

# BITZACK



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**DAVID TAIT**  
EDITOR



**4 EASY SUBSCRIPTION PAYMENT OPTIONS...**

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### What's inside this Issue

**As June approaches, Linlithgow enters a season unlike any other – a celebration of 500 years of tradition surrounding the checking of the town's defensive boundaries through the historic Riding of the Marches. To mark the occasion, Deacons' Court has once again produced a 12-page supplement exploring the people, events and rich history behind the celebrations, leading up to the main event on 16 June, the first Tuesday after the second Thursday in June.**

Few communities in Scotland can claim a heritage as deep or distinctive as Linlithgow's. While **One Linlithgow Business Improvement District (BID)** reflects on how "the times they are a'changin'", there is perhaps no change more worth striving for than restoring Linlithgow's reputation as "the Jewel in West Lothian's Crown". **Deacons' Court** hopes to inspire both long-standing residents and newer generations within the town's growing – though paradoxically, currently declining – population to discover, celebrate and participate in Linlithgow's traditions, enriching their connection to the place they call home.

The BID meantime works to shine a light on the ever more complicated and often frustrating legislative environment within which small business enterprises have to operate as well as giving advance notice of significant and welcome changes to the way parking on the congested High Street and elsewhere is regulated.

Looking to the future, attention also turns to Linlithgow's long-term development. The **Planning Forum** continues to examine proposals affecting Edinburgh Road – a key area for growth – while raising important concerns about ensuring future development reflects updated planning priorities rather than outdated

frameworks. The decisions made now may shape Linlithgow for generations to come.

This year also brings milestone anniversaries worth celebrating. Former pupils who began primary school in 1951 mark their 80th birthdays, while **Linlithgow Reed Band** celebrates an impressive 70 years since first performing in 1956, continuing its role as a cherished part of civic life. Meanwhile, **Linlithgow String Orchestra** marks its 10th anniversary with a special performance featuring the work of young composer Joe Cobb at Linlithgow Burgh Halls on 7 June.

Sport remains central to community life. **Linlithgow Rugby Club** celebrates success both on and off the pitch, while **Linlithgow Athletic Club** continues to excel during marathon season in Paris, Manchester, London and Leeds, all while encouraging participation across every age and ability at home. **Linlithgow Tennis Club** is opening its doors to welcome new and returning players alike, inviting residents to experience the friendly atmosphere at Linlithgow Sports Club. Meanwhile, **Linlithgow Ramblers** prepare to celebrate 40 years of hill walking, hoping founding members from 1986 will join a commemorative climb of Cockleroi on 30 May.

Education, too, remains at the heart of the community. **Linlithgow Academy** has earned the prestigious Gold Rights Respecting School status from UNICEF UK – recognition of its commitment to building confidence, trust and dignity into everyday school life and relationships. Across the town's primary schools, pupils continue to thrive through wellbeing initiatives, community engagement, literacy development and lively discussion on issues shaping modern life.

An appeal by **Guide Dogs** for "Puppy Raisers", a review of the facilities provided by **Linlithgow Day Centre** at the Partnership Centre and our regular

articles on gardening, heritage, book review and **Folk Fae Lithgae** complete the line-up for this issue.

At every level – heritage, culture, education, sport and planning – this issue reflects a community with much to celebrate, much to protect and even more to look forward to.

**Help Keep Linlithgow's Community Voice Alive**

Every issue of this magazine exists because local people choose to support it. By subscribing or donating, you're helping protect something rare: an independent publication dedicated entirely to celebrating, connecting, and championing everything that makes Linlithgow such a special place to live.

Your support does more than fund pages. It gives local clubs, voluntary groups, charities, and community organisations a platform to share their work, reach residents, and strengthen the town we all value. These are the people who quietly contribute their time and energy to making Linlithgow one of Scotland's best places to live – and your contribution helps ensure their stories continue to be heard.

There is no other free publication focused solely on keeping residents and visitors informed, inspired, and connected to the life of the community. Without ongoing support, that local voice becomes harder to sustain.

Subscription options have been designed to be affordable and accessible, because every contribution matters. Even a small regular donation helps secure the future of a magazine that belongs to the community it serves.

If you enjoy the magazine, value independent local journalism, or simply want to invest in the future of Linlithgow, now is the time to act. **Visit [linlithgowcommunitymagazine.co.uk](http://linlithgowcommunitymagazine.co.uk)**, select Subscribe, and choose the option that works for you.

**Support your community. Strengthen local voices. Help keep Linlithgow connected.**

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**NEXT ISSUE COPY DEADLINE**  
24 JUNE 2026

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## THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'

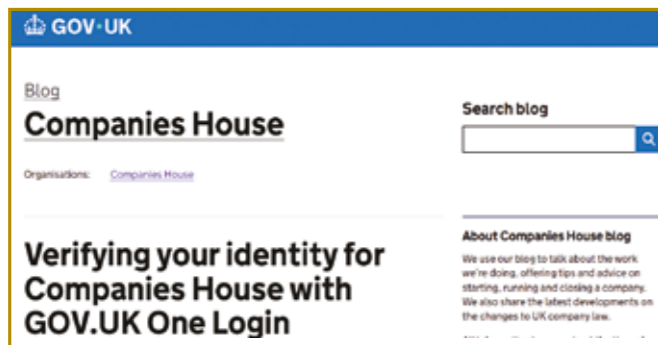
Those lyrics penned in 1963 and released in 1964 by the legendary musician, Bob Dylan, is a timeless song about the inevitability of social, political and generational change. It poetically warns that old systems and traditional ways of thinking are being replaced by new ones.



It urges people to adapt to this shift or risk being left behind. In modern times, does this sound familiar? No doubt, while reading this month's column, the tune will be ringing in your ears and some of you may even do a Google "full lyrics to the times they are a changin' by Bob Dylan". Or mention it to Chris at Low Port Music as you pop in for a proper music fix.

### WHO ARE YA?

"Who are ya?" is a popular, ironic UK football chant dating back to the 1990s, used to taunt opposite fans or players by implying they were insignificant, unknown or undeserving of being there.



In the modern-day UK, those amongst us registered as self-employed or as a director of a UK Limited company are very much aware of the UK Government increasingly asking us to determine "who are ya" through the UK.gov 'One Login' linked to His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

Furthermore, registering your identity on Companies House involving biometric identification with your passport or driving licence is also forcing hundreds of 1000's of UK citizens to go through the process. This is all fine and dandy if you drive or have a passport, but for those who do not, it makes starting a business much more difficult.

Why? Because you can't open a bank account until you can prove your identity has been verified by the UK Government. And in the digital age with much less cash as a medium of exchange, a business can't be run without a bank account.

And even in an e-commerce driven world, that many small

businesses cannot survive without, the big tech platforms are also doing the checks to run an account on their selling platforms. Picture the vision of a head-shaven man parading along Linlithgow High Street.

Let's call him 'Geoff', who runs a successful global selling platform. The vision of him shouting "who are ya?" to the local retailers sounds chaotic at best but is a reality to many independent traders who can even get "suspended" from his platform, to coin another football analogy, because their UK issued driving licence was sufficient evidence to prove they are British.

This is a reality for many thousands of business owners across the UK, including many you know and engage with in your local High Street. They are the lifeblood of the UK economy and your High Street.

They are from many generations who grew up with Dylan, Springsteen and more recently Billy Eilish. They have diverse cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds of established businesses and entrepreneurial start-ups. They all work hard together to make our High Street what it is today.

They play by the rules. Pay rent to their landlord; Rates to the Local Authority; Tax to HMRC; Levy to their BID; Living wages to their staff. They work weekends and bank holidays. They support local charities, sponsor local clubs. The list is endless, just for the privilege of trying to earn a living.

However, all is not well on our High Streets as recent news will suggest. You may have seen the national BBC news and iPlayer at the end of April, featuring our beloved High Streets being taken over by organised criminals.

According to professional body the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI), organised crime on High Streets has steadily increased over the past decade.

### "IT'S NOT LIKE THAT IN LINLITHGOW"



However, research by the CTSI and Anti-Counterfeiting Group (ACG) found Alloa was the third-biggest hotspot in Scotland, behind only the two largest cities. Alloa is just a short 30-minute (18 miles) drive away from Linlithgow.

Is there anything that can be done to prevent this kind of development occurring on High Streets where there is not an issue?

*"Come senators, congressmen / Please heed the call / Don't stand in the doorway / Don't block up the hall"*

Does the research show that the organised criminal gangs own the premises where the crimes take place?

Are the shop traders registered with a 'One Login' at HMRC or do they have their identities verified at Companies House?

Do commercial landlords have a role to play in undertaking more 'due diligence' about who they are leasing their premises to?

Should Local Authorities have a say about the number and type of shops offering specific types of goods on the High Street?

Should the 'over provision' rule that is applied to the sale of alcohol be expanded to other types of substance?

So many questions.

### DID YOU KNOW ABOUT SAA.GOV.UK?

It's the Scottish Assessor's Association website.

Be honest if you've never heard of it - many people haven't. However, by simply typing in the postcode of anywhere in Scotland, you can find out so much information about what is happening in your town. Who owns what. Who is renting to whom. How much they are paying in Non-domestic Rates (NDR) to the Scottish Government, collected locally by the Local Authority, then re-distributed to Local Authorities!

SAA.gov.uk is never fully up to date because the times are a changin' constantly with businesses closing and being replaced by brave entrepreneurs, prepared to give it a go on their own. You may have noticed new types of businesses opening in Linlithgow in recent years, to serve your needs as residents. However, you can get a sense of the scale of what is going on in your town.

If you had to guess how many businesses with an "NDR reference" are in



Linlithgow High Street, how many would you say there are? It's more than you may think and for any premises with an NDR over the £12,000 exemption limit on the SAA.gov.uk website, the person occupying the premises - not the landlord - has to pay HMRC 48.1p in the pound (£). If a business has an NDR of say £20,000 their annual tax to the government is £9,620

irrespective of how much the business makes. Collectively, all businesses in Linlithgow High Street have a combined NDR of over £4million. Many are under the £12,000 exemption, but many are not and have to pay Non-Domestic Commercial Rates. Geoff doesn't have a presence on the High Street and pays significantly less than your owner managed local business.

### TRADE WASTE - A GUIDE FOR WEST LOTHIAN BUSINESSES

West Lothian Council has produced a guide for all businesses about how to deal with waste. Non-compliance by businesses could risk a potential fine of up to £5,000, with West Lothian Council (WLC) officers able to issue fixed penalty notices of £80 to £500 for improper presentation of waste.



The details have all been spelled out in print and handed to all businesses by WLC. Add it to the small business task list from earlier in this column. Effective management of waste is a serious collective effort to make our towns look great and attract people to visit.

The flyer states that "Every organisation and business no matter how small or large has a legal responsibility for waste they generate." It explains how waste is to be presented; it covers

recycling; the display of 'waste transfer notes' to describe the waste; table and chair permits; graffiti on private property; fly posting.

Geoff's cardboard trade waste is disposed of in your own blue bin at home. Geoff pays nothing. Maybe Geoff should be charged a cardboard tax?

### COMMERCIAL LANDLORDS

There is no specific, universal licensing or mandatory registration scheme for commercial landlords in Scotland equivalent to the mandatory Landlord Registration scheme for private residential landlords. While commercial landlords enjoy significant freedom regarding lease terms and are not subject to the same regulatory oversight as residential landlords, they must still comply with obligations regarding property safety and environmental standards.

Unlike residential landlords, commercial landlords do not have to be tested for "fit and proper" status by local authorities. Should this be the case?

Should there be a mechanism to make sure the businesses operating on our High Streets are playing by the rules and running their business in a fair, honest and legal way?

Geoff's NDR bills are much cheaper per square foot as he operates in faceless, soulless out of town, automated warehouses on the edge of major conurbations.

### DECRIMINALISED PARKING ENFORCEMENT (DPE) CONSULTATION

Back in July 2025 we reported in issue 115 that a DPE that was going to be introduced down the line. That time is getting closer.



West Lothian Council have now announced that a consultation would begin from 11 May and will close on 3 July 2026 to provide members of the public and other stakeholders the opportunity to comment on the proposals to introduce DPE.

#### KEY POINTS.

Currently Police Scotland are responsible for enforcing parking regulations in West Lothian. DPE is a system in the UK where the responsibility for enforcing parking regulations is transferred from the police to local authorities.

The introduction of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement aims to provide a more consistent, locally controlled enforcement regime, improve parking compliance and improve road safety.

The local authority retains the income generated from parking penalties to finance parking enforcement and other road activities and income is not passed to central government.

Currently in Scotland there are 23 Local Authorities that operate a DPE regime of parking enforcement.

A DPE would result in enforcement powers being managed by the council and would cover the whole of West Lothian.

The implementation of DPE in Scotland involves a legal process that can take around two years to complete. The process would require the council to submit an application and business case to Transport Scotland for consideration and Ministerial approval.

Source: <https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/88805/Decriminalised-Parking-Enforcement-Consultation>

High Street parking is not a problem for Geoff as he contracts self-employed people to deliver to your door in their own vehicles. Geoff doesn't pay for depreciation, ongoing vehicle maintenance, or employers National Insurance for delivery drivers.

