they call 'the Rickle', and persuaded her home. She's shared our fireside since but returns often to the loch where she can be heard howling.

Twas the night after Andrew was taken that I had the idea. Hugging Meg to my bosom, I wept as I thought about my love, cold and hungry and at the mercy of the elements. The dog glanced at me with her soft brown eyes and in that moment a vision flashed before mine and I knew what I must do. Later, when everyone was abed, I wrapped bread, cheese and ale in

an oilskin cloth and led Meg to the edge of the loch. Darkness had fallen and the inky black water reflected a bright waxing moon. We had to be quiet for fear of being discovered or I'd be pilloried in the town square. Or worse. And it would be the end of Andrew.

I gathered my skirts and waded out into the shallow waters. I tied the oilskin bundle to Meg's collar and bade her find Andrew. The brave hound dove into the water, sending sleeping water fowl screeching from their roosts, and swam towards the Rickle. Hours seemed to pass

As if my anguish and despair were not enough, the worst happened yesterday and our petition was denied. That evening, Meg and I made our nightly visit to the loch and I waited in the shallows for her return. Unbeknownst to me, Keening had set a watch when he'd heard of Andrew's refusal to die. I crouched in terror among the reeds as I heard boatmen drag Meg from the loch and beat her. As I listened to the hound's screams, I clutched my sides for fear I'd come apart. I returned home weeping to find my parents waiting for me. They implored me to leave Andrew

to his fate, and marry Keening for the sake of our family. I promised to do no such thing. And then I learned today that poor Meg is to share the same punishment as Andrew, and is to be tied to an oak on the island opposite and left to starve.

I write this entry as a testament to the bravery of Meg, Andrew's faithful black bitch who has shown more courage and fortitude than exists in most men. The candle is dwindling now and the hour is upon me when I must act. I go tonight in the hope of saving them both. Old John Stewart

will be waiting for me by the loch in his boat to ferry me to Andrew and then to Meg. Before I go, I leave behind this truth so that one day others may learn of it and perhaps remember Meg's loyalty.

Dear God, I beg of thee to help us but, should we fail, I pray you take our souls to keep.

**Catriona MacLean**

*Author's note: This was inspired by recent headlines concerning the renaming of the Black Bitch pub, and the short story 'From the diary of James Ashdown,' by Sam Eastop.*

*Little is known of when and how the legend took root, so I've used artistic licence in bringing it to life.*

*H.J. Russell is a Scottish author who lives in the historic town of Linlithgow in West Lothian – see: <https://hjrussell.co.uk/>*



before I heard the lap of water and Meg reappeared. The wretched creature was shivering and exhausted and I wrapped my woollen cloak around her until she stopped shaking. I was heartened to see my bundle returned, empty of food and with the ale pot drained and stoppered.

For almost three weeks, Meg and I repeated our evening mercy mission while the court dragged its feet over our petition. My father grew suspicious when he overheard gossip after fishermen brought word that Andrew showed no signs of starving. My father said nothing, but each night I would find bread and ale laid out ready on the table.

Then, two days ago, the Sheriff called upon my father to ask for my hand in marriage. Refusal of such a request by Keening was unthinkable, despite him being more than thirty years my senior. The bargain was struck, me a mere chattel in the games of men, and a date agreed. Only three days hence. I begged, nae pleaded, with my father to renege but he would not break his promise; not to Keening, for to do so would be the end of us all.

## 50 YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP IN PEACE AND FREEDOM



The twinning between Hochsauerlandkreis and West Lothian is celebrating its golden anniversary.

The anniversary of the partnership involving West Lothian county and the Hochsauerland district (HSK) shows the special connection

between these two regions. For fifty years it has been a shining example of how continuous civic commitment and active participation can turn former enemies into very good friends - a development that many people on both sides exemplify both publicly and privately. This has never been more important given the current level of risk to stability in Europe and beyond.

The regions have been connected since 1972. Representatives of the districts of Kreis Arnberg (now HSK) and the pre-regionalisation West Lothian County Council met in the County Buildings in Linlithgow and signed an agreement which states:

*“The aim of the partnership is, especially in the interest of international understanding, that people from all walks of life, particularly young people, are able to meet each other.”*

Exactly this demand and promise by the founders is the basis on which the partnership has been continuously reinvigorated: in school exchanges, internships abroad, conservation projects, the co-operation of politics and administration, visits from music groups or sports clubs to name just a few examples of the many encounters that have regularly taken place over the last fifty years - due to the pandemic recently also virtually. These are often organised and mediated by the West Lothian - HSK Partnerschaftsvereinigung on the German side and the West Lothian Twinning Association here in Scotland.

The strength of this partnership is based not least on the personal commitment of the people of both regions, who through individual events and projects, have maintained and developed long friendships.

The exchange of ideas, opinions and learning from each other and with each other: all this can only work through the direct contact between people of both nations. Over the last five decades, it is exactly this personal exchange which has made the experience of peace and freedom real. Politicians and the administrations, as well as the members of the two twinning associations, have lived these ideals and contributed to the diversity of life in the Hochsauerlandkreis and West Lothian.

Whether young or old, the stated aim of the **Partnerschaftsvereinigung** and the **Twinning Association** has been to allow people of all generations on both sides to get to know each other and exchange ideas. Europe has changed continuously over the last fifty years, our countries have changed, our way of life and our lifestyle has also changed a lot. The friendship of the two regions has however remained strong. **The first 50 years of this partnership have written a success story which is far from over. 50 years - and counting!**

**Sebastian Schüttler,**  
Chairman Partnerschaftsvereinigung West Lothian - Hochsauerlandkreis e.V.



**Editor's note** – Members of Linlithgow Reed Band have been enthusiastic supporters of the twinning link with Germany for many years. The band has made six visits to Hochsauerlandkreis – in 1981, 1985, 1989, 2008, 2011 and 2016 – and individual musicians have travelled under their own steam to play at local festivals. A seventh visit was planned for July last year, but was cancelled due to the pandemic.

# LINLITHGOW'S LOCK-UPS

Bruce Jamieson

The concept of imprisonment as a form of punishment was virtually unknown in Scotland until the late 18th century. Prisons served a purely temporary custodial function, detaining prisoners until their debts were paid or until due punishment was carried out.

In 1449, for example, Robert Livingston of Linlithgow was incarcerated in the dungeons of Linlithgow Palace before being taken to Edinburgh where he was beheaded on Castle Hill.

In 1597 an act was passed requiring the Linlithgow Provost and Bailies to build a "prison-house and appoint a jailer to supervise its use; the cost to come from the Common Good Fund." A cell was duly built within the Tolbooth (the original 14th century Burgh Hall) which was later demolished by Cromwellian troops, and its 17th century replacement also had a jail incorporated in the design. It held prisoners awaiting trial and any future punishment which could range from a fine, being made to stand in the pillory or, as a



punishment for drunkenness, being made to walk through the town inside a beer barrel.