## WHY WILCOXHOLM FARM STILL RAISES BIG QUESTIONS FOR LINLITHGOW...



If a computer traffic model does not properly capture existing queues and delays, then its predictions about future impact become much less convincing.

*Plans for housing at Wilcoxholm Farm continue to prompt concern in Linlithgow, with local residents and the Community Council arguing that some of the most important questions have still not been properly answered.*

*At the end of April a rebuttal of the Community Council's objection was made on behalf of the developer by Icen Projects who conclude that the site is acceptable in principle because it is already included in the adopted development plan, and that many of the detailed issues can be dealt with later. But for many in the town, that misses the point. Their concern is not simply whether homes could be built there one day, but whether this development should move forward before the wider transport and infrastructure picture is fully understood.*

The rebuttal suggests the Linlithgow Local Place Plan should carry only limited weight. For local people, that is difficult to accept. The plan reflects years of discussion about what the town needs to grow well, not

just grow quickly. It highlights pressures on roads and the importance of linking new development to the rest of the town in a way that is practical and sustainable. Residents are not arguing against planning in



The Low Port roundabout is a good example of misleading technical reporting...



Queuing at Blackness Road.



principle; they are arguing that local priorities should matter when deciding whether a major scheme is ready to proceed.

A key issue is timing. The developer's planning application relies heavily on the idea that, at this stage, it is enough to show that the proposal could comply with policy, with unresolved matters left to planning conditions and later approvals. The Community Council takes a different view. It believes that certain matters are too important to postpone, especially where they relate to road capacity, cumulative traffic impact and the ability of local infrastructure to cope. Once development is accepted in principle, it can become much harder for the community to influence the bigger strategic questions, just ask the residents of Deanburn.

Particular concern surrounds the proposed eastern link road between Burghmuir and Riccarton Drive. This is included in the Local Place Plan, together with a four-way junction at Burghmuir, as part of a wider solution to traffic movement in eastern Linlithgow, yet it has been dismissed in the rebuttal as unnecessary. Icen Projects say that the link road proposed in the Local Place Plan has not been backed by enough evidence. The Community Council's argument is that the town's transport problems should be looked at strategically rather than site by site. In other words, the question is not only how traffic enters and leaves Wilcoxholm Farm, but how this development fits into the wider pattern of school travel, station access and everyday movement around the town.

That is why many local observers believe the application may still be premature in the context of the forthcoming new West Lothian Local Development Plan. The fact that the Wilcoxholm site is allocated in the old 2018 (but current) development plan does not automatically mean every planning issue has been settled. Planning policy still expects proper evidence, meaningful mitigation and confidence that the impact on the wider community has been assessed honestly and thoroughly. Recent planning appeal decisions have also pointed to the need to think about transport solutions for Linlithgow as a whole rather than judging each scheme in isolation. For residents, that principle remains highly relevant here.

The Low Port roundabout is a good example of misleading technical reporting. The developer's application suggests that the road network will operate satisfactorily as now with no congestion. However, many people who use the area everyday find that difficult to reconcile with lived experience. Congestion at peak times is a familiar problem, and the fear is that the computer modelling reported in the application which shows no congestion at Low Port may not fully reflect what drivers, parents, pedestrians and rail users actually encounter on a daily basis.

If a computer traffic model does not properly capture existing queues and delays, then its predictions about future impact become much less convincing. The Community Council say the model has been tested using historic traffic flow figures but not against current traffic conditions.

They also question whether local factors such as; traffic signals, parking activity, bus stops, station access, school-related movement the knock-on effects from nearby junctions such as the Tesco car park, have been fully considered.

**In the end, the debate over Wilcoxholm Farm is about more than one housing application. It is about how Linlithgow grows, who gets heard in that process and whether infrastructure is treated as a real requirement or as something to be sorted out later. For the Community Council and many residents, the message is clear: before any major development moves ahead, the town needs confidence that transport evidence is robust, strategic connections have been properly explored and local planning priorities over the development of Linlithgow have been taken seriously. While important questions remain unanswered Planning Permission should be refused.**

**John Kelly**  
Linlithgow Planning Forum

# Linlithgow Academy Celebrates UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Gold Award



**LINLITHGOW ACADEMY**



Our Rights Respecting journey began in February 2022, when we first registered with UNICEF's Rights Respecting Schools Award (RRSA).



Linlithgow Academy is proud to share a significant milestone with our whole community, we have been awarded Gold Rights Respecting School status by UNICEF UK. This prestigious award recognises schools where children's rights are not only understood but are actively lived, protected and celebrated every day. Achieving Gold reflects years of commitment, collaboration and belief that young people thrive best when they are respected, included and empowered.

Bronze accreditation soon followed, then Silver in June 2023, each stage helping us grow deeper understanding of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and how it can shape school life for the better. Reaching Gold this April is not an end point, but a powerful affirmation that children's rights now sit at the heart of Linlithgow Academy's ethos.

What makes this achievement especially meaningful is that it belongs to our entire school community, pupils, staff, families and partners all working together to ensure that dignity, fairness

and participation are not just ideals, but daily practice.

### Our Keystone Rights: A Shared Language

A distinctive feature of our approach is the development of our Keystone Rights – Articles 12 (the right to be heard), 13 (freedom of expression) and 29 (the right to an education that develops the whole child). These rights were chosen through consultation with young people and are now highly visible across the school, from classroom displays to assemblies and daily conversations.

Visitors often comment that you can feel we are a rights respecting school the moment you walk through the door. That shared language of rights creates consistency, clarity and a deep sense of belonging for young people, regardless of background or need.

### Pupil Voice That Truly Matters

One of the strongest messages in UNICEF's Gold accreditation report was just how confident, articulate and passionate our pupils are when speaking about their rights. Young people at Linlithgow Academy don't just learn about rights, they use them to shape real change.



Through Pupil Parliament, equity groups, curriculum focus groups and assemblies, pupils influence decisions about learning, wellbeing, school policies and culture. They even contribute to staff training, helping adults reflect on rights-based practice in classrooms and relationships. As one staff member noted during the visit, pupils here are "agents of change", taking their voices beyond the school to organisations such as the Scottish Youth Parliament and the Children and Young People's Commissioner for Scotland.

### Relationships Built on Dignity

UNICEF recognised the caring and nurturing ethos of Linlithgow Academy, where relationships are grounded in dignity and mutual respect. Our Positive Relationships Statement and Classroom Culture model, co-created with pupils, ensure that expectations are fair, restorative and rights-based. Pupils told assessors they feel confident resolving issues respectfully and know they can approach any adult if they need help.

This culture has a real impact. Parents spoke warmly about increasing confidence in their children, particularly around identity and wellbeing, and staff highlighted the power of having a shared rights-based language that shapes communication across the school.

### Safety, Wellbeing and Inclusion

Being Rights Respecting also means ensuring that every child feels safe, supported and included. Pupils told assessors that they feel protected in school and understand how to seek support, including through innovative approaches such as anonymous QR-code reporting for wellbeing and bullying concerns. Mental health, emotional wellbeing and healthy lifestyles are prioritised across learning and support systems.

These interactive sessions are led by experienced teachers from across Scotland and offer an excellent opportunity for pupils to reinforce their learning, revisit key topics and gain additional explanations. They are particularly useful for independent study, allowing learners to access high-quality support from home at times that suit them.

### Inclusion

Inclusion was another major strength highlighted in the report. With 41 languages spoken and a wide range of learner needs, Linlithgow Academy places equity at the centre of its work. Young people clearly understand the difference between equality and equity and can explain how the school values

them as individuals. Initiatives such as Learning Passports, pupil support structures and co-created pledges ensure that all pupils can participate fully in school life.

### Taking Action, Locally and Globally

Gold accreditation also recognises how young people take action to uphold the rights of others. Pupils spoke proudly about fundraising for Women's Aid, supporting foodbanks, leading anti-bullying campaigns and engaging with global issues such as migration, conflict and climate justice. They understand that rights are universal and that they have both the power and responsibility to make a difference.

### A Collective Achievement – and a Commitment to the Future



UNICEF concluded that children's rights are embedded across every facet of school life at Linlithgow Academy. That is an incredible achievement, but it is also a responsibility we hold with pride. As a Gold Rights Respecting School, we are committed not only to sustaining this work, but to sharing it beyond our walls, acting as ambassadors for children's rights in our local community and beyond.

To our pupils, staff, families and partners, thank you. Together, we have shown what is possible when a school lives its values and believes in the voice, dignity and potential of every young person.



**Grant Abbot**, Head Teacher



Follow all the news and events at Linlithgow Academy: <https://linlithgowacademy.westlothian.org.uk/>



Folk Fae Lithgae **MYRA STEEL**

**Linlithgow Link volunteer, Myra Steel, has lived all her life in Linlithgow and is a weel-kent face in the town.**

Born in 1948, her early days were spent in a flat at 63 High Street, which is now the kitchen of the Four Marys. Her family moved shortly afterwards to 293 High Street, next to Eleanor Alexander's shop. In 1953, they were the first occupants of a brand-new house at 12 Braehead Avenue.

After leaving Linlithgow Academy, Myra enrolled at Torphichen Street Secretarial College in Edinburgh and her first job was in the office at Lochmill paper mill.

*"I was the clerkess to the sales manager, Miss Dorothy Hutton", she recalled, "and when I first started, office boys Charlie Glen and Jimmy Henderson locked me in the attic at the top of the office building. This was a typical trick they played on the new girls".*

Myra loved the great camaraderie in the paper mill and fondly remembers all the excitement that took place in the weeks leading up to the Riding of the Marches.

*"We used to make paper flowers for weeks before and there was always a great rush from the Monday lunchtime to get the lorry ready for the next day".*

Serving the public has been a huge part of Myra's life, and for many years, she and her husband **Dave** owned the Mini Store at the West Port, next door to the Black Bitch pub. People of a certain vintage fondly remember patronising the famous 'Penny Tray' on the way to and from school.

When the shop was sold, Myra took up a position at Graham pharmacy next to the Health Centre and continued her daily interaction with the public.

Since retirement, Myra has been a volunteer with the **Linlithgow Link** organisation, which aims to provide support to the elderly, isolated and infirm people throughout the local community, helping them maintain their independence and well-being.

The service is delivered by a team of dedicated, trained volunteers who offer encouragement, companionship and support to help older people engage in social leisure and community activities. All volunteers are fully insured and

security checked as members of the PVG Scheme.

Myra is very proud of her involvement with Link and told me:

*"It has been the making of me. I hope I am giving something back to the community because I really enjoy it. It has given me a purpose in life to help people and it is always a pleasure to see how much they appreciate it. It's not a one-way thing, I get as much out of it as the people I am helping".*

Myra is one of the drivers who provide transport to medical appointments, and is also involved in Link's other activities, such as befriending people in their homes, the monthly Caring Café with Alzheimer Scotland at Queen Margaret Hall, and the weekly Tuesday Group at The Bield, West Port.

**Marion Fleming**, one of the Link co-ordinators, told me:

*"Myra is a member of our management committee and she goes above and beyond the call of duty. She does an amazing job and is very popular with the clients. She is so well-known in the community and people respond so warmly to her".*

Myra is very keen to publicise the work done by Linlithgow Link and is urging more people to get involved as volunteers:

*"Volunteering is very rewarding and if you feel you can commit to helping in any of the services we provide, please ring the office on 01506-845137 and speak to one of the Co-ordinators. We have an office at the Partnership Centre at 93 High Street, which is open Monday to Friday from 9.30 until 12.30. You can also send an email to co-ordinator@linlithgowlink.org.uk"*

**Murdoch Kennedy**



## POTAGER TO PLATE THIS SUMMER

**Whether you are growing some of these crops yourself, or buying them, these are our favourite summer dishes using the harvest from our potager at home. Hopefully sitting outside in your garden.**

### A touch of Spain with chilled Gazpacho Soup



**Dougal maintains that there is nothing better than a chilled Gazpacho soup in the summer.**

Skin 700g of ripe tomatoes (cut a cross in the skin and cover with boiling water for 2 minutes and they are easy to peel - The soup isn't sieved so you do need to get rid of the skins) and roughly chop. Peel and chop 5" of Cucumber. Chop 3 Spring Onions or one small onion. Crush one or two cloves of Garlic. Deseed and chop one green pepper.

Put everything into a food processor adding 1 heaped tbsp Basil (or Thyme or Marjoram), 4 tbsp Olive Oil, 1.5 tbsp Red Wine Vinegar, lemon juice and black pepper to taste. Process at full speed until smooth and pour into a bowl and chill thoroughly. Finely chop some of the ingredients for a garnish.



### Mint & Courgette Frittata

Frittata is easy and quick to make and you can use seasonal vegetables you have available - try Peas, Broad Beans & Basil or Potato, Spinach & Bacon. Great eaten warm or cold.



Cook 1 thinly sliced onion in oil in a 9" frying pan for 10 minutes on a low heat. Add 2 thinly sliced courgettes and cook for a few minutes. Beat together 2 tbsp of chopped mint leaves and 6 eggs and season with lemon juice and pepper. Add to the vegetables in the frying pan - its good to arrange the veggies evenly at this stage. Cook over a low heat for 10 minutes until all but the top of

the frittata is set. Sit under a grill to complete the cooking till just golden.

### Courgette Rolls

Those Courgette plants keep producing lovely fruits, perhaps you might try these Courgette Rolls. Great for a light lunch with crusty bread, as part of a buffet or an individual salad platter.