More serious or persistent offending could be penalised by a flogging or a red-hot branding with the town's Black Bitch insignia.

A quick look through some Linlithgow burgh records shows how magistrates actually did punish transgressors in the 17th and early 18th centuries.

*"James Mackay was found guilty of selling goods at the market before the due hour. He was branded with the burgh crest and then whipped from the Low Port to the West Port, naked and tied to the town cart."*

*"Nineteen habitual drunkards were rounded up and laid in irons at the Cross. There they were subject to public scorn and abuse."*

*"Alex Wilson confessed he was guilty of breaking the toon drum wi' a mighty whinger (a large sword). He wis led frae the burgh jail and ordered tae gae doon at the Cross wi' the broken drum around his neck. He wis then floggit at the Mercat Cross."*



*The Burgh Halls before the 1847 fire which destroyed the steeple.*

More serious offences were tried in Edinburgh where punishments could include the death sentence or transportation to Australia. It is estimated that in Scotland between 1788 and 1867 around 160,000 "criminals" were taken in prison ships to overseas colonies – including over 1600 women.

Meanwhile, back in Linlithgow, in 1710, after a couple of breakouts from the burgh jail, some windows were blocked up to improve security. At the same time, the "Thieves Hole" was enlarged. This was a particularly dark pit-cell in the base of the stair tower where conditions were markedly appalling. By the early 19th century, it was becoming apparent that Linlithgow's ability to securely and humanely detain prisoners was seriously compromised.

In December 1814, a gang of men accused of assault and robbery were detained in the Linlithgow Tolbooth Jail, but somehow they managed to escape. One of them, John Grant, was spotted and pursued. His only escape route was blocked by Linlithgow Loch – but this did not deter him. He plunged into the freezing water and set off swimming to the far side.



*Claire in the Thieves Hole, from an episode of "Outlander".*

His pursuers got there before him and watched as Grant slowly sank and drowned.

Such incidents, and an increase in long term prison sentences, persuaded the central government to improve prison accommodation across Scotland. An 1843 report by the Prison Commissioners recommended that Linlithgow should build a new, purpose-built jail. Linlithgow Town Council wrote back declaring that this was not required and that the increase in prisoners in the town was temporary – caused by an upsurge in crime being committed by "an influx of strangers employed in the construction of the Edinburgh-Glasgow Railway."

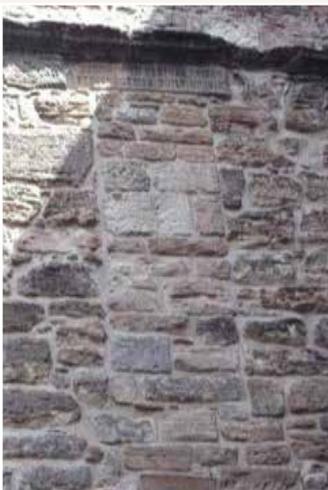
The Commissioners disagreed, pointing out that the 200-year-old facilities within the Burgh Halls were "lacking in security, cleanliness, ventilation and management". We can, but surmise what conditions must have been like – in both the Debtors Prison (accessed by an entry on the west of the tower) and in the general cells.

One account from the time states that, "one cell was a cube measuring 7 feet by 8 with a barred window and a black-painted iron door. The prisoner within was like a wild animal, pacing his cage, merely existing between meal hours. It was cold and damp, the prisoner suffering from the poor diet and the solitude."

The Rev. Andrew Bell reported in the early 1840s that, "The Tolbooth Prison accommodates around 125 prisoners a year. It is as well-ventilated as the situation will allow. Each prisoner is washed and clothed in prison dress. Their diet consists of, for breakfast: 6 ounces of oatmeal porridge, with ¾ of a pint of buttermilk; for dinner: either ox head broth or fish with 4 ounces of bread. Provision is made

*A Linlithgow branding iron with the Black Bitch crest on the end.*





for religious instruction. Mr Alison, the prison governor, instructs those who cannot read or write while his wife teaches the female inmates.”

*The blocked-up entry to the Debtor's Prison in the Burgh Halls.*

Eventually, the Town Council, led by Provost Adam Dawson, began looking for a site for a County Prison and eventually, in 1844, one was planned on the South High Street at the top of Cross Brae. It was designed, by prison architect Thomas Brown, with three stories containing 15 cells, a separate room for debtors, an office for the keeper, a large prison kitchen (which would also be used as a washing room) and storerooms for food, prisoners' clothes and raw materials for prisoners' work (eg: sacking to sew into mail bags or old ships ropes to be picked apart.)

In addition, there would be an examination room for precognitions by the sheriff and a house of five apartments for the keeper and his wife or, if he was unmarried, the prison matron. An airing gallery was planned within the roof space and an exercise yard, surrounded by a 15-foot-high wall. In a corner of the yard there was to be an outbuilding for fumigating and disinfecting prisoners' clothes.



*The new prison and exercise yard photographed in 1845 by Hill and Adamson.*

The prison was opened in 1845 with Mr Rutledge as its Governor and, after inspection, the Commissioners declared that all was in good order with all the cells properly heated and ventilated. However, prisoner supervision was not all that it should have been. In the first year of the new prison's opening, an inmate called Barclay, committed suicide by hanging himself in his cell after



locking his jailer in another cell.

*The town "Jail", near the UP Church in Dogwell Wynd, mapped in 1856.*

It was from the "death cell" in this building that Peter Maclean walked to the gallows set up at the Cross in 1857 and became the last man to be hanged in public in West Lothian.

There does not seem to have been many prisoners kept in the County Jail at any one time. The 1861 census records six men and six women. In 1863 a courthouse was built in front of the prison, and the rear portion of it became the town's police station. In 2014 the whole building became the Court Residence hotel.



*A sign at Court Residence marks the entrance to the old Police Station.*



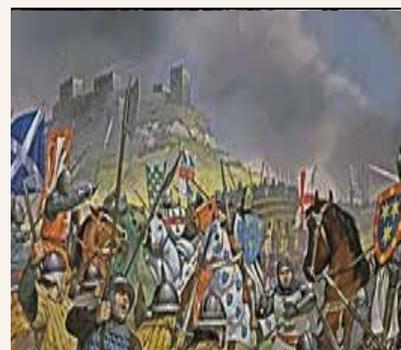
In 1878 all Scottish prisons were taken over by the Secretary of State and the new national operators brought in a harsh regime. Various approaches to the treatment of prisoners were tried, including the use of the crank (an apparatus which had to be turned by hand a certain number of times before a meal could be earned) and the silent system (solitary

confinement), but over time these died out and efforts were made to reform the inmates through education and more constructive work.