Slice courgettes lengthwise 6mm thick. Brush both sides with rapeseed oil and fry for 3 minutes each side. For the fillings use Goats Cheese (or Ricotta) with finely chopped plum tomatoes (remove seeds from 'wetter' varieties), black pepper and lemon juice to season. Place a tablespoon of the filling at one end of a courgette slice and roll up.



**Bruschetta**  
Finally so try this Bruschetta recipe, it is so simple and is fresh and yummy.

Finely chop tomatoes, losing excessive amounts of juice in a sieve as you want the 'wetness' to be the Olive Oil. Finely chop 2 or 3 garlic cloves to every 4 or 5 medium sized tomatoes.

Mix in a bowl with 6 chopped Basil leaves, 2 tsp chopped Marjoram or Oregano, black pepper, juice of half a lemon and 3 tbsp Olive Oil. Spoon onto freshly toasted slices of baguette or sour dough bread, and enjoy



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

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### BRITISH RED CROSS - 217 / 221 High Street

Shop manager **Louise Matthew** has told us that they were given a generous cash donation from a local lady to paint the shop recently. The shop has also been refurbished internally and **Provost Derek Green** and retired Pipe Major **Martin Huxter**, Argyle & Southern Highlanders, attended in early May to celebrate the reopening of the shop.

Provost Green said that the investment in the Linlithgow premises represents both a commitment to the community by Red Cross and to the causes which Red Cross supports.

**Pictured with shop manager Louise Matthew are Provost Derek Green and Martin Huxter.**



# ROBERT BRAID PHOTOGRAPHER

Bruce Jamieson

Between the years 1905 and 1914, a prolific West Lothian postcard producer called Robert Braid turned



out hundreds of photographic images from his darkroom at the back of Livingston Village Post Office. He then marketed them as postcards - his production business

operating from his nearby home, 'Almondbank'.

Braid had seen an opening for his work in the postcard craze which swept Britain at the time when, for just one half of an old penny, a postcard could be sent to any corner of the British Empire. Everyone sent postcards - just as we would make a phone call or send an email today. Many people collected their received cards in albums and Braid was determined to produce images to suit all tastes - both senders and collectors.

Robert Braid was born in 1864, the son of the Postmaster in Livingston Village. His early working life was as a watchmaker and then a locomotive engine driver, but his hobby of photography gradually became his main source of income. Braid's photographs are often, but not always, signed with his name or his initials sometimes reversed as ЯВ.

For the street scene collector, he produced some early views of shale mining villages such as Oakbank and Winchburgh and this quaint shot of the Sunday Bus leaving his birthplace, Livingston Village.



Those interested in memorable, local events could purchase a Braid card recording such occasions as the children of Linlithgow celebrating Empire Day in 1909 in front of their school at the West Port or the visit to Linlithgow of King George V in 1914 when Braid photographed four Linlithgow families standing in front

of their decorated homes at 308-310 High Street.



He also captured the residences of the wealthier members of West Lothian society, including 'Bridge Castle', near Torphichen, 'Westwood' in West Calder and 'Charlesfield House', Livingston. In the next postcard, he has captured the gardeners at Champfleurie House, the residence at that time of Admiral Robert Hathorn Johnston Stewart.



Champfleurie C. 1904.

Annual events all across Linlithgowshire (it wasn't named West Lothian until 1925) were also captured by Braid's camera. As a friend of Police Superintendent Henry Robinson, he was sometimes able to get a lift in an official police conveyance and attend special occasions such as the Whitburn Gala Day, the Newlands Day Procession in Bathgate, the Broxburn Cycle Parade or the Linlithgow Crying of the Marches. This next photograph was produced for a card posted in 1907 showing children in Linlithgow High Street accompanying the Town Crier, Sam Weir, just along from the Post Office which had opened just three years before.



The Crying of the Marches in 1907.

I have only ever come across one Braid postcard of the Marches Day itself - perhaps because of the reason outlined in the last paragraph. The card I have was posted on June 18th, 1909 - just a

few days after the Marches, so Braid must have worked hard to get them produced. It shows the morning parade approaching the West Port.



Marches Day - June 15th, 1909.

Braid was also in Linlithgow on October 5th, 1911, at the unveiling of The Cross of the statue of John Adrian Louis Hope, 1st Marquess of Linlithgow and the first Governor General of Australia.

Present on the day were some of the greatest men in the county including former Prime Minister, Lord Rosebery; Victor Hope, 2nd Marquess of Linlithgow; Colonel Caddell of Grange; Charles Chalmers of Longcroft and Fred Johnston, publisher of the Linlithgowshire Gazette. Also present was the famous sculptor of the statue, George Frampton - well known as the creator of the statue of Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens.



The unveiling of "The Green Man" at The Cross in 1911.

Braid was a regular follower of the Linlithgow and Stirlingshire Hunt, a fox-hunting "club" set up in the mid 18th century. In the next card, the Hunt is meeting in Torphichen in the year 1908. The sender, M. Drybrough, writing to Andrew Drybrough in Corstorphine, writes "I think you will see some of the family in this PC."



A Linlithgow and Stirlingshire Hunt Meeting in Torphichen.

Perhaps the most famous member of the family was Jack Drybrough whose horse, "The Dream" took a prodigious leap over a stone wall during one episode of hunting around Linlithgow. Jumping over the six-foot obstacle, the horse found a fourteen-foot drop on the other side - and it duly fell, spilling his 16 stone rider. Jack's brother Tom had a stone plaque made and inserted into the aforementioned wall at the top of Friars Brae. It's still there, bearing the lettering "WJD The Dream 9th December 1888."

Braid also cashed in on the contemporary demand for humour and sentiment with cards showing children playing leapfrog, or in a home-made go-cart (more commonly known as a bogie or a glider) or this one showing young children playing hide and seek amidst the corn stooks in a West Lothian field.



The children depicted here were his own, for he unashamedly used members of his family in many of his productions including this one of his wife, the village postmistress, and his children on a home-produced Christmas card.



The Braid family in 1908: Robert, children Frances and Robert junior and his wife, Elizabeth.

He even got the long-suffering Mrs Braid to pose for a series of cards depicting amusing incidents. The one pictured below is from a set of six showing the antics and eventual arrest of a chimney sweep whose cleaning



The village chimney sweep is arrested.

methods led to the soiling of the clothes hanging on a hard-working housewife's washing line. It featured, along with Mrs Braid, the village policeman, PC Macleod, and real life chimney cleaner, John Imrie.



Braid's prolific output slowed down with the outbreak of World War One. He caught the patriotic fervour with cards such as one depicting a young lad (his son) being "inspected" by

a kilted soldier.

The war disrupted the postal services and the craze for sending postcards dwindled away. After the war, Robert Braid continued to produce high quality photographs such as one showing the unveiling of Livingston Village's War Memorial, but the demand for his cards was never the same.



15th May, 1920: the unveiling of the War Memorial at Livingston Village by Lt.-General Sir Francis Davies, Commanding Officer for Scotland.

Braid obtained employment as a mechanical engineer until he took ill and ended his days in 1936, aged 73, in St Michael's Hospital in Linlithgow.



An early view of St Michael's Hospital.

The glass plates from which he had produced his many images were stored in an inspection pit in his Livingston Village garage and, when Braid moved away, the new owner filled it in with concrete - thus losing an invaluable collection of images of West Lothian taken over a period of 20 years. However, thanks to Robert Braid, we still have some of his interesting snapshots of a bygone age, the likes of which we shall never see again.

## ELEVATION CYCLES 103 HIGH STREET



Elevation Cycles is under new ownership after the business was put up for sale by Fraser McNeil who previously ran the venture for 13 years. Calum Nicol who lives in the High Street will now run the shop on a day to day basis.

Ronald Hunter caught up with Calum:

"In late 2025, a group of us, all keen cyclists with a passion for everything bike-related, began talking about the possibility of taking over Elevation Cycles when it came up for sale. A few weeks later, Geoff, Stephen and I joined forces and officially took over the business.

I run the shop day to day and have been involved in cycling since I was a kid, having worked in bike shops in both the UK and France. I've also been a member of the West Lothian Clarion since 2022 and I volunteer as a coach with the youth section.

Our aim at Elevation Cycles is to create a community-focused bike shop in the heart of the town. Somewhere people can come to buy accessories and new bikes, have repairs carried out in the workshop, ask questions, and meet like-minded cyclists. We want it to be an open and welcoming space for everyone, whether you're new to cycling or a lifelong rider.

I'm currently building up our stock and we already have a range of Genesis, Santa Cruz and kids bikes available, with UTO folding e-bikes arriving soon.

The shop is open from 10am-6pm Tuesday to Friday, and 10am-4pm on Saturdays. Please feel free to drop by and say hello anytime."



## LINLITHGOW RUGBY CLUB REDS FINISH THE SEASON ON A HIGH WITH A WIN OVER THE CHAMPIONS ELECT

The Linlithgow Reds closed out their league season with a thrilling 29-26 win against previously unbeaten Cartha Queens Park from Glasgow. The young Reds side, with an average age of just over 23, turned in their finest performance of an excellent season to delay the visitors league winning celebrations - Cartha went on to win the league the following week scoring 101 points in the process! The young Reds side were both fearless and relentless against the vastly more experienced visitors and capped off the win with a superb pushover try against a team known for their set-piece strength. Earlier that same day, the Reds u18 side closed off their strong season with a fine win on the main pitch at Myreside against a Watsons' school side bolstered by their 6th form leavers. With the u16 team winning team of the year at the Youth Awards dinner, the pipeline of good young players continues to look strong.

established themselves in this season's Reds' senior team.

Two of our youth teams enjoyed Spring tours, with the P6s travelling down to the Lake District for games against Penrith, Kendal and Kirkby Lonsdale and the u14s venturing on an unforgettable sporting adventure abroad to France to play against Linlithgow's twin town club Plaisir. The trips stand as a testament to the power of sport in bringing people together across borders and cultures.

### Player Award Dinners

Both the Reds seniors and the Young Reds held their respective annual award dinners, with Ruaridh Stewart winning the prestigious Players' Player of the Year award, while on the youth side, the u16s claimed the team of the year award. You can see all the award winners by clicking on the QR code above.



### Spring and Summer Rugby

During April and May, the Reds have been closing out the season playing in various 7-a-side tournaments, which will culminate in our own RedsFest 7s and beer festival combined -

more on this in the next issue.

During the off-season we will be running free Touch Rugby sessions on the Winchburgh Sports Hub 3G on Mondays at 7.45pm.

**Fly Half**  
www.linlithgowrugbyclub.co.uk



Club	Pts	W	D	L
Cartha Queens Park	75	14	1	1
Androssan Accies	67	13	0	3
Kilmarnock	62	11	2	3
Linlithgow	58	11	0	5
Hamilton	48	8	1	7
Whitcraigs	36	6	0	10
Stewartry	20	4	0	12
Dunfermline	9	2	0	14
Moray	9	1	0	15
Ellon				withdrawn in January

### Developing Young Players

One notable factor in Linlithgow's success has been the club's amazing ability to grow our own, with 27 of the 33 players who have represented the Reds this year having come through our Youth teams over the years. Pictured are three of last year's u18 team (Lewis McGill, Cammy McHardy and Alfie Muir) who have

## ANSELM ADORNES AND LINLITHGOW

On the side wall of St Katherine's Aisle in St Michael's Church is this plaque remembering Anselm Adornes. The memorial goes on to state that he is "buried near this place."



The memorial tablet unveiled in 1990 by descendants of Anselm Adornes, called him a 15th century "Belgian" merchant, diplomat, politician, confidant of King James III and "friend of Scotland." He was a colourful character, a superb businessman, winner of many jousting tournaments and on one occasion arrested for alleged "insider trading" in Bruges. He was the father of sixteen

legitimate children- and Euphemia, born out of wedlock in Linlithgow!

His connections with Scotland began when he was sent to ask King James III to renew a lucrative wool trading treaty with Flanders and was appointed Conservator of Privileges by the king. In the course of his dealings, Anselm's charisma and forceful personality so influenced the Scottish monarch that he became one of the king's closest companions and the role of Keeper of the Palace of Linlithgow.

His closeness to King James, and the wealth he accumulated, brought him enemies however, and whilst on a pilgrimage he was attacked and killed outside the Cistercian Nunnery at North Berwick. According to



The Tomb of Anselm and his wife, Margareta van der Banck.

Anselm's final wishes, his body to be brought back to Linlithgow, rather than Edinburgh, for burial in a vault beneath St Michael's Church.

SAT  
6  
JUNE

For further information about the event or the Adornes Network contact Jill at :  
adornesnetwork1424@gmail.com

## ANSELM ADORNES: A GREAT LIFE IN LINLITHGOW AND BEYOND ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH, LINLITHGOW, SATURDAY 6TH JUNE, 2.30 - 4.00 PM

### ANSELM ADORNES: A GREAT LIFE IN LINLITHGOW AND BEYOND

St Michael's Church, Linlithgow  
Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2.30 - 4.00 pm



You are invited to a discussion and Q & A to celebrate the remarkable life of Anselm Adornes, fifteenth century merchant, diplomat, jousting, traveller to Jerusalem and his links to Linlithgow.