The County Prison remained in use until 1936 when it was demolished, and a larger police station built in its place. Thereafter, although the police station had a few "holding" cells, local miscreants were incarcerated elsewhere.



*The rear of the former Police Station showing the barred windows of the cells.*



## LINLITHGOW AND THE WAR OF SCOTTISH INDEPENDENCE

**Friday 11 March at 7pm**

A Zoom presentation by Bruce Jamieson

Friday, March 11th at 7-00pm

Register your interest at

[bruceajamieson@yahoo.com](mailto:bruceajamieson@yahoo.com)



## BLACK BITCH

**HOURS:** Monday- Thursday 11am-12pm, Friday & Saturday 11am-1am & Sunday 12.30am-12pm

### BLACK BITCH ENTERTAINMENT

**Sat 5th March** Singing sensation Lynne Size will be performing in the bar from 9-late. **Last weekend of the month we have our Double Bill Weekend - Sat 26th** Gerry's Karaoke 9-late & **Sun 27th** Pure Malt - Scottish, Irish & contemporary 5-8. **April Sat 2nd** sees the return of **The Voice UK** contestant Maxine Jack from 9-late. **Sat 16th** we have the fabulous **CAL** in the bar from 9-late.

**BLACK BITCH FUNCTION SUITE** Offering an ideal setting for any event or occasion. Accommodates 46 seated & a further 15 standing guests. We offer a private bar with a wide range of wine, beers & spirits. Music & buffet can be organised on request.

### SKY & BT SPORTS

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**TEL. 01506 842147**

14 West Port, Linlithgow EH49 7AZ



# GARY CLINTON, MUSIC TUTOR

## Dogs Are Like Heavy Metal Music



Fans of the more extreme varieties of rock music not only love their chosen genre and listen to it daily it actually affects how they live their life - the clothes they choose, the places they go and the people they spend time with. However metal is not for everyone and it would probably be rude to head down to the local park with a portable Bluetooth speaker and blast out Slipknot's progressive and experimental aural assault, Vol. 3: The Subliminal Verses. The riffs are killer, the drums are bone crushing and the ear-splitting vocals are explicit and at times furiously angry - but why should others have to listen to it if it's not their thing?

This is the best analogy I can think of to paint a picture to the responsible dog ownership in Linlithgow who may not realise that when their dogs are off the lead at our local play parks, they can scare and intimidate young children who may be running around playing football. 'Oh he's friendly'; 'Don't worry she won't bite' are the classic lines we've all heard and I'm sure this is true. Dogs are friendly, loyal and beautiful animals. They are adored and loved by the families who own them and of course they are a family member too. However just like heavy metal music, they aren't for everyone and when we are with our children at Linlithgow's play parks we should not have to deal with nuisance dogs off the lead, jumping up and sprinting at full tilt towards little ones who are kicking a ball around if we don't want that.

## Burst Balls and Scared Children

Unfortunately I have heard stories from some of my young students, and their friends & families, about dogs whom the owner has no control over and doesn't recall. Stories of burst footballs that Santa brought for Christmas, chewed up shoes that were left at the goalposts, dogs jumping up and fouling. I myself have also experienced this first hand. This is putting our children off going to play

parks to be healthy and active so I would like to stand up for them and make all Linlithgow outside play areas free from nuisance dogs who are off the lead so children feel safe.

With the help of council employees like the Open Spaces Officer and my young students themselves, we hope to create awareness in the town. You may have noticed some signs already at the Bellsburn play park, Springfield (next to the cricket pitch) to stop these incidents and hopefully garner the support of all responsible dog owners, the vast majority of which are already extremely considerate. After all this issue doesn't just affect young kids.

## Contact Your Local Councillor

Canine companions running off the lead who don't recall can spook other dogs causing them to uncharacteristically bite. Even if a dog can walk to heel, I don't think it's too much to ask that they are placed on a lead for a couple of minutes around play parks. More on this problem in an upcoming issue however in the meantime, if you or your child has been negatively affected please contact a local councillor and express your concern or contact me. Now all this talk about leads has got me thinking about guitar!



## Student Diaries Danny Moon

Lead guitarists usually get all the limelight and my young student Danny Moon (10, Springfield Primary School) will no doubt experience this as he gets older. Danny was actually part of the 'lockdown intake' - an interesting period where I took on many new students who were complete beginners and they learned via Zoom. When I met Danny in-person, around 14 months later, he had already become a very special young player.

Sometimes people are just wired for it - and Danny certainly is, quickly reaching the 'Debut' standard after only 6 months. He began chalking off piece after piece with most of the legwork being done all by himself at home which allowed Danny and I to look at the exciting, expressive side of music. By February 2021 Danny had aced his Rockschool 'Debut' mock exam with a very rare 'distinction' pass

and began learning pieces from the Grade 1 syllabus by The Script, The Stereophonics and Green Day with a fantastically positive attitude fuelled by passion, dedication and solid work ethic.

After completing 6 of these pieces and smashing another mock exam Danny accelerated towards Grade 2 exploring new genres like soul and funk. Arthur Conley and The Meters were expertly executed so I decided to ask Danny to learn a really cool and challenging party piece - the theme from Pirates Of The Caribbean 'He's a Pirate' by Hans Zimmer. Danny absorbed it like a sponge so we decided to make a studio recording which can be found pinned to my tutor Twitter account. Check it out as it's awesome! Let's hear from this young lad himself...

## Interview

### Q Why did you want to learn guitar?

I started learning when I got a guitar for my birthday right at the start of lockdown in 2020 and it gave me something really fun to do.

### Q What is it you love the most about guitar?

I love being able to play whatever I want, there are so many cool songs I've played so far. A lot of them are new songs I didn't know before but I like House of the Rising Sun and I get to find out about loads of cool new music.

### Q Do you have a favourite song?

Sweet Child O' Mine by Guns and Roses. I love rock!

### Q Your recording of Pirates of The Caribbean was first class... can you tell me about how you found the recording experience?

It was weird! There was a phone and microphone quite close to me so it was kind of hard to move. It was hard trying to get it right all in one go but it was fun.

### Q What is the most challenging thing about learning guitar?

Sometimes it hurts your fingers!

### Q Aside from guitar what other hobbies do you have?

I love playing football with Linlithgow Rose. I also love gaming with my friends, scouts and swimming.

## Well done Danny!

You can keep up to date with Gary's tuition business through social media

Twitter: @GaryGuitar4

Facebook: garyclintonguitartutor



# THE BLACKNESS ON SEA POETRY PRIZE 2022

The Blackness on Sea Poetry Prize is a quest by the ageing landlord of The Lobster Pot Pub in a Firth of Forth village to create a literary legacy for what will be his final pub.

The substantial Prize of £1000.00 and a Trophy shield, will be awarded for the poem judged to be of most literary merit containing a reference, not necessarily complimentary, to “The Lobster Pot” and “Blackness on Sea” somewhere in the composition. This is a genuine endeavour to find a lasting work which will pass down the ages and possibly attract some budding Burns or McGonagall. The Prize which has already been dubbed “The Poet Inebriate” by the locals is open to all and entries will be viewable online.

A runner up prize of £200 and a Trophy will be awarded to the second choice of the Judging panel which will be made of four people from the arts world, and the publican, from the other world.

A formal presentation ceremony will take place in October 2022 and if the competition is well subscribed it may become an annual event.

## BLACKNESS ON SEA

The village of Blackness on Sea lies 15 miles from Edinburgh, and has been famed since Roman times for its Oysters. Long associated with the literary figures, Robert Louis Stephenson and Robert Burns whom local lore has it holed up in the village after famously upsetting the people of adjacent Boness with disparaging remarks about their town.

A popular seaside resort since Victorian times the village with its sandy beaches, Promenade, Pier and Castle has a population just below one hundred, a mixture of Bohemian professionals, artisans, and fishing families, while a similar number of indigenous people inhabit the surrounding hinterland known as the Holdings. The village has a thriving sailing club and naturist swimming group.

Popular with Charabanc trips from Glasgow and Edinburgh in the 1940s the resort was considered by Fred Pointin for his Scottish holiday camp, losing out to Ayr.

## THE LOBSTER POT

The Lobster Pot in the village square of Blackness on sea is a convivial pub popular for its superb seafood, much of which is landed in the village. Here the older locals gather with the landlord to quietly contemplate the futility of human existence without as much as a poem to tell future generations of the glory that once was Blackness on Sea.



**“THE UNIQUE LOBSTER POT”**  
**GREAT FOOD AT**  
**BLACKNESS ON SEA**

**The Lobster Pot**  
Blackness on Sea

**TEL. 01506 830086**  
[thelobsterpotblackness@gmail.com](mailto:thelobsterpotblackness@gmail.com)  
[www.lobster-pot.co.uk](http://www.lobster-pot.co.uk)

For more information on this and how to submit a Poem can be found on the website

<https://blacknessonseapoetry.wixsite.com/website>

Or email: [blackness\\_on\\_seapoetry@hotmail.com](mailto:blackness_on_seapoetry@hotmail.com).

Tel: Colm O'Rourke on 07484 112723

## LINLITHGOW ARTS GUILD MARCH EVENTS

On Saturday, 5th March, Sinfonia Chamber Players will perform music by Schubert and Beethoven in St. Michael's Parish Church. The 8 players, with a mix of string and wind instruments, will include the well-known Schubert Octet, and the event is at 7.30pm.

On Saturday, 26th March, we will welcome a piano, violin and clarinet trio “Metamorphoses”, led by Jean Johnson with Dutch violinist Roeland Jagers



and Russian pianist Ilona Timchenko.

Their debut CD has received strong reviews

in the Classical world. This event will be in Bo'ness Town Hall (7.30pm), as Linlithgow Academy Theatre remains unavailable.

Everyone is welcome to these events. Tickets are available from Far from the Madding Crowd or online at [www.linlithgowartsguild.co.uk](http://www.linlithgowartsguild.co.uk)

The Arts Guild is surviving well through the pandemic and hopes that audience numbers will gradually increase to enable us to cover costs as life returns to normal. We continue to be cautious with social distancing at events and encourage audience members to wear masks to protect each other and the professional musicians.

**David Lunt** [davidalunt@aol.com](mailto:davidalunt@aol.com)

For Linlithgow Arts Guild (SCIO) Charity Number 048083

**Telephone: 07821 017099**  
or **01506 842628**



## CHOOSE THE WORLD YOU WANT



**They say that if a butterfly flaps its wings in the Amazonian rain forest it can change the weather half a world away. Whether or not you believe this alleged aspect of chaos theory, it is certainly the case that our choices and actions here in Linlithgow can have an impact on other people, whether they live round the corner or round the other side of the world.**

If you're cold and turn up the thermostat a couple of degrees, you not only increase your carbon emissions, you also increase the demand for fuel which helps push up the increased prices we are all about to face. If you buy a t-shirt for £5, you can be fairly sure that the people who made it aren't being paid the UK minimum wage. But, if you pay £55 for the t-shirt, how do you know that the people making it are getting a fair living wage, and that the £55 isn't being eaten into so much by manufacturers' profits, middlemen's fees and seller mark-up, that only a tiny proportion is left for those who actually made it? Similarly, if you buy a jar of coffee, or some chocolate, or some biscuits, how do you know that those who actually grew the ingredients have been treated fairly and not taken advantage of? We might not want to participate in exploitation, but how do we know the true impact of our choices? What we need is a system which assures us that those who sweated to produce the items we buy have been treated fairly.

I'm pleased to say that such a system

exists, in the Fairtrade Foundation and its Fairtrade Mark. Most people readily recognise the Fairtrade Mark and know that it guarantees that the farmer who grew it, or the artisan who produced it has been paid a fair living wage. Many people also know that the Fairtrade Mark indicates that gender equality, child labour and health and safety issues have been addressed, and that a proportion of the profits have been paid back as a cash premium to the local community to use in the way which would help them most. But how many people realise that Fairtrade is also working actively to address climate change?

**It is a sad fact that those who live in the global south, who have done least to contribute to climate change, are the ones most affected by it. Flash floods, droughts, increased crop diseases, and changing weather patterns are only some of the results of climate change which are impacting the farmers who grow much of our food. So much so, that the climate crisis is now the biggest threat to the livelihoods of millions of small-scale farmers and agricultural workers in low-income countries worldwide.**

Fairtrade is actively working with farmers to combat the effects of climate change in practical ways and to help them increase their resilience. Planting trees can not only absorb carbon dioxide, but can also, if planted as a shelter belt, protect crops from wind damage, prevent soil erosion and provide shade to reduce evaporation and conserve water. Intercropping – the planting of another crop between the rows of the main crop – can provide an increased source of income and avoid total reliance on a single crop, without increasing the size of the farm. Using animal manure to fuel biogas stoves, instead of cooking on open wood fires, prevents chopping down existing trees for firewood or wasting hours collecting wood each day. And if farmers reduce their carbon footprint in this way, they can convert their carbon savings into 'carbon credits,' which are sold to generate additional income for their business or local community.



But, as well as giving practical help and advice to farmers, the Fairtrade Foundation has been campaigning for climate justice at a political level. At COP26, in Glasgow last November, the Fairtrade Foundation arranged for a number of small-scale farmers and producers to address the COP26 delegates and speak to the Scottish Parliament's Cross-Party Group on Fairtrade. They described the practical effects of climate change which they are experiencing and stressed the need to take urgent action. They were bitterly disappointed that there was no commitment to the \$100 billion climate promise and will keep up the pressure in the run up to COP27 in Cairo, next year.