Join Dr Bryony Coombs and Jill Harrison, the authors of *Anselm Adornes: Travel, Trade, Cultural Exchange and Intellectual Networks in Scotland, Bruges and Jerusalem*, with local historian Bruce Jamieson and Frances Murray, HES steward at Linlithgow Palace

You will be able to see the new book, a copy of which will be donated to Linlithgow Library. You might also like to join the Adornes Network as they continue research into Adornes and Linlithgow. Your local knowledge would be greatly welcomed.

For further information about the event or the Adornes Network contact Jill at :  
adornesnetwork1424@gmail.com

Join us in St Michael's Church on 6<sup>th</sup> June at 2.30 p.m

Learn about Anselm Adornes and help us uncover more details about his intriguing life.



Anselm Adornes is remembered in a plaque in St Michael's Church. Linlithgow was important to him, but we need to know more about his life in the town.

He requested in his will that his body was buried at St Michael's and that his heart was returned to his family in Bruges.

When Keeper of the Palace of Linlithgow, he fathered a daughter, Euphemia, to whom he gave property in the Kirkgate, but who was Euphemia's mother?

Who were John Maktalze and his wife, Joneta, Andrew Lepeltat, John Skelliat and John Mur, all mentioned in Anselm's will?

Anselm also oversaw Blackness Castle and owned property in Blackness, but where?

Anselm was a renowned jousting - might he have taken parts in local tournaments?





# FEEL GOOD FORTNIGHT



In May, Springfield and Low Port Primary Schools took up a challenge! For two whole weeks we are committing to doing lots of healthy but still extremely fun activities, sports, healthy eating and healthy mindsets and we would love to tell you about all the fun stuff we are doing starting from the 11th of May!

Make sure not to miss out on our brain scratching crossword quiz that might just be the perfect activity you need right now!

## What happens during Feel Good Fortnight:

Feel Good Fortnight is two weeks in May where Springfield and Lowport Primary schools participate daily in a range of health and well-being activities. During our Feel-Good fortnight, we also have our sports day and a community picnic. In previous years, there has been many different sport tasters and mindful activities that have been exposed to the students, giving them an experience to remember.

### Community Links

Along with doing lots of different activities in school, lots of people from our community come and give us taster sessions. Here are some of the local groups that we have worked with:

- Linlithgow Tennis club
- Bellsburn Bowling club
- Linlithgow Athletics Club
- Kuk Sool Won
- Drama Kids
- Tae Kwon Do

**FEEL GOOD FORTNIGHT**  
 FEEL GOOD • FEEL RESPECTED • WE BELONG  
 11TH - 22ND MAY

We are excited to share that we will be celebrating Feel Good Fortnight across our school!

Over two weeks, children will take part in a range of learning experiences designed to support their health, wellbeing and positive relationships. Creating opportunities to talk, reflect and connect helps build a strong sense of belonging and supports children to thrive emotionally and socially.

**WHAT IS FEEL GOOD FORTNIGHT?**  
 A whole-school focus on:  
 • Feeling happy, safe and included  
 • Building respectful relationships  
 • Developing confidence and resilience  
 • Understanding how we can help ourselves and others feel good

**WHAT WILL BE HAPPENING?**  
 Across the fortnight, children will experience:  
 • Big Questions and class discussions (P4C-style thinking)  
 • Teamwork and relationship-building activities  
 • Opportunities for pupil voice and sharing ideas  
 • Wellbeing activities to support emotional health

**SPORTS & ACTIVE OPPORTUNITIES**  
 Alongside learning in class, we will also have:  
 • A range of sports events and taster sessions throughout the two weeks  
 • Opportunities to try new activities and build confidence  
 • Our whole-school SPORTS DAY to celebrate teamwork, effort and enjoyment!

**HOW CAN FAMILIES SUPPORT?**  
 • Talk about what makes your child feel good  
 • Discuss the daily Big Question with your child  
 • Encourage kindness, respect and inclusion  
 • Take part in active time together (walk, play, sport)  
 • Ask "What helped you feel good today?"

**WE BELONG**  
 OUR MESSAGE  
 At the heart of everything is a simple message:  
**WHEN CHILDREN FEEL GOOD, FEEL RESPECTED AND FEEL LIKE THEY BELONG - THEY ARE READY TO LEARN AND SUCCEED.**

**THANK YOU** for supporting our children's wellbeing and happiness

## Feel Good fill-in



### ACROSS

- It shines in the sky and makes us feel warm.
- Being nice and caring for others.
- Faster than a walk.
- Very important, or full of life.
- Your general state of being well.

### DOWN

- Able to lift heavy things; the opposite of weakness.
- Always on the go; not sitting still.
- Outside in the fresh air, not in a building.
- What you need to run and jump.
- To fix something or get your energy back.
- What do you do with your mouth when you're happy.
- Filled with light, or a very smart person.

## BENEFITS OF FEEL GOOD FORTNIGHT

- Makes you fit and healthy
- Improves your mental health
- Reduces stress and anxiety
- Boosts happiness hormones
- Helps your immune system
- Encourages physical activity
- Upgrades sleep quality
- Uplevels social and communication skills
- Supports a growth mindset
- JUST MAKES YOU HAPPY



## POEM

*Feel good fortnight, two weeks of fun. When mental health and sports make one.*

*Days like sports day with friendly competition. Trying to get house points like you're on a mission.*

*With a smoothie bike making smoothies galore. To taekwondo that won't make you snore*

*Feel good fortnight is for everyone. So have a great time and have some fun.*



## WHAT YOU CAN DO AT HOME TO STAY HEALTHY!

### MAKE SOME SUPER SNACKS!

- REFRESHING:** Greek yoghurt with berries
- FRESH:** Veggie sticks with hummus
- SWEET (BUT HEALTHY!):** Dark chocolate and raspberries.

### SOME SIXTY-SECOND SPORTS!

- HIGH KNEES** - jog on the spot trying to touch your knees to your hands with ranging impact.
- CALF RAISES** - raise up and down on your tiptoes with hands on waist.
- KITCHEN DISCO!** - come on, you know what I mean.

### YOUR MIND MATTERS!

- Move your body to release natural stress-fighting Endorphins.
- Prioritise sleep to give your brain time to recharge and process emotions.
- Limit screen time to reduce digital fatigue and constant comparison.

**AND REMEMBER TO DRINK LOTS OF WATER!**

## FAMILY

As spring nudges in, many gardeners are now plotting what to grow. Some are ahead of the game with seed trays lined up and the odd green shoot pushing through. The promise of homegrown salad and veg to come.



Six years ago, in 2020, that same sense of possibility took hold in Linlithgow. During lockdown, many people grew their own vegetables for the first time, brought together by a new community group then called Linlithgow Family Farmers.

The group began in March 2020, led by the team at Narrowboat Farm. It was a practical response to food uncertainty, and just as importantly, a way to bring people together when we were all being forced to isolate. The aim was simple: make growing food accessible and fun. At a time when supply chains felt fragile, it carried a bit of a "dig for victory" spirit.

The Facebook page was set up and people young and old shared tips, triumphs and inevitable mishaps. Starter kits of seeds, trays and compost were packed (at a distance) and delivered to doorsteps across the town. Not long after, raised beds appeared in gardens, driveways and back corners, built from bulk sourced pallet collars and filled with gigantic amounts of shared compost. People made space where they could, in tubs, car tyres, former lawns and sunny walls all over the town.

And we grew! In more ways than one.

As the plants flourished, so did the family farmers community. Volunteers stepped forward, and after a stiff competition "Farmily" was chosen as the name for the group, eventually becoming part of Linlithgow Community Development Trust (LCDT), which supported the practical side of things. For some, it rekindled a long-lost hobby. For others, it became a new ritual, bringing calm, purpose and a reason to step outside during the lockdown days. Successes were celebrated, failures were

shared, friendships made.

There were Zoom veg awards, heroic failures and some impressively rude-looking vegetables. A Covid friendly "pumpkin wagon" made sure children got a spooky surprise from the Three Witches delivering pumpkins to carve at Halloween.

Over the following years came seed and seedling swaps, harvest meals and Christmas wreath-making. Simple events that kept us growing and coming together to share, or commiserate, each year's harvest.

But as any gardener knows, not everything lasts beyond a season.

Life has moved on, picking up pace. Volunteers went back to work and school, families grew up and time is now scarce. Changes to social media has meant the posts and events have reached fewer and fewer people.

Efforts were made to secure funding for a part-time paid role to keep things going, but with little luck. By the end of 2025, with no one able to lead, and no new volunteers coming forward, we made the difficult decision to bring Family to a close.

The Facebook page will remain, holding six years of shared knowledge, photos and memories. It's a cracking library of how, and how not, to grow a wonderful amount of veg. There will be no more organised events.

We're all so glad of the Family experience. For some of us it really was what kept us sane during the Covid years. We're grateful to all the people of the town who came out to swap, take part in events, and share their veg growing stories. There were even one or two who changed careers to make growing their livelihood! What remains is something less visible but just as real - a reminder of what happens when people come together with a shared idea.

If this story has planted an idea, inspired you to take up the Family mantle, or sparked interest in getting involved in other local community projects, you can contact the Trust at [hello@trust-linlithgow.org.uk](mailto:hello@trust-linlithgow.org.uk) with your details.

May your carrots grow straight, & your apples be juicy!

# LINLITHGOW STRING ORCHESTRA Bill Jones, Director of Music



St Michael's Church, Linlithgow



Burgh Halls

The Linlithgow String Orchestra, which is celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2026, regularly collaborates with others and in 2025, was chosen by **Making Music**, the UK-wide group that supports music-making in the community, to work with composer **Deborah Shaw** in preparing and performing a brand new score celebrating the 200th anniversary of the Railway. The concert, sponsored by LNER, in which her piece, *Engine Shed*, was premiered, was a great success and performed in front of an audience of over 400 in St Michael's Church, Linlithgow.



Bill Jones with young composer, Joe Cobb

Another large and enthusiastic audience of well over 700 gathered in St Michael's Church to witness **"A Messiah For The Community"** at the end of March this year, in which conductor **Bill Jones** led the orchestra and 120 singers from various local choirs in a wonderful performance of Handel's great work in a stunning location. Appreciative comments followed:

*"Well done for a truly memorable community event tonight! Amazing to have pulled together so many singers and musicians and to pull off a very creditable performance. What an incredible number of people came to hear us too. An amazing outreach in the community."*

*"Wow! What a wonderful event! I wanted to express thanks to you and to the huge team you brought together for such a marvellous way to mark Palm Sunday."*

In 2026, the orchestra continues to look for ways to encourage performers of all ages and share the joy of music. The orchestra's next concert in **Linlithgow Burgh Halls on Sunday, 7th June at 2.30pm**, features a young composer with an exciting future ahead of him. In 2016, when the LSO began, **Joe Cobb** was leaving primary school in Wye, Kent. In the 10 years since then he has excelled in his academic studies and developed his performing and composing skills and

is clearly developing into a fine young musician with an exciting career ahead of him. He will be completing his finals at King's College London this summer before taking up a role as Composer-in-Residence in a London school. Joe is a composer with Scottish musical heritage (his grandfather grew up in Paisley) and is delighted to have been invited to produce a special new work for the orchestra. Entitled **"Calluna"**, with its rich harmonies, Joe declares that it "reflects his memories of walking in the hills of Scotland".

**Linlithgow String Orchestra's 10th Anniversary Summer Concert takes place at 2.30pm in the Burgh Halls, Linlithgow on Sunday, 7th June 2026.**



Joe began his music studies at KCL in 2023 and since then his course "has given me the opportunity to connect with large musical ensembles, like the KCL Symphony Orchestra, who run a yearly composition competition to have a student's piece performed, which I won in 2025, having my piece performed in London and on tour in Europe. Moving towards the end of my final year at university, I'm currently writing as my final project a series of movements for woodwind sextet that draws from late 20th and 21st-century contemporary classical music as well as a commission from the Linlithgow String Orchestra."