So, the Fairtrade Mark might look like just a little logo on a jar or packet, but behind it lies a very big guarantee and a huge amount of work to ensure people receive a fair working wage, safe and equitable working conditions, and can plan for a sustainable future. When we put things in our shopping basket it is very difficult to judge the conditions and circumstances under which those items were made, but when an item is marked 'fairly traded' or has the Fairtrade Mark, you know that the people producing it have been treated fairly.

We know that we live in an interconnected world and that our day-to-day choices here in Linlithgow can affect people around the world, for good or for bad. That's why, this year, Linlithgow Fairtrade Partnership is asking you to choose the world you want – to choose Fairtrade.

### Ian Fowell

Linlithgow Fairtrade Partnership



**Ask the UK Government to deliver on its climate commitments by joining the Fairtrade campaign to email your MP, at <https://action.fairtrade.org.uk/page/96538/action/1?ea.tracking.id=Actionrd>**

## LINLITHGOW'S ROTARY TREE OF LIGHT

The Rotary Club of Linlithgow Grange (RCLG) continued its support of local charitable organisations again in 2021 with its Rotary Tree of Light festive period fundraising initiative. The event kicked off on the day of the Advent Fayre and ran until the end of December.

Thanks to the generosity of the good folks of Linlithgow, the fantastic support of numerous local businesses and with the help of Gift Aid, a significant sum was raised over the five weeks of the event. **Linlithgow Link, Linlithgow Young People's Project (LYPP), Positive Pathways Bereavement Support, and Quiet Waters** - all local charities operating tirelessly in the Linlithgow community - will all benefit from an equal share of the funds gathered.



RCLG would like to thank everyone who made a donation and/or placed a dedication on the Tree. Particular thanks go to Veitch Solicitors for their very generous donation this year. **Thanks also go to West Lothian Council for the use of their tree at the Cross and our corporate sponsors Alan Steel Asset Management, RGM Solicitors, Stewart Electrical, and Cala Homes** - their financial support ensures that every pound of public donation goes to the designated charities.

At the end of the day, the Rotary Tree of Light is a community endeavour. Many other local businesses also rallied round again this year and supported the project in kind by taking donation packs and posters for wider distribution. RGM Solicitors, A Wee Mindin' and Wilsons Newsagents also helped out again this year as collection points. We are all very grateful for this assistance. It makes such a big difference.

We will of course be running the event once again in 2022, so look out for the announcements in the autumn.

In the meantime, more information can be found at [www.linlithgowtreeoflight.org.uk](http://www.linlithgowtreeoflight.org.uk) or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/LinlithgowTreeOfLight](https://www.facebook.com/LinlithgowTreeOfLight). More information can also be obtained by emailing Allan M Robertson at [administration@linlithgowtreeoflight.org.uk](mailto:administration@linlithgowtreeoflight.org.uk).

**Allan M Robertson**

The Rotary Club of Linlithgow Grange

## SUPPORT FOR VETERANS WITH SIGHT LOSS



The charity Sight Scotland Veterans is on a mission to reach out to even more veterans with visual impairment.

Established in 1915 to help those blinded in service, today Sight Scotland Veterans gives support to all veterans with sight loss – including National Service veterans – no matter if they lost their sight during or after service.

98% of veterans the charity supports have sight loss that is not related to their service – for example, resulting from age-related sight conditions, such as age-related macular degeneration, illness or an accident.

The charity's friendly and knowledgeable outreach workers, based across Scotland, provide tailored practical and emotional support to veterans with sight loss in their homes and local communities. A Sight Scotland Veterans outreach worker covers the West Lothian region, supporting veterans with sight loss based in Linlithgow.

Sight Scotland Veterans' free support ranges from expert advice and specialist equipment in order to aid independence in day-to-day tasks – such as talking devices, electronic magnification, specialist lighting and mobility support – to opportunities to make new social connections in the community.

Sight Scotland Veterans' expert rehabilitation team can offer expert one-to-one support to help regain and maintain independence with sight loss. Support and advice for families and carers of veterans with sight loss is also available.

If you are a veteran with sight loss or know you a veteran, Sight Scotland Veterans could help, and you are interested in the charity's support, they would love to hear from you.

Contact Sight Scotland Veterans today: call 0800 035 6409, email [hello@sightscotlandveterans.org.uk](mailto:hello@sightscotlandveterans.org.uk), or visit [sightscotlandveterans.org.uk](http://sightscotlandveterans.org.uk)

**Jos Weale**, Media and Information Officer  
Sight Scotland and Sight Scotland Veterans  
2A Robertson Avenue, Edinburgh EH11 1PZ

Tel: 0131 229 1456  
[Sightscotland.org.uk](http://Sightscotland.org.uk)  
[Sightscotlandveterans.org.uk](http://Sightscotlandveterans.org.uk)



# BOOTCAMPS AND BREAKING WORLD RECORDS

The beginning of January typically commences with a list of New Year's resolutions longer than the length of one's arm, none of which normally last the month let alone the year. This year, I was determined to keep to my resolutions concerning my health and fitness. A friend recommended a six week bootcamp challenge to me. My heart sank as I remembered my previous experience of doing a bootcamp which consisted of hauling heavy tyres across a field, as an ex-Army officer shouted at us to hurry up or we would have to do 50 press-ups as a punishment. Sensing the fear in my eyes, I was reassured that this bootcamp, although tough, would not be quite as gruelling.



I messaged **Stuart Jamieson** who is the organiser of the bootcamps and owner of **SJ Fitness Coaching**. Stuart has been operating SJ Fitness Coaching for four years and has worked in the business for over 20 years. He runs the online bootcamp all year round. These consist of five weekly 30 minute High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) sessions. You also have the "Focus Five" with a daily check-in, which consists of doing 10,000 steps a day, good nutrition, daily exercise, drinking two litres of water and getting seven hours sleep. It's a great way to stay disciplined and see what areas you need to improve on.

Stuart also offers a gym program, based at Linlithgow Rugby Club. Sessions are Monday - Friday, and there are eight sessions a day to choose from. He also runs four and six week challenges each year. Once you join, either online, or in-person sessions, you are added to the "Get Up And Go Bootcamp" Facebook group, where members share tips and support each other. You can become a member for a monthly fee or just sign up to the challenges, if you prefer. There is a mix of people in the groups, some who are at the start of their journey, and some people who can lose 14-20 lbs in a six week challenge.



When asked what the biggest hurdles people overcome are when they embark on these challenges, Stuart advised the biggest one is controlling food and people's relationship with food and drink. It's hard for people to move away from bad habits, and to start to focus on more beneficial ones. The second biggest hurdle is time, most of his clients are working parents and are spinning a lot of plates at once. Sessions are kept short in order to focus on the most effective processes.

Stuart advised that it's important to realise that there have to be changes and some will be uncomfortable but once you have moved past these and start seeing great results it makes it all worthwhile. Also, don't wait till the time is right, or you are a wee bit fitter to start. Just take action straight away and adapt as you go along.

**The next challenge lasts for 21 days and starts on March 14th. You will get workouts, nutrition coaching, accountability, mindset and motivation. The next six week challenge starts in May. You can find out more on Stuart's SJ Fitness Coaching Facebook Page.**

**I have just completed my six week challenge and I can honestly say I feel so much better for it, both physically and mentally. I've discovered hidden**

**willpower I never knew I had; I've made new friends through the Get Up And Go Bootcamp Facebook group and I've shed a good few pounds in the process. It was exactly the challenge I needed to kick start the year and I'm now looking forward to the next one in March!**

After Stuart's wife Eva sadly passed away in 2018 he has been raising money doing ultra running events and was supposed to climb Mount Kilimanjaro until Covid intervened. Kilimanjaro was always something that Eva wanted to do, so it seemed appropriate for Stuart to complete it while raising money in her memory. **The trek was cancelled in 2021 so he decided to run 40 marathons in 40 weeks to raise money and when it was cancelled for 2022 he decided to plan a challenge from Lands' End to John O' Groats by kick scooter. On April 30th this year Stuart will attempt to break the Guinness World Record whilst raising money for Marie Curie, a charity close to his heart.** He is hoping to do this in 10 days which is a big challenge as the current record is 21 days. In order to achieve this he will be on the scooter between 10-12 hours a day. As far as Stuart's aware only two people have completed this before and another person had a failed attempt just as Covid lockdowns came into play.

There were a few reasons Stuart chose to do the challenge on a kick scooter rather than by foot or bike. He really wanted to

attempt to get into the Guinness World Records and the current record for this made it seem possible. He remembers reading about a man who completed this incredible feat by scooter and it had always struck him as a fun way to do it. It's a huge challenge that will hopefully help him raise a few more thousand pounds for Marie Curie. Stuart's challenge is aptly named Scoot Lejog marking the start and end point. His daughter Beth named his scooter Big Green Geraldine.

In terms of Stuart's training regime, he's been focussing on strength and conditioning in the morning, spin bike in the afternoon plus extra runs on Monday and Wednesday and then he does a long scoot at the weekend. So far on his training runs he has averaged 8 miles an hour which is a nice easy pace to maintain over a long time, although he's hoping to get nearer to 10 as the training progresses. 26mph is the fastest speed he has clocked so far. He has planned the route using a popular LEJOG book and The Ordinance Survey app. The route is a mix of paths and quiet roads.

Stuart has registered with Guinness World Records but everything else has been organised by himself and his partner Katy. Katy and Rosie the dog will be going along to support him. They will meet him at different points and take him to and from the accommodation each night and morning. Their accommodation was funded by their sponsor, Evolve-IT Recruitment, which is operated by Stuart's good friend Simon McOscar who he used to play rugby with at Linlithgow Rugby Club. He is hoping to see some friends and family enroute especially on the Scottish part of the trip. His kids may cycle parts of the Scottish stages as well. They are excited at the prospect of their dad getting a Guinness World Record. No pressure then Stuart!

Stuart envisages the biggest hurdle for this challenge will definitely be in the mind. Keeping going day after day on any challenge is more of a mind game than a physical one as the mind always wants to give up first when things get tough. He tries not to think about the challenge as a whole and just focuses on what he has to do that day. Other than that he puts himself in a position where he has to just get it done.



You will be able to follow Stuart on his journey as he plans to have a live tracker and the details of this will be put on his Instagram page [scoot\\_lejog](https://www.instagram.com/scoot_lejog). I'm sure everyone in the local community will join me in wishing

Stuart and Big Green Geraldine the very best of luck as they take on this truly remarkable challenge.

You can sponsor Stuart here <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/scoot-lejog>



Amy Cornock

## Glaucoma: Why it's important to be aware of this 'silent thief of sight'

Specsavers



With World Glaucoma Week taking place between 6 and 12 March, Diana Kelly, store director at Specsavers in Linlithgow, discusses what this eye condition is and why everyone should be aware of it as many

people don't realise they have the condition until it is too late.

### What is glaucoma?

Diana says: *'Glaucoma is a common eye condition where the optic nerve, which connects the eye to the brain, becomes damaged. It's usually caused by fluid building up in the front part of the eye, which increases pressure inside the eye.'*

*'Glaucoma can lead to loss of vision if it's not diagnosed and treated early.'*

### Are there any warning signs?

Diana says: *'With chronic glaucoma, the visual loss can initially be very subtle, but at Specsavers, we benefit from having advanced diagnostic equipment called OCT (Optical Coherence Tomography) that enables us to look at the eye in more detail than ever before and spot the early signs of many sight loss conditions.'*

### Are there any warning signs?

Diana says: *'The most common type of glaucoma, primary open-angle glaucoma, is hereditary. If members of your immediate family have glaucoma, you are at a much higher risk. People of African-Caribbean and East Asian origin are also at higher risk.'*

*'Glaucoma also becomes more common with age and very high or very low blood pressure can also increase your risk.'*

### How is it managed?

Diana says: *'Eye drops are the most common form of treatment for glaucoma and are used to decrease the amount of fluid in the eye. However, other options such as surgery and laser treatment are available.'*

To find out more or book your next appointment head, visit [www.specsavers.co.uk/stores/linlithgow](https://www.specsavers.co.uk/stores/linlithgow).



## WHAT'S IN A QUALIFICATION? QUITE A LOT ACTUALLY!

### BEWARE OF CLINICS CLAIMING THEY HAVE THE HIGHEST QUALIFICATIONS, SUCH AS THE LEVEL 6 OR EVEN A DEGREE IN LASER AND IPL.

Currently there is no Level 6 which is accredited or examined by reputable examination boards such as CIBTAC or VTCT. However, it is in the pipeline. When it will be ready or released though is yet to be known. A degree on the other hand is absolutely NOT in existence!

### MY ADVICE TO ANYONE LOOKING FOR ANY KIND OF TREATMENT THAT INVOLVES LASER OR IPL MACHINES IS TO DO THEIR HOMEWORK FIRST.

Research the clinics they are interested in and most definitely ask questions on their qualifications. Any reputable clinic will be happy you asked and be proud to explain what they have and who it is accredited by.