Joe Cobb [joecobb@gmail.com](mailto:joecobb@gmail.com)  
[www.linlithgowstringorchestra.uk](http://www.linlithgowstringorchestra.uk)



**Hello everyone! We are excited to feature in this month's edition of the Black Bitch magazine and would love to share a snapshot of some experiences at Linlithgow Primary School throughout this session.**

**P1 News:**  
P1B has had a wonderful time this year and particularly enjoyed learning about the people in our community who help keep them safe. They had a visit

from local firefighters who showed them the fire engine vehicle and the police also came and let them go into the jail section of their van and listen to the sirens, which was exciting. P1A enjoyed their school trip to the Owl Centre. They took part in a scavenger hunt around the area, looking for different types of owls. After lunch they were entertained with an educational talk and owl flying demonstration. *Reported by Quinn and Merryn.*

**P2 News:**  
This year, P2 has been doing lots of exciting things! A Civil, Mechanical and Software Engineer came to talk about engineering for their 'Young Engineer' topic. They had visits from NYCOS, during which they played lots of musical games and sang together. They visited Linlithgow library where they participated in a scavenger hunt and read the book '10 Delicious Teachers'. Recently, they enjoyed learning about the Picts, discovering how they decorated their skin and they even had the opportunity to make their own costumes, inspired by traditional Pict clothing. *Reported by Hannah and Ella.*

**P3 News:**  
The highlight for the P3's this year was an exciting trip to Edinburgh castle! They travelled together by

# LINLITHGOW PS BIG BLETHER.

bus, used their tickets to have a tour inside the castle and participated in an informative workshop. After that they had an opportunity to explore, eat lunch and view the gun that fires at 1 O'clock. They had a lot of fun! *Reported by Ruaridh and Ryan.*

**P3/4 News:**  
P3/4 also enjoyed their trip to Edinburgh castle. Their favourite parts were learning all about the history behind the 1 o'clock cannons and finding out about the castle jail. When they were exploring, they felt very small compared to the massive castle walls! They would really recommend this trip. *Reported by Maisie and Hannah.*

**P4 News:**  
P4 had a wonderful visit from a golden retriever Guide Dog called Bob, during which they got to feed and pet him. These pupils commented that although they all have different interests, everyone agreed that this visit was very special and definitely one of the highlights of the year. *Reported by Maisie and Hannah.*

**P5 News:**  
P5 had a fantastic trip to the Battle of Bannockburn Centre where they tried on the armour and discussed different roles within the Scottish and English army. Another highlight of the year has been school camp to Lockerbie Manor where they

participated in activities such as archery and abseiling. The P5's are very creative and loved taking part in our school Christmas Enterprise event where they made and sold a variety of interesting products. *Reported by Euan and Irving.*

**P6 News:**  
The P6's enjoyed getting active

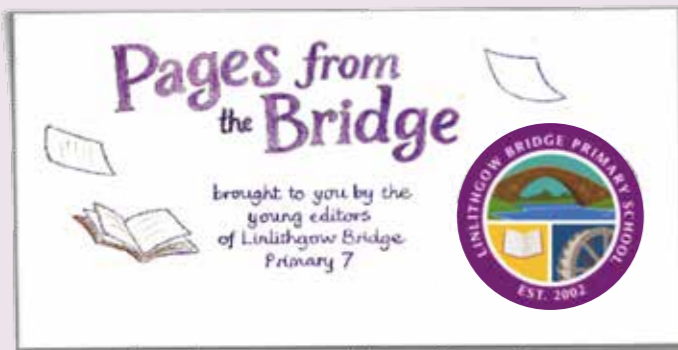
during their 'Activity Days'. On one of the days, they canoed along the canal and played games, then the next day they experienced archery and team building where they solved challenges together. Recently, the P6 and P7 children collaborated to do a 'Scottish Opera' performance together. They split into groups (Pirates, Indians and Africans) and learned songs with actions. On the day of the performance, the Scottish Opera team arrived at school and worked with the pupils to create a fantastic show which was performed to the other pupils and families. The pupils particularly liked wearing funky costumes and they were sad when it was over! *Reported by Alexis and Orla.*



**P7 News:**  
In 7B, they most enjoyed visiting the Risk Factory this year. Quotes from students say that it was fun and teaches people about different risks at home and in our local community, such as near water, roads and railway lines. A student also said, "I liked it because it showed real life risks!" In P7A, they enjoyed making and racing model F1 cars at a STEM event with cluster schools. One team, Lightning Legends, travelled to the UK finals in Rotherham, where they competed against 70 other teams from around the UK. They came 6th overall in their track races. *Reported by Elliott and Arthur.*

**Created by our reporters from our Novel Navigator Pupil Leadership Team.**





**A Literacy Showcase from Linlithgow Bridge Primary School**  
Collated by Primary 7

**Our School Values**  
Respect, Kindness, Responsibility

**RRS Articles of the Month**



**Welcome from Primary 7**  
Welcome to the latest edition of 'Pages from the Bridge'. This month, we have been busy exploring everything from magical fairylands and mystery-solving spies to persuasive debates on modern technology. We are proud to share the fantastic reading and writing highlights from across every stage of our school. We hope you enjoy this window into our learning journey!

**Primary 1: A Visit from Fairyland**  
The children were thrilled by a secret visit from a friendly Fairyland Dragon who left a cuddly baby dragon and an important letter.



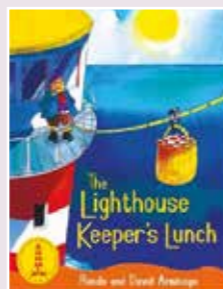
**Rebuilding Fairyland**  
Inspired by the dragon's request for help, P1 worked together to brainstorm ideas and build a massive 3D beanstalk decorated with their favourite characters. They also used collage materials to create a large castle and dragon.

their favourite characters. They also used collage materials to create a large castle and dragon.

**Daily Reading**  
The class is continuing to develop their love for literacy by enjoying different fairytales every day.

**Primary 2: Exploring the Seashore**

The class has been diving into *The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch* as part of their seashore and tides topic.



**Seagull Scares and Problem Solving**

Alongside learning about rock pools and lighthouses, the pupils have been using their problem-solving skills to find ways to keep pesky seagulls away from Mr Grinling's lunch.

**Inspired Writing**

Inspired by the book, P2 has been working on both informative and persuasive writing pieces.

**Primary 3: Reading Two Tales**

P3 is currently reading *Magic Tree House: Adventure on the Amazon* and *The Umbrella of Us*.



*"This book taught us to be respectful to all different types of brains."*  
*"All brains are equal and special."*

**Brain Sparkles**

The class has been learning that everyone's brain works in its own special way. They are creating a "Galaxy" of stars, each decorated with a pupil's "Brain Sparkle" – something they are uniquely good at or a way they love to learn.

**Persuasive Pets**

Loosely linked to the animals in their novel, the children are writing persuasive letters to their parents to convince them to let them get a new pet, ranging from dogs to tortoises.

**Primary 4: Comic Book Science**  
The class is enjoying a weather-themed comic series, including *Master Hamster: Super Science Weather*.  
**Activities**

This reading sparked rich discussions about extreme weather events both locally and globally.



**Writing Reports & Postcards**

P4 produced information

reports on extreme weather and wrote thank-you postcards following their "fish in the classroom" experience after releasing trout into the local burn.

*"I love reading comic-style stories, it makes reading even more exciting and engaging!"*

*"I liked how the book discussed the formation of tornados; I found that really interesting".*



**Primary 5: Alex Rider Adventures**

By popular demand, P5 is currently reading *Point Blanc*, the second book in the Alex Rider series.

**Historical Reports**

Linking to their "Scottish Wars of Independence" topic, the class wrote detailed informative reports on the Battle of Stirling Bridge.

**Primary 6: Euro Spies**

The class is reading *Euro Spies*, which links to their research on European countries, landmarks, and history.



**Sustainable Cities**

P6 used their research to invent sustainable cities, detailing renewable energy sources, green spaces, and waste strategies for a chosen European country.

**Pupil Voice**

The pupils shared that they particularly enjoyed creating PowerPoints for their class talks and participating in the Euro Quiz heats.

**Primary 7: Reading: Ethics and Big Decisions**  
We have been reading *Millions* by Frank Cottrell-Boyce. The story follows two brothers who discover a bag containing a massive sum of cash.



This has led to deep class discussions regarding ethics, the true value of money, and the importance of generosity. This engaging text has provided a brilliant

independent focus for our novel study this term, allowing us to explore complex themes of morality and decision-making.

**Writing: The Great Mobile Phone Debate**

Our writing was inspired by a recent online debate and the "Mobile Phone Free Learning Environment" survey for West Lothian BGE students.

We have been crafting detailed persuasive essays exploring whether mobile phones should be banned in schools. Pupils investigated how these "digital distractions" can affect mental health and academic potential, with some arguing that phones cause "blurry brains" and social media addiction.

On the other hand, we also explored the benefits of "Responsible Use Agreements," discussing how phones can be helpful tools for scanning QR codes and accessing learning apps when used correctly.

*"Having access to our own mobile phones is essential for our learning, especially since we don't always have enough school laptops or tablets for everyone to use. Being able to quickly scan a QR code or use a learning app on our own devices means we can get on with our work straight away."*  
*"The only way to stop the irritating buzz... is to bring these phones down with a bang (and a ban)!"*

**Looking Ahead**

From fairyland castles to debates on the future of technology, this month has shown how stories help us understand our world and each other. We look forward to sharing more of our literacy journey in the next edition!

## Guide Dogs - Puppy Raisers

**Are you a dog lover with space in your home and heart for a puppy?...**  
**The charity Guide Dogs is appealing for residents of Linlithgow to provide a loving home for a pup for 12-18 months.**



Puppy raisers help their puppy to grow into a life-changing guide dog, by providing basic training, socialisation and the

introduction of new environments and experiences.

**Mary Graham**, a first-time puppy raiser with the charity, lives in Bo'ness but frequents Linlithgow with golden retriever Banjo.

**Mary said:** "Banjo and I spend a lot of time in and around Linlithgow as the area provides us with lots of great training opportunities."

"A visit to the high street gives us a chance to practice in smaller shops and larger supermarkets. We visit cafes to practice settling in busy environments, and the library to practice being calm and focused in quieter spaces."

"We might go to the train station to

get used to the sights and sounds or hop on a bus for a short trip to familiarise Banjo, as the use of public transport may be important to his future role.

"Banjo and I go to the monthly market in Linlithgow. It's always busy with people and dogs and there are numerous displays of tempting foods, so it's a good place to practice staying focused in spite of the many distractions."

"Linlithgow Loch gives Banjo the perfect opportunity to practice calm behaviours at a safe distance around the swans, ducks and other wildlife, whilst the Peel is great for him to have fun off lead and practice his recall."

"Further afield, a trip to the farm park at Muiravonside gives Banjo the chance to build confidence around unfamiliar animals and Beecraigs is a favourite place for Banjo to practice being a dog after all his training."

Being a puppy raiser for Guide Dogs is an exciting and rewarding opportunity to prepare a dog for their future role supporting someone with sight loss.

**Puppy Development Supervisor Fiona Fraser said:** "What we need is for people to get our puppies used to a range of sights, sounds, smells and environments. This means when they start their formal guide dog training, they will be confident, well-rounded dogs."

"Linlithgow is a wonderful place for our guide dog puppies to grow up and we would love for locals to get

involved and care for a pup during their important first year.

"You'll receive plenty of support and we also offer puppy classes for puppy raisers in the local area to get together, share stories and provide refreshers on training techniques. It's a great role for meeting new people, making friends and getting out and about."

"We do hear people saying how hard it must be to give the pup back after the year, and they are right. But as difficult as it is for our volunteers, we hear time and time again how incredible it is when they learn their pup has qualified as a guide dog and has been partnered with a person with sight loss."

**Guide Dogs provide all the support and training you need and covers essential costs, including food and vet bills.**

**To find out more about becoming a puppy raiser, visit [www.guidedogs.org.uk/puppyraiser](http://www.guidedogs.org.uk/puppyraiser) or call 0800 781 1444. With your support, we can help train more life-changing guide dogs for people in the UK living with sight loss.**





## LINLITHGOW REED BAND MARCHES ON – IN ITS 70TH YEAR

Linlithgow Reed Band is celebrating its seventieth anniversary and the musicians are about to embark on their busiest time of the year.

Eleven playing engagements will be undertaken during the month of June, including the Linlithgow Marches and Gala Day, and the Bo'ness Fair.

The packed programme gets underway on Saturday June 6th with a visit to the Mid Calder Gala Day. Later that day, the band will lead the procession at the first Deacons' Night and then welcome all the newly-installed Deacons, who will come to fraternise at a social evening in the Bowling Club. This has become a major event on the calendar and is the perfect curtain-raiser for the Marches celebrations, which are always the highlight of the band's year.

The Royal Burgh of Linlithgow Reed Band first appeared on the streets at a Deacons' Night on Saturday May 26th 1956, although moves to establish a new band in Linlithgow had got underway at a public meeting in October 1953. This was a direct result of the long-established Kinneil Military Band in Bo'ness deciding to move to having a brass-only configuration, thereby leaving the woodwind players, such as saxophonists and clarinetists, without a musical home. A committee was formed and they

quickly embarked upon the massive task of raising the funds which would be required to purchase instruments, music and uniforms. This would take several years and it wasn't until May 1956 that the band was able to undertake its first concert performance. The Empire Picture House – formerly the Victoria Hall – was the venue and a varied programme concluded with a rousing rendition of Linlithgow's Marches Day anthem "The Roke". This iconic piece of music would also be heard three weeks later, when the band marched along the High Street for the first time, accompanying Deacons and their supporters from the Regent Works at the Low Port and the British Road Services depot at Stockbridge on the Falkirk Road.

The Riding of the Marches has always been hugely important to the Reed Band and as Linlithgow's official Burgh Band, the musicians in their distinctive red tunics take up an honoured position at the head of the procession.



Marches Day dawns early for everyone connected with the band and they assemble at the West Port at around 6.45am. Before marching off at 7am, the 23rd psalm is played, in honour of band members who are no longer with us. This simple ceremony, one of the most

poignant moments of the whole Marches Day, was first established in 1966, when 'Abide with me' was played as a mark of respect for a young bandsman, Reggie Gray, who had died earlier that year, and to remember the great Marches stalwart, Jocky Muir, who passed away at the end of 1965. Nowadays, many people gather at the West Port and take the opportunity to remember family members who are no longer with them on Linlithgow's biggest day of the year.