### THE HIGHEST ACCREDITED AND EXAMINED QUALIFICATION IN LASER AND IPL IS CURRENTLY A LEVEL 5.

There are several aesthetic courses out there often pitched as online courses that loosely qualify people in as little as 1-3 days, involving very little experience of handling any equipment.

### WHY DO I CARE?

Because last year I had a good handful of clients come to me from other clinics who had made some questionable claims or explained methods of treatments that were quite frankly scary and completely hazardous. Others were simply told they needed more treatments than

was required or the intervals were spaced too closely together. Resulting in wasted money for the client and a good number of treatments being ineffective.

This is why I have my 'wall of frames' in prominent view of all my clients who walk into my clinic room. I will often mention them during consultation too. Getting someone to treat you with the right qualifications and experience is absolutely critical to ensure you are in safe hands and to get the best possible treatment and results.

I am always striving to enhance my qualifications and expand my knowledge. I invest in training and education with the top laser training and examining boards in the country, because anything less is not worth it.

When doing your research, CIBTAC and VTCT are the two examining boards to look for certificates for anyone offering Laser and IPL treatments, and these are the ones that insurers ask for.

### AS A REMINDER TO ALL MY CLIENTS, AND ANYONE THINKING ABOUT BOOKING IN WITH ME...

I re-trained into aesthetics in 2017, having come from a Principal Pharmacy Technician and Dental Nurse background. I have, since 2017, gained several qualifications and these are just three in relation to treating clients using laser or IPL machines:

**2018** - VTCT Level 4 Certificate in Laser and Intense Pulsed Light (IPL) treatments

**2019** - CIBTAC Level 3 Certificate in The Principles of Cosmetic Practice

**2021** - VTCT Level 5 Certificate in Laser Tattoo Removal.

To further this, I attend annual clinical update training days from the UK's leading Laser and IPL manufacturer and training centre, Lynton Lasers. As well as being a member of and attending the annual British Medical Laser Association (BMLA) conference.

### A CONSULTATION WITH SKIN HAPPY WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH ALL THE INFORMATION YOU NEED TO MAKE AN INFORMED DECISION.

I spend my time during consultations to explain everything from treatment options, how they work, what to expect, how to look after your skin pre and post treatment, to answering all your questions. Obviously, medical history and suitability is covered in this and most importantly, if I believe treatment is not in the best interest of my client, I am honest, I do not treat, and I explain why.

### I only invest in clinically proven and medical grade machines and products to ensure I provide my clients with the safest and most effective treatments.

I am a Laser, Light and Skin Care Specialist. If you want to find out more on how I can help you with your skin an 'In-clinic General Consultation' can be booked via the "book now" button on the website.



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# WHAT DO YOU THINK WE GET UP TO DURING THE WINTER?

“It must be lovely working here in the sunshine!” is a refrain that we hear regularly from our lovely customers. Generally they visit us when the weather is good but we are here every day come rain or shine... snow, ice and hail. We all love working here and we try to keep everyone dry and warm, at least until lunchtime, but we just have to get on with it, whatever the weather, when our growers send in a delivery of new plants which have to be unloaded there and then so we can return the trolleys they arrive on.

We all have to multi-task and we have a management structure similar to the way geese organise themselves: they fly in skeins taking turns in being the leader, supporting any unwell birds till they get better and all knowing what is going on. This philosophy applies across the whole business including Dee and her team in the Orangery tearoom. See who you can spot on the shopfloor next time you are in.



Warming the whole of your body

Unusually sitting down (just for a photograph!) four of our directors, Nicola, Claire, Morag and Lesley in the Scottish Garden around the firepit, as Dougal’s father had the habit of saying: ‘warming the whole of your body’.



Men indoors

**Men indoors** Scott, Graham and Tim in the bird house restocking the shelves. You may see them working outdoors on the forklift, unloading and displaying pots and compost, and inside on the tills helping you with your purchases, and restocking the shelves or giving advice whatever the weather.



Parents-to-be Sam and Iain

**Parents to be** Parents-to-be Sam and Iain, working together in the Orangery gift shop, we are all very excited as their baby is due in June. They are great multi-taskers too and if you don’t see them around when you visit it might be that they have earned a day off or they will be in the office keeping the computers and tills up to date or in the storeroom processing deliveries and putting goodies out on the shelves.



Ladies get on with it

Lisa, Angie, Olivia and Vicky don’t need to wait for a man, they just get on with whatever needs doing. Here they are building and positioning new tables for herbs in the plant sales area to replace old rotten ones, just in time for deliveries of lots of lovely fresh herbs for your gardens.



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**WHAT PLANS HAVE YOU GOT FOR YOUR GARDEN THIS SPRING?**  
COME ALONG TO THE GARDEN CENTRE,  
GET SOME INSPIRATION  
AND SOME WONDERFUL PLANTS!

## LADAS - MEMORIAL FOR IAN HARKNESS



Many readers of the Black Bitch will remember **Ian Harkness** who, in his time was a Boys Brigade leader in Linlithgow,

a member of the Deacon's Court for many years, and a volunteer for Victim Support, West Lothian. Ian was also an enthusiastic and popular

plot holder at Oakwell allotments, a longstanding member of the LADAS committee and a hardworking Membership Secretary. Many new plot holders remember the warm welcome to the allotment that Ian gave them and all of us remember his cheery and friendly nature. Ian sadly died just over a year ago.

In memory of Ian, it was decided to have a tree planted for him at the allotment. His children, Gail, Claire and David, along with their partners and Ian's grandchildren, gathered at the allotment with fellow plot holders to plant a Rowan Tree in memory of Ian. Gail planted the tree and David spoke a few words about Ian, who is sadly missed by all who knew him.



### Things to do in your fruit and vegetable garden in March

- >> Sow summer cabbages and broad beans in pots or modules indoors in week 1 for planting out in spring.
- >> You can sow early types of peas such as "Meteor" outside under cloches in the first week of March, but peas and broad beans are better started off in pots indoors for

planting out later when the seedlings are at least 6 inches (15 cm) if mice are a problem as they will dig up and eat the seeds.

- >> In week 1 sow chilli and sweet pepper seeds in a propagator or a warm place indoors. The minimum air temperature they need to germinate is 60° F (15.5°C), the ideal being 85° F (29°C).
- >> In week 2 you can sow broad beans outside under cover.
- >> Sow celery and celeriac seeds inside in week 2.
- >> In week 2 prepare the soil in your vegetable plot for courgettes, pumpkins and squashes. Fork in well-rotted manure or compost ready for receiving your plants in June.
- >> In week 3 sow early carrots under cloches.
- >> Sow seeds of early brussels sprouts indoors in week 3
- >> Plant Spring garlic towards the end of the month.
- >> Sow tomato seeds in a warm place in week 3.
- >> Harden off cauliflower seedlings sown earlier.
- >> Plant potatoes towards the end of the month and into April.

As we have a long waiting list, we are no longer taking requests for new plots at Oakwell allotments. Please contact West Lothian Council to request an allotment plot.

Paul Taylor,  
Chair LADAS





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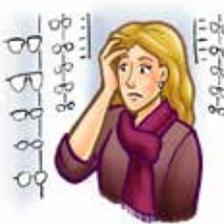
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### How is the Housing Market Developing in 2022?

Early indications are that the housing market is quickly accelerating into 2022. Whilst the amount of housing stock available on the market remains tight, in January valuation requests from prospective house sellers were up 44% on the same period last year, according to Rightmove.

Buyer enquiries, though, are 15% higher than the same time last year. However, 40% of buyers making enquiries about property for sale, who need to sell to make a purchase, are not yet on the market. With demand so strong, these potential buyers continue to risk losing out on a property purchase to buyers in a much stronger position, i.e. those who are already on the market or who are under offer.

Scotland, in general, continues to perform well, as demonstrated by two Scottish towns,

Prestwick and Dumbarton making the UK wide Top 10 buyer demand hotspots.

There is no reason to predict that the Scottish property market will cool in 2022 versus 2021. Zoopla recently predicted an overall increase of 2.5% in Scottish property prices in 2022, while Rightmove forecast a UK-wide increase of 5% in selling prices.

### The Private Rented Sector

**There are more potential changes to legislation surrounding the private rented sector in the pipeline.**

The Private Rented Sector in Scotland has grown, in the last 20 years, from approximately 130,000 properties to 340,000 properties, and at 14% of all Scottish residential properties it rivals both local authority housing, also 14%, and the housing association stock at 10%.

In December 2021, the Scottish Government published its draft strategy consultation titled "A New Deal For Tenants."

It is a wide ranging consultation but its main aims will be to bring into force legislation to provide for more determination of, and control over "affordable" rents, give tenants in the Private Rented Sector more of a voice over the how the Sector is controlled and to move away from minimum acceptable standards of housing towards the objective of providing "quality" - warm, energy efficient properties for tenants.

The Scottish Government aims to have new housing and maintenance and repair standards enshrined in law by 2025, with emphasis on the best way of ensuring landlords meet existing and new obligations in the repair and maintenance of tenanted properties.



Hello  
I'M CALLED  
SKYE VICKERS

Skye is a one and a half year old Cocker - Cocker Spaniel and King Charles Cavalier Cross.

Skye's family describe her as being full of energy, very loving, very gentle and shy, and extraordinarily greedy!

She makes them laugh on walks with her little "deer" hops through the woods with her ears flapping in the wind. Her favourite activities are sniffing, and of course eating!

Skye just loves having a ball thrown for her to find and is in her element sniffing out hidden treats. She also has a cheeky habit of finding (and stealing socks) from their washing machine.

Skye is at her happiest when she is running around the local woods "like a mad thing" down by the river, also when she's hiding snuggled underneath the duvet on her owner's bed.

Skye and her owners have had a lot to manage in this past year after discovering that Syke had an issue when walking. Her owners noticed that when she was running along, she'd suddenly yelp and lift one leg up at a strange angle. After a few seconds she'd be fine again and running on all four legs, so they initially assumed she'd just stood on something spiky. However when this had happened a few times they quickly realised it would be a bit of a coincidence if she was continually stepping with the same foot on something uncomfortable so they took her to Westport Vet to get it checked out.

The vet noted immediately that her gait wasn't right even though she wasn't limping at the time and she was diagnosed with a luxating patella. This was causing her kneecap to slip in and out of place. Skye required Medial patellar luxation orthopaedic surgery to fix the issue.

Without the surgery she would continue to be in pain, and it would also result in the progression of degenerative joint disease (Arthritis) in the knee joint.

Medial patellar luxation (MPL) is a condition also known as kneecap dislocation. It's more common with smaller dogs but can be found in dogs of all sizes. Normally, the patella (kneecap) sits in a groove on the femur (thigh bone) and is secured by a tendon connecting the quadricep to the tibia (shin bone). This results in the patella jumping in and out of the new joint. Patellar luxation is a very common orthopaedic condition found in dogs and requires surgical intervention.

Following Skye's successful repair surgery, she required six weeks cage rest and six weeks rehabilitation - for a lively seven-month-old puppy the family say this part was a challenge! However Skye's owners managed to find ways to keep her feeling settled on rest, they had many methods which allowed Skye to feel comfortable and in company whilst in her cage.

Skye's owner said the cage rest part was very difficult. For the first few days she was shivering uncontrollably so which initially they had thought was pain however after a check-up discovered it was due to her being anxious as she didn't understand why she had to stay in the cage which they found heartbreaking. However the family got through the recovery period successfully, working together to ensure full rest was managed as stress free as possible.

The recovery process can be hard for owners, but for the surgery to be successful it has to be done. Having goals to look forward to afterwards can be a big help. For Skye, they were most looking forward to just being able to take her out on walks. When they had the all clear and after a gradual build up of exercise over time, seeing her being able to run freely again was joyful!

Skye's owners advice for other owners who have to go through this is:

*"Grit your teeth! Definitely isn't easy. Skye had lots of toys and treats and we more or less did a rota so someone was always in the cage with her - we made a big cage out of a*

*playpen which took up half the living room so it was all very disruptive!"*

The family also say that the op itself would not have been possible had they not got their insurance. Insurance meant they were able to do everything Skye needed without having the unplanned financial burden, or having to make any decisions on treatment be influenced on cost.

Insurance is best from the beginning for pets, however when they are young and healthy is prime time to get this done. Starting a policy when your pet already has a condition or issue quite often will mean these are not going to be covered in your policy. Pet insurance also allows owners to consider the best treatment options without having the additional stress of cost influencing their treatment options. Like Skye's family, things can happen to our pets without prior warning and where treatment is required quickly.

Insurance also allows owners to be able to relax in the knowledge that should anything ever happen to their pet, they are giving them the best care in advance by having cover. Insurance is a form of protection for pets. Westport Vets regularly do direct insurance claims which make the world of difference to owners and their pets when immediate treatments are required.

*If you have any concerns about your pet, please call Westport Vets on 01506 844165.*

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### Apology to Patrick Stewart

*Issue 86 Correction: Primary Schools Art competition - we offer apologies for our proofreading error to Patrick Stewart whose entry gained class winner prize representing Linlithgow Primary in the Primary Schools Art competition, November 2021. Editor*

*The Linlithgow Community Magazine (aka The Black Bitch) is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO): SCO42542 Find us on Facebook, Follow us on Twitter.*

*The paper we are using is FSC approved.*

*Images: A big thank you to all our photographers who support the magazine throughout the year.*



Paul Rolfe\*

LUXXE