The band heads off along the High Street to the stirring strains of the great Scottish march, 'The Moray Firth' and its ultimate destination is the house of the Provost of the Deacons' Court. A bus will take the party from the east end of the High Street to Listloaning Road in Linlithgow Bridge, where Derek Green and his family will give them a warm welcome. The early-morning parade will continue, calling in at the Bennie family on Preston Road and then heading for breakfast at the Rose Club. This year after the bacon and eggs, each musician will receive a commemorative seventieth anniversary medal.

Suitably refreshed, the next stop is the Cross, where a programme of music is discoursed before the band leads the Civic Party up to the palace for the Fraternisation. At 11am, the musicians strike up 'The Roke' and the Marches procession heads off for the western boundary at the Brig. After leading the ceremonies at

Blackness, the band heads off for a well-earned lunch before returning to the Cross for the 5pm finale.



Murdoch Kennedy



## LINLITHGOW ATHLETIC CLUB...

### Spring Marathon Season: Linlithgow Athletic Club Shines

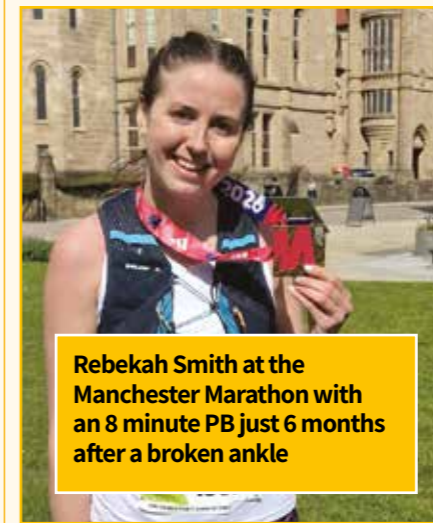
Spring marathon season brought outstanding performances from Linlithgow Athletic Club members across four of Europe's biggest road races, with personal bests, standout placings, and stories that go far beyond the finish line.

#### PARIS MARATHON

Five club members took on the iconic streets of Paris. Adeline Armstrong led the way with a personal best (PB) of 3:33:37, followed by Laura Ross with a huge 35 minute PB of 4:26:31 and Peter Wong in a PB of 4:33:06. David Main Reade finished in 3:58:17 and Graham Chambers in 4:50:47.

#### MANCHESTER MARATHON

Clair Howison ran a 4 minute PB with a well-earned 3:15:27, with Kenny Gray finishing just ahead in 3:14:38. David McQuilken had a strong day, finishing in a PB of 2:55:38. Jose Leon recorded 3:19:02 and Andrew Johnston finished in 3:27:42. Rebekah Smith crossed in 3:39:50, an 8 minute PB made all the more impressive after breaking her ankle in October. Harry Esson finished in 3:56:24 and Lana O'Hara in 4:31:29.



Rebekah Smith at the Manchester Marathon with an 8 minute PB just 6 months after a broken ankle

#### LONDON MARATHON

Sam O'Neill led the London charge with a PB of 2:22:28, finishing 36th in the mass start. Grant Hunter followed with a 3 minute PB of 2:45:42 in only his second marathon, with John Redding not far behind in 2:59:02. Among the women, Lynsey Hay ran a PB of 3:16:31, with Matt De Villiers recording a PB of 3:34:14, Kathryn Holm 3:34:43, Roisin Murray 3:39:10, Ali Malone 3:54:36, and Mark Geraghty 4:00:58.

One of the most meaningful performances of the day came from Fiona Gallie, who completed her first ever marathon in

5:34:39, having never even run a half marathon before and after recovering from a stress fracture last summer. Fiona took on London to raise £6,000 for Marie Curie in memory of her mum Ann, and the club is incredibly proud of everything she achieved on the day.

#### LEEDS MARATHON

Three weeks after Manchester, Rebekah Smith returned to the start line for the Rob Burrow Leeds Marathon, completing the 26.2 miles in 3:51:03. Running two marathons in three weeks is no small feat!

#### A CLUB FOR EVERY RUNNER

From elite-level marathon performances to deeply personal fundraising journeys, this spring has captured everything that makes Linlithgow Athletic Club special. The club caters for all types of runner, whether you are just starting out with Couch to 5k or chasing a marathon PB.

Good luck to everyone lining up for the Edinburgh Marathon later this month.

And if you have an autumn marathon on the horizon, why not join the club for company and camaraderie along the way?

Come along to a session and see what we are about at [linlithgowathletics.org](http://linlithgowathletics.org).

#### NEW WEBSITE NOW LIVE

We're delighted to launch our new website [www.linlithgowathletics.org](http://www.linlithgowathletics.org)



Sam O'Neil crossing Tower Bridge on his way to finishing 36th



Fiona Gallie raised £6000 pounds in her first marathon

**ALLOTMENT IN JUNE**  
LINLITHGOW AND DISTRICT ALLOTMENT SOCIETY



- > **Feed potatoes** with high potash fertiliser from the end of the month until the middle of August. Organic tomato fertiliser is good for this.
- > **Plant out winter cauliflower and kale.**
- > **Feed all summer cauliflowers** weekly to get good-sized curds.
- > **Continue sowing radish, spring onions and lettuces.**
- > **Blackcurrants** benefit from a liquid feed of a fertiliser high in potash as fruits begin to swell; an organic tomato fertiliser would be ideal.

For those who have an established vegetable garden and want information about what to do each month we have a post on our website that gives growing information, month by month. This is on the left hand side of the home page

Our website address for LADAS is [linlithgowallotments.wordpress.com](http://linlithgowallotments.wordpress.com)

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**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** We are happy to announce that the **waiting list is now open again.** Please contact us using the CONTACT US page on our website.

**Val Corry Chair LADAS**



**Watering:**

What has truly stood out this spring is just how dry it has been. In many regions, we've experienced very little significant rain for weeks, and watering has already turned into a regular task on the plot. This is not something we typically anticipate after a British spring!

Besides seedlings and newly planted crops, try to avoid the temptation of giving the plot a light sprinkle every evening. A quick surface watering promotes shallow roots, making plants more susceptible during hot or dry periods. It's much better to water deeply when necessary, allowing moisture to penetrate further into the soil and fostering strong, resilient root systems.

**The main tasks in June:**

- > **Plant out courgettes, pumpkins, squashes and outdoor cucumbers** into planting pockets filled with well-rotted manure or compost mixed with soil. Keep an eye on the weather. We can still get some frost as late as June. They benefit from protection with fleece or cloches at this time of year as it can be cold and/or windy. It is a good idea to sink a plastic pot in the soil a short distance from these crops and water into it rather than directly onto the plant.
- > **Plant out dwarf french beans and runner beans** sown indoors.



- > **Plant out sweetcorn in blocks** at least four plants wide after hardening off.
- > **Keep sowing carrots**, but very thinly, and make sure the bed is covered with fleece or carrot root fly mesh.
- > **Transplant leeks sown outside** to their final positions when they are ideally about as thick as a pencil and about 15 cm high.

**Class of 51 Reunion Party**

Did you start school at Linlithgow Public, Bridgend Primary or Blackness Primary School in 1951 or Linlithgow Academy in 1958? If you did, there is a reunion afternoon tea party coming up for all you 80 year olds in the Burgh Halls on **Friday 14 August 2026 at 2.00pm.**

So, if you are one of the wee smiling faces in any of the photographs (or if you are the spouse/partner of one) or perhaps know someone who joined the class after the photos were taken, **please get in touch with Christine Anderson (Clancy) at Purely Patchwork, email [c.anderson3578@gmail.com](mailto:c.anderson3578@gmail.com) or Catherine Murray (Laurie), email [cathgmurray@gmail.com](mailto:cathgmurray@gmail.com) to book your place.**

We've had a few get-togethers over the years so have contact details for quite a few, but not all, of our classmates so if you know one of our classmates, particularly anyone no longer living in the town, please try to contact them to tell them of our get-together and persuade them to come along - **we don't want anyone to miss out on our birthday cake!**

**Linlithgow Public School, Primary 1 (1951-1952)**

- Known Names left - right **Top Row:** James Cunningham, Joe Bell, George Bannerman, John Steel, George Donald, Andy Walker, Wilson Erskine, Duncan Ainslie, Brian Robertson, David Wilson  
**2nd Row:** Anne Grant (Grant), Jennifer Kilbride (Cockburn), Helen Barrett (McCabe), Phyllis Birch (Sheills), Margaret Milligan (Anderson), Margot Patten (Sutherland), Mary Loudon (Wilson), Rosemary Hudson (Anderson), Margaret Dickson (McAlpine), Carole Una Plowman (Gent), Marilyn Landels (King), Christine Anderson (Clancy).  
**3rd Row:** Marie McLeish (Lockhart), Vina Cunningham (Ritchie), Marion Pryde (Nelson), Wilda Russell (King), Janice Alexander, Jane Lindsay (Philip), Mary McPherson (Bishop), Hilary Hill (Rodger), Christine Henderson (Old), Betty Galloway (Wood), Irene Craig (Wilson), Carol-Anne Emslie (Grant).  
**Front Row:** Glen Neilson, David Wallace, Hugh Campbell, Mackie Newbigging, Roy Snedden, William Johnston, Alex Cook, Struan Robertson, Peter Sutherland.

**Linlithgow Public School, Primary 1 (1951-1952)**

- Known Names left - right **Top Row:** James Ford, George Veitch, Alex Blackwood, Roy McAlpine, Robert Waddell, Garry McFarlane, George Gray, Charles Glen, Reggie Gray, Donald Price, James Morton, Sandy Grant, Eric Ure.  
**2nd Row:** Elizabeth Clarkson (Lowrie), Isabel Snedden (Murdoch), Anne Smallbone (Hunter), Naomi Williams, Jean Chambers (Hislop), Elizabeth Fraser (Key), Anne Fairley (Martin), Christine Hamilton (Millar), June Buchan (Steedman), Myrtle Deans (Eadie), Margaret Clark (Clark), Allan Watson.  
**3rd Row:** David Jaffa, Brian McAndrew, Carol Ann Mulholland (Stewart), Eileen Murray, Patricia Bryce (Tuplin), Mary Muszynski (Grant), Pamela Humphries (Chavass), Joan Scott (Kilbride), Shirley McLuckie (Bamberry), Janette Oliver, Morna Smart (Auchincloss), Joyce Pirie (Panton), Alexandra Kerr (Kerr), George Clark, Allan Dougall.  
**Front Row:** John McBurnie, Jan Komorowski, Ewan Cutler, Peter McLean, Robert Mathieson, Tom Kerr, Kenneth Cunningham, Charles Colton, Jim Sneddon, Paul Cairns, Addison Dodds, Joseph McCrystal.

**Bridgend School, Primary 1 & 2 (1951-1952)**

- Known Names left - right **Top Row:** Lawson Mungall, James McCabe, Albert Golding Richard Grant, Frank Garland (Thomson), Jim Kerr, Alastair Black.  
**2nd Row:** Alan Muir, Myra Hamilton, Jean Robertson, Elizabeth Currie, Sheila Headridge, June Black, Helen Grindlay Nancy Bell, Morris Finnigan.  
**3rd Row:** Unknown, Fay Smith, Brenda Robertson, Ann Neilson Doris McCulloch, Linda Mapp, Sandra Ross, Wilma Stirton, Jean Grant, Alison Smith.  
**Bottom Row:** Ron Henderson, Stuart McMillan, George Christie, Scott Russell, Scott Davidson, Brian Muldoon, John Callaghan.

**80th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION - TEA PARTY**

**FRI 14 AUG**



**“we don't want anyone to miss out on our birthday cake!”**



At Highland Hotel, Strathpeffer

## Ramblers

**Linlithgow Ramblers are all set to celebrate 40 years of rambling and hill walking at the end of this month. The celebrations will take the form of a relatively modest climb to the top of Cockleroi on Saturday May 30 followed by a celebration lunch at the Queen Margaret Hall (bring your own picnic).**

**SAT  
30  
MAY**

The hope is that a good number of those who were in at the birth of The Ramblers in 1986 will still be able to make it to the summit. One who has definitely set his sights on being there is Duncan Meek, of Linlithgow, who was present at a public meeting held in the Burgh Halls on May 28, 1986.

*"There were about 20 people there," he recalls. It was quickly established that there was sufficient interest to warrant setting up a group - and off we went."*

One of the prime movers behind the inaugural meeting was **John Davidson** who had already been organising local walks for the then Linlithgow Civic Trust. John went on to lead many walks all over Scotland for the ramblers and was also the author of a series of booklets of local walks around Linlithgow.

**Other founder members included Margaret Morrison (who ran a shoe shop in Linlithgow), Ian Ure, and Norrie Melrose.** An early recruit was **Mary Salmond** (mother of Alex) who went on to lead many walks. Mary had

a Girl Guides background and liked to keep firm control of any group in her charge. *"Anyone who goes ahead of the leader will be deemed to have left the walk"* was her credo. She refused to pursue anyone who had gone ahead and taken a wrong turning - but she also turned a blind eye to those who set off to round up the rebel ramblers.

Mary was also known for attention to detail when it came to preparing for a walk. Her recce involved not just the planned route but also the availability of a good venue at the end for coffee and scones.

### Summit of Kings Seat Hill in the Ochils



I was once deputed by Mary to inform the restaurant at the House of Bruar, near Pitlochry that we had a party of 10 ramblers going up to see the Falls of Bruar and would, on our return, be requiring coffee and scones. When I got to the restaurant door I could see several tour buses disgorging their passengers. The restaurant staff were run off their feet. Our party of 10 was rather insignificant, I thought. I took cold feet but I assured Mary I had delivered her message. Luckily when we got back there were still plenty of scones left.

John Davidson was another leader who had an issue with coffee - but from a different angle. John saw little need for coffee breaks on a walk. One short lunch



### Summit of Meall nan Uan in Strathconon

break was his preference. On many a walk he was faced with a rebellion and forced to concede a mid-morning break for the coffee flasks to be opened and the biscuits unwrapped. John was a fast walker and was always slightly bemused that his group of ramblers took a good bit longer to complete the course than he had on the recce.

From its earliest days the Linlithgow Ramblers group proved popular with walkers from neighbouring communities. **Maurice Watson and his partner Lena** were early joiners from the Falkirk area. Folk from Edinburgh and South Queensferry were also attracted by the variety of the programme and the quality of the walks on offer.

**Linlithgow Ramblers are affiliated to Ramblers Scotland as part of the Lothian and Borders area.** Their programme caters for all levels of ability ranging from A walks, which are the most demanding

in terms of distance or terrain to C walks which by comparison can be a pleasant afternoon stroll. The programme of weekends away started at a spartan level with accommodation in hostels or B&Bs. In time there was a push to move to hotel accommodation. That started off with 'bus-tour hotels' but has gradually moved slightly upmarket. The most recent spring weekend was based at Strathpeffer and next year's spring outing will be based at the Craiglynne Hotel at Granton on Spey. Pitlochry is this year's autumn choice, and the October 2027 venue will be at Skipton in Yorkshire.

**The programme has also tackled some of Scotland's long-distance walks over a series of week-ends, the most recent being the Southern Upland Way, led by Sheila Austin.**

**Full details of the current programme can be found on the Linlithgow Ramblers website <https://linlithgowramblers.org.uk/site/>**



**ALAN STEEL**  
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# BURGH BEAUTIFUL

## IT'S TIME TO GET YOUR GARDEN GLOWING!



It's time to get your garden glowing! Burgh Beautiful is back with two fantastic summer events designed to bring our community together and keep Linlithgow looking its absolute best.

Whether you're a seasoned green-thumb or a complete beginner, here is how you can get involved:

### The Grand Annual Plant Sale

*Transform your garden with top-tier blooms at bargain prices!*

We're bringing you a massive selection of high-quality plants, ranging from unique specimens donated by our talented local volunteers to professional stock from the renowned Pentland Plants. It's the perfect opportunity to breathe new life into your flower beds while supporting local horticulture.

**WHEN:** Saturday, 6th June

**TIME:** 10:00 – 12:30

**WHERE:** The Cross, Linlithgow

**WHAT:** Incredible quality, competitive prices, and expert advice.

### Inviting Gardens: A Summer Weekend

*Your exclusive "all-access pass" to Linlithgow's hidden gems.*

Ever wondered what lies behind those garden walls? This is your chance to explore a curated selection of the town's most beautiful private gardens. This year's trail features a delightful mix of returning "fan favourites" and brand-new, never-before-seen gardens that are sure to inspire.

**WHEN:**

Saturday 27th & Sunday 28th June

**TIME:** 14:00 – 17:00

**ADMISSION:** Just £5 per programme (covers both days!)

**HOW TO JOIN:** Pick up your official programme at Far from the Madding Crowd starting mid-May..

### Why Support Us?

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## Linlithgow & District Community Day Care Centre

Linlithgow & District Community Day Care Centre located in the Partnership Centre in the middle of Linlithgow High Street provides day care support for up to sixteen frail older people with varying degrees of dementia, each day (Monday - Thursday) from 9am - 5pm; with client pick-up and return home by our specially adapted bus. The Centre offers a comfortable and homely environment with secure respite, care, and compassion for those in need in Linlithgow

and the surrounding communities. We provide 'critical stage' care for older people between home and a care home, and with current shortages of places in care homes the Centre offers an excellent intermediate local caring service.

Our regular daily activities amongst others tailored for the individual client include games of bingo, quizzes, carpet bowls, dominoes, and reminiscence work with famous faces of the past bringing back special memories for the clients. Further, our acquisition of an interactive table similar to a giant tablet specially designed for people with dementia, provides lots of calming sensory features, which the clients love.

On the afternoon of the second Thursday of the month the clients generally attend the Sunshine Singalong for Memory at St Michael's Kirk Hall, providing 'a happy, joyful atmosphere for both those with memory loss and their carers'.

Recently our clients have been on a

number of entertaining visits including travelling over the Forth Bridge with CWAS (Cycling without Age Scotland) and on a ferryboat trip out of South Queensferry, while fish suppers have been much enjoyed from Corvi's and Benny T's.

Coming up shortly is one of our main annual fund raisers - our Prize Bingo in Bridgend Golf Club on 22nd May, to which everyone is cordially invited for the fun and games.

We're a registered charity, which depends upon raising funds to provide equipment and summer outings for the clients; and for the various donations for the many community organisations, businesses, and individuals we're eternally grateful. We plan to keep you informed of our activities through this regular column.

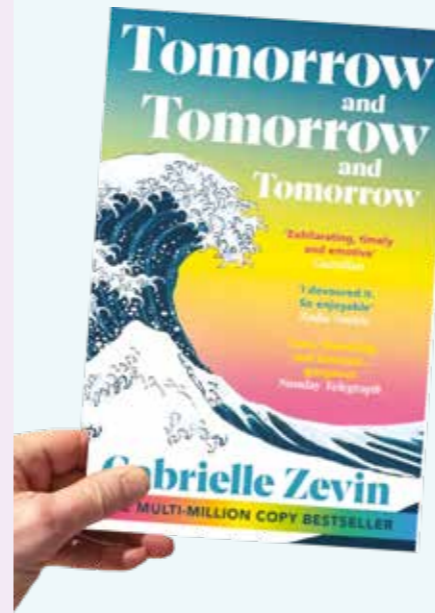
For further information on the centre and how our services could possibly help you and your family, please contact our Manager Karen Wright on 01506-847496 or email on [karen.manager@btconnect.com](mailto:karen.manager@btconnect.com).

David Keddie



## Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow

GABRIELLE ZEVIN



"But sometimes, you have to make your game in the time that you have. If you're always aiming for perfection, you won't make anything at all."

The novel is set in the 1980s and initially focuses on two main protagonists, Sam Masur and Sadie Green. It is set across several decades of their lives. Sam and

Sadie meet at a paediatric hospital when both of their lives are touched by childhood illness and accident. They bond together through a shared love of computer games, and develop a deep and mutual respect.

A misunderstanding over their communications and intentions leads to almost a decade where Sadie and Sam are not in contact. They move forward separately with their lives, achieving academic successes, and with each thinking of the other but neither prepared to concede. A chance encounter at a train station in Massachusetts leads to an opportunity for their friendship to be rekindled, with both characters slipping naturally back into the ease and platonic intimacy of their youthful friendship. An irresistible academic idea blossoms and they throw themselves into a collaborative project which allows them to further their knowledge and skills in the creation of a virtual computer world.

Their collaboration essentially brings much material success as they are provided with a platform to become successful computer game developers. This achievement is balanced precariously as the novel progresses with themes of betrayal, failure, mistrust, tragedy and isolation coming to the fore.

"Isn't that the definition of insanity? Doing the same thing over and over but expecting a different result." "That's a game character's life, too," Sam said. "The world of infinite restarts. Start again at the beginning, this time you might win. And it's not as if all our results were bad. I love the things we made. We were a great team."

This novel is a thought-provoking tale of the relationships that develop between people when they live, work and learn alongside one another. It explores the different connections that can be made within social groups, and the ways in which people can change and grow in their mindsets, viewpoints and feelings over time. Both Sadie and Sam

learn much about their own methods of communication, and relationships with others, through their interactions with each other. They are both instrumental in helping the other to evolve.

"Long relationships might be richer, but relatively brief, relatively uncomplicated encounters with interesting people could be lovely as well. Every person you knew, every person you loved even, did not have to consume you for the time to have been worthwhile."

This novel is narrated in chronological order, across multiple settings, with tantalizing and fleeting foresights for the reader which offer glimpses into the future. It is an interesting storytelling technique and one which Zevin uses to good effect. The computer games explored in the novel are based on authentic computer worlds developed in the initial stages of computer programming. Readers are provided with an interesting insight into the ways in which the early game developers honed their crafts through refining their ideas and technical processes.

Zevin has created a highly enjoyable and thought-provoking novel that evokes strains of nostalgia for any reader familiar with the early computer programming and gaming era of the 20th century.

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



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## OUR TENNIS FAMILY

At Linlithgow Tennis Club we welcome all ages and standards of players. Here's what some of our tennis family had to say about tennis and our club.

**Olga** A member since 2019, Olga got into tennis after joining a club to make friends. She met husband, Simon, on court. Son, Alex, learnt to play at the club and the two of them now have great fun playing other parent/child combos.

Olga loves social tennis and plays in regular lunchtime groups and the club's Box League. Tennis provides her adrenalin and competition fix, however she prefers playing well to winning. She's enjoyed curry and quiz nights at the club, volunteers behind the bar and helps out at junior pizza events. Olga has played with the same racket for 24 years!

**Olga says:** Give it a go! If you like it, join our tennis family! It helps keep you fit and well.

**Jack** Jack, 19, has been a member most of his life due to dad, Andy. Jack leads the men's 1st team and is a Level 2 LTA (Lawn Tennis Association) coach. He's focussed on this recently, but he's been Men's Singles Club Champion twice in his mid-teens, represented East of Scotland in national singles and doubles events, and played at Wimbledon as a junior through the Play your Way to Wimbledon event.

Jack loves both social and competitive aspects. He has friends throughout Scotland from his tennis travels and thinks the game has improved his self-belief and mental abilities. He likes the club's more recent focus on encouraging younger players. The men's 4th team was set up mainly for teenagers.

**From Jack:** We love welcoming new members. Come and try tennis and make new friends.

**Gina** Gina had lessons for years, before joining 5 years ago. She'd never played before but loved watching Wimbledon on TV. 7-year-old

grandson, Fraser, enjoys Easter and Summer Camps and coaching twice a week. Gina first showed him how to play against a wall.

Gina plays social tennis once a week. She loves being outside and trying to improve her play. She thinks it's a friendly way to exercise and likes the supportive coaches and beautiful club environment.

**Gina's words:** There's something for everyone. Start with lessons and join an appropriate group to play with.

**Gregor** Gregor, a member for 3 years, recently joined the Tennis Committee as Junior Rep. He played into his teens then, 30 years later, he and son, Lucas, now 9, attended a weekly parent/

child, pre-school tennis group, after which they joined the club.

Now Gregor plays with daughter, Ellie, 7, sometimes against other parent/child combos, and in the men's 3rd team, club Box League and Championships. Lucas has won the Under 8 and Under 9 Club Championships and receives coaching, while

Ellie has attended Summer Camp.

Gregor loves tennis as he prefers outdoor sports and is quite competitive, but he can also simply play with his family.

Gregor says: It's fantastic value for money, at £43 per year for a child's membership, for which they can play squash and bowls as well.

**Paul** Paul is legendary in Linlithgow as Low Port lollypop man! He's been a club member for only a few months, after signing up for lessons with his son-in-law and later joining. Paul needed a non-contact sport, as there is no cover for his lollypop duties. He enjoys the social tennis evenings, as there are different levels to suit everyone, he gets to be outside, and he lives 2 minutes away from the club. After walking his dog past the courts daily for years, he finally decided to use them!

**From Paul:** Everyone here is so welcoming. Just come along and try it!



**Ellis** Ellis, 8, has been a member for 2 years. He got into tennis through a friend and his 2 older brothers. They live close to the club, so saw the courts every day. Ellis has weekly coaching, plays on Sundays and participates in the club's junior "Mini" tournaments. Ellis does other sports, like swimming, street dancing and football, but tennis is his favourite.

Mum, Linda, captains the 2 Under 16 teams. She thinks the club offers great progression for juniors.

**Ellis says:** You should try tennis, it's fun!

**Richard** Richard's parents met through tennis. He, his sister and 2 sons have played all their lives and Richard's wife, Fiona, does too. He joined Linlithgow around 1990 and plays for the mixed doubles Over 55 team and in regular Monday, Tuesday and Saturday morning groups. He feels it's one of the few sports you can play all your life. Richard's advice: Contact our coach Gordon for adult coaching (07753 809122) or join social tennis.

**Linlithgow Tennis Club is part of Linlithgow Sports Club, which also offers squash/racketball and outdoor bowls.**

**Contact:**  
Rosanne Cubitt, Secretary,  
Linlithgow Tennis Club, linlithgow.sports.club.tennis@gmail.com

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Laser hair removal is one of the most effective ways to achieve smooth, stubble-free skin. By targeting the root of the hair, it delivers long-lasting results that go far beyond temporary fixes.

> **Long-term results:** After a course of around 8 sessions (depending on client and any hormonal conditions), spaced 4 - 8 weeks apart, hair growth is significantly reduced – and in many cases, permanently.

> **Improved skin quality:** It helps eliminate issues like ingrown hairs, folliculitis, and shaving rash.

> **Precision:** The laser targets dark hairs while leaving surrounding skin untouched, making it suitable even for sensitive areas.

> **Speed:** Treatments are quick – just a few minutes for smaller areas like the upper lip, or up to an hour for larger areas like legs.

> **Minimal discomfort:** Most clients describe the sensation as a quick flick of an elastic band. Thanks to advanced cooling technology the IceTip™ handpiece on my laser machine, reduces any discomfort felt.

### HOW IT WORKS

Laser hair removal works by emitting light that is absorbed by the pigment in the hair. This light converts to heat, which damages or destroys the stem cells within the hair follicle.

- > **Destroyed follicles** can no longer produce hair
- > **Damaged follicles** grow hair back slower and finer
- > Most effective on **dark hair (brown or black)**
- > Limited results on **blonde or red hair**
- > Not effective on **white or grey hair**

Because hair grows in cycles, multiple sessions are needed to target all active follicles effectively. Worldwide, on average 8 sessions are required for full removal. Some clients do not need this many whilst a few others need a few more.

### WHAT TO EXPECT BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER

Your journey starts with a consultation and patch test. It's important to arrive unshaven for your consultation so that I can assess your hair colour, skin type and treatment plan. You'll receive full guidance on the treatment, preparation and aftercare to ensure the best results.

**Before treatment:** For each treatment session, shave the area 1-2 days before (or the morning of).

**After treatment:** You may experience mild redness or slight swelling, which usually settles within hours. It's important to:

- > Avoid heat (hot baths/showers, saunas etc) for a few days
- > Keep the skin cool post-treatment
- > Use SPF for at least 4 weeks on exposed areas
- > Minimise sun exposure to reduce pigmentation risks

**When Should You Start?** Autumn and winter are ideal times to begin treatment, as reduced sun exposure lowers the risk of pigmentation changes and makes aftercare easier. However, you can start at any time of year with proper sun protection and care.

**Is It Permanent?** Laser hair removal is best described as permanent hair reduction. Once a follicle is destroyed, it won't grow back. However, some dormant follicles can activate later due to hormonal changes. An ad hoc maintenance section can easily manage this.

For those with hormonal conditions such as PCOS, results can vary, you will always need ad hoc maintenance sessions as and when which could be as little as annually but the treatment still significantly reduces and manages excess hair.

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## PARTY AT THE PALACE Award Winners

Congratulations to John Richardson, Event Director, and the Party at the Palace team who won Best Sustainable Event at the Scottish Events Awards final in Glasgow on April 30th. John said

*"We beat the likes of The Tall Ships Aberdeen. It was great to be recognised for the efforts we put in, working alongside Linlithgow based GreenFox Energy".*

As highlighted in last month's magazine, environmental responsibility has been central to Party at the Palace from the outset and improvements continue year on year.

Pictured at the Awards ceremony are Peter Ferguson, Party at the Palace (centre), John Richardson (second from right) and Eddie Curran (far right) from GreenFox Energy along with representatives of the Scottish Events Awards team.



## COMPETITION TIME YOUR GOLDEN TICKETS TO PARTY AT THE PALACE 2026

Here's a great "money can't buy" prize for those heading to Party at The Palace. John has a pair of weekend tickets to give away for the event which returns to The Peel this summer on 8th and 9th August. John added - "In addition to the weekend tickets, you will be able to meet and then watch your favourite band from on the stage itself. It's a unique prize and a great opportunity to see things up close and personal".

To win the competition, simply answer this question.

What year did the first Party at The Palace take place?

Answers should be emailed to [info@partyatthepalace.co.uk](mailto:info@partyatthepalace.co.uk) by 19 June 2026

A number of acts with a local connection will be playing at Party at the Palace 2026 and Chris Corry from Low Port Music has also recommended a few acts who will be appearing on the second stage.

**Mac Na Galla** - they sound like a clash between The Proclaimers and The Pogues. The singer of the band, Andy Jamieson, is originally from Linlithgow but now lives in Sweden. John will be flying in especially for the event.

**Bloodsugar** - a band made up of locals from the town including one of Linlithgow's best known GPs, Stewart Box.

**Emily Evans** - came to Party at the Palace in 2014 and has been every year.

**Jasmin Jet** - local girl (Grangemouth) won the Greene King National Battle of the Bands competition winning £10,000 and getting in Rolling Stone magazine.

**Charly Miller** - up and coming female artist from Edinburgh.

**Flame** - band members Kieran McKinven and James Veitch are from Linlithgow.

Charly Miller and Flame have both previously played live in Chris's High Street store.

### SOME OTHER FACTS AND FIGURES

Over 125,000 people have been to the event since it started in 2014.

Around 500 different bands and singers have performed there over that time.

The very first act to perform was called Jamie and Shoony.

Bands who have played more than once have included Deacon Blue, The Bluebells, The Farm,

Heaven 17 and The Bootleg Beatles.

The historic concrete platform with grass seats, located in the Peel near to the Rose Garden, will be used for the PATP 2026 comedy stage.

Artists usually stay at the Dakota hotel at South Queensferry or Euro Central towards Glasgow. Some acts have used over 20 rooms to include their full entourage of musicians, managers, stylists etc.

Little known fact - after the 2014 event, a representative from The Rolling Stones considered the site as a venue for their tour on the recommendation given by Simple Minds.

Similarly, Rod Stewart keeps saying he'll come along but he never does! One year maybe.

For tickets, up to date lineup details and more information about Party at the Palace 2026 :-

[www.partyatthepalace.co.uk](http://www.partyatthepalace.co.uk) / email: [info@partyatthepalace.co.uk](mailto:info@partyatthepalace.co.uk)


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## PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS: A TURNING POINT FOR THE PROPERTY INDUSTRY

**The Westminster Government's long-awaited consultation response on home-moving reform – including proposals for mandatory agent qualifications – closed at the end of last year. A formal roadmap for change is expected during 2026, and the industry is already feeling the ripple effects.**

At present, only letting agents in Scotland are legally required to hold a formal qualification. Estate agents, south of the border, are under no such obligation, and many continue to operate without any accredited training. That landscape may soon shift in England as a result of the consultation, prompting renewed scrutiny of professional standards across the UK.

Fresh data from Rightmove, the UK's largest property platform, shows a significant surge in agents voluntarily pursuing qualifications. Bookings for the Rightmove Certificate for Estate and Lettings Agents exam have risen by an

impressive 128% year on year, signalling a clear appetite for upskilling.

This trend reflects a broader shift in consumer expectations. Rightmove's research reveals that seven in ten home-movers prefer to work with a qualified agent, while more than 70% of renters and homeowners believe formal qualifications should be mandatory. In an increasingly complex market, sellers and landlords are placing greater value on demonstrable expertise.

The pattern is echoed by Propertymark, the UK's leading professional body for property agents. It has reported a sustained rise in demand for qualifications, with a 51% increase since April 2020. This long-term growth suggests a structural change in how the industry views training, professionalism, and accountability.

**Rightmove's Head of Education notes:**

*"Agents are being asked to navigate more complex consumer expectations, and qualifications give them a practical way to show*

*their expertise, build trust and differentiate their service."*

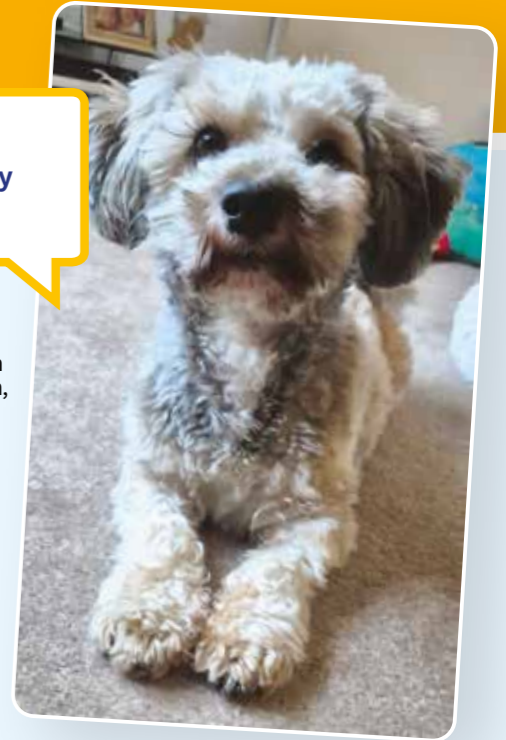
**Propertymark CEO Nathan Emerson adds:**

*"Working within the property profession is both rewarding and incredibly quick paced. It is a sector seeing vast evolution and one that represents exciting opportunities. Staying ahead of the curve through demonstrable knowledge and understanding is essential – qualities consumers highly value when navigating their property journey."*

**At Paul Rolfe, we strongly encourage anyone considering selling their home – often their most valuable asset – to instruct an estate agent who holds formal Propertymark qualifications. Consumers can easily check an agent's status by visiting the Find an Agent section on the Propertymark website.**



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Rocky is a 4 year old Havanese. Rocky's family describe him as a velcro dog who is full of fun, mischievous, very cute and loves cuddles.

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Rocky loves doing cool tricks with their kids and getting treats. His favourite tricks include spinning round, and offering everyone his paws!

He has a few cheeky habits! Chasing birds, playing hide and seek under the trampoline and stealing any snacks that the kids leave about.

His favourite toy is a soft pea from a pod, which he takes great delight in speaking loudly when the family are trying to watch the TV.

His favourite place to be is where there is sunshine. His breed is from Cuba, and true to form he will always find a sunny spot to chill and snooze, either in the garden or living room.

**Q. What are you and the family most looking forward to doing together this year?**

Lynn says: "Rocky loves the

*beach and other sniff-filled walks, so hopefully having some nice sunny days to exercise then chill."*

Last year, Rocky underwent orthopaedic surgery to repair a cruciate ligament rupture.

The cruciate ligaments are found inside the knee joint. In dogs, the cranial cruciate ligament, or CrCL, is similar to the anterior cruciate ligament, or ACL, in people.

It is a strong band of tissue that helps stabilise the knee. It runs between the femur, or thigh bone, and the tibia, or shin bone, and helps stop the tibia from sliding forwards. It also helps prevent over-extension and excessive rotation of the joint.

When this ligament is damaged, the knee can become unstable, painful and inflamed. This often causes limping, although some dogs show more subtle signs, such as stiffness, slowing down on walks, difficulty rising, or simply not seeming quite themselves.

A cruciate injury can involve a partial tear or a complete rupture of the ligament. In some dogs, the ligament weakens gradually over time, a bit like a fraying rope. In

others, the injury can appear more sudden, often after twisting, jumping, landing awkwardly or turning quickly.

Any dog can injure their cruciate ligament, at any age, although some dogs are at higher risk due to factors such as bodyweight, conformation, activity level, genetics or underlying weakness in the ligament.

Like Rocky, some dogs require surgery to stabilise the knee and allow them to return to better comfort and mobility. Diagnosis usually involves a clinical examination and radiographs, or x-rays, of the affected joint. X-rays may also be taken during surgery and are commonly repeated around 6 weeks after surgery to check healing.

Recovery from cruciate surgery needs careful management at home. Dogs usually need strict rest and controlled activity for the first 6-8 weeks. This often includes crate or cage rest when unsupervised, lead-only toilet breaks and avoiding running, jumping, stairs, furniture and rough play.

Once the 6-week post-operative x-rays have been assessed, and if healing is progressing well, the vet will advise when exercise can start to increase. Exercise is reintroduced slowly and gradually to help strengthen the leg while protecting the healing bone and joint. After a successful recovery, many dogs are able to return to their normal exercise and fitness routines.

**Q. How has Rocky been doing since his cruciate surgery?**

Rocky's owner, Lynn, says:

*"Rocky took a while to recover from his surgery, with some TLC and time as a 'conehead!'"*

Rocky's owner did the right thing by bringing him in for a check-up when she first noticed he was not quite himself. Rocky's family have done a fantastic job with his post-operative care and recovery at home.

If cruciate injuries are left untreated, they can lead to ongoing pain, reduced mobility and progressive arthritis in the knee joint. Partial tears can also progress over time, meaning the instability in the knee may continue if not managed. Dogs may also put extra strain on the opposite leg while compensating, which can sometimes contribute to further problems. Early identification and appropriate treatment give dogs the best chance of a comfortable, active recovery.

**Q. Do you have any advice for owners whose dog needs cruciate surgery?**

Lynn says: *"Other than having pet insurance, have lots of patience, look towards the positives and put up with restricting their fun for longer term gain."*

Team Westport is here for your pets 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. In an emergency, or if you have any concerns about your pet, phone 01506 844165. For enquiries, email [surgery@westportvets.com](mailto:surgery@westportvets.com).

## Willow Tree Live Entertainment



Friday 8pm-late

Acoustic Bruce Jamming Session  
29th May & 26th June

Saturday 9pm-late

Gerry's Karaoke - 30th May

Euan Russell - 6th June

David Mairs - 13th June

Kris Blak - 20th June

Gerry's Karaoke - 27th June

Banksy - 4th July

Sunday 5-8pm

Will Treeby - 31st May

Under Cover - 14th June



Function Suite

Offering an ideal setting for 40 seated guests  
We offer a private bar complete with a wide  
range of Wines, Spirits, Beers & Cocktails

Sky TNT Viaplay

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The Best Place to Live In Scotland

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