

LINLITHGOW BOWLING CLUB

160 YEARS OLD AND BOWLING ON. P10



NOBEL MUNITIONS FACTORY -

EXPLOSIVE PRODUCTS, EXPLOSIVE DESIGN. P4



LADIES HOCKEY, DID THE GOALIE SAVE IT? P26

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Gill Scott first came to Linlithgow at the beginning of 2002. She had met her husband-to-be, Finlay, while both were working with the Bank of Scotland in Ueberior House in Edinburgh's Grassmarket. Finlay had a house in Priory Road and Gill moved in with him. They were married in August 2002 in the Undercoft at the Palace. Gill reckons they were one of the first couples to have their wedding in that magnificent setting. She told me:

"Not a lot of people had used the venue at that time, although I know that my hairdresser, Aileen Forbes, was married there the year before. We had the service and then we walked down the cobbled street and had our meal at the Marynka restaurant".

Just over a year later, Gill and Finlay were blessed with a baby daughter, **Kara**, and her arrival gave Gill a great opportunity to meet people in the town:

"I just loved Linlithgow, because I met so many people as I walked around with my pram and they always said hello. I got to know a group of young mums through the wife of somebody I had worked with and we all used to meet up every week in Bar Leo. We would have a meal and the staff left

us to it, as we sat through the back and breast-fed. It was just lovely and such a tonic. At that stage of my life, with all my family living in Montrose and Dundee, it was so nice to have the support of like-minded people who were going through the same experience - professional women who found themselves with a wee bundle to look after".

When her daughter started at Low Port primary school, Gill volunteered to help as much as she could and she later coached Kara's football team at the Linlithgow Rose Community Club for five years. She even gained a first-level coaching badge.

At school, Gill dreamed of becoming a PE teacher, but instead of following her older sister to Jordanhill College, she left school after S5 and joined the Bank of Scotland, where she enjoyed a very successful career. However, she laughed that she has what she describes as "total career envy" when she sees friends who did become PE teachers.

Gill's great passion for sport has not gone to waste, however, and in the twenty-four years she has lived in Linlithgow, she has made a huge contribution to the sporting life of the town.

Gill's first love was hockey, but she is well-known locally as a very accomplished

golfer. A former ladies champion at Linlithgow Golf Club, she was the first ladies champion at Kingsfield. She is currently the captain of the whole club at West Lothian Golf Club and this role keeps her very busy. When she is not at the club, in a playing or administrative capacity, she has other activities, such as volunteering with the local Jog Scotland group.

"I did my Couch to 5K in 2021 with Alex Wood of Linlithgow Athletics Club and then the training to become a leader. I now take a Monday night group in Linlithgow. Through this, I've met a lot of lovely local people. I've run in the local 10K, and now I steward at it and the Santa Dash at the Advent Fayre"

As if all these activities were not enough, Gill takes part in the Linda Currie Pilates classes twice a week and also attends a gym in Bo'ness on three mornings. You really have to marvel at where she finds all the energy!

Gill Scott has shown herself to be a huge asset to Linlithgow in her comparatively short time in the town and long may this continue!

Murdoch Kennedy



Photography: Martine Stead

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BUSINESSES: PAST AND PRESENT

To continue our series of articles about change on the High Street, One Linlithgow have continued with the local research that will likely be common knowledge to many local people. However, for those that are unaware of the vibrant history of Linlithgow, we would like to highlight a few more historical snippets with global connections.

THE REGENT CENTRE

In Linlithgow, there is a stone monument in the planter bed outside the entrance to Tesco that says "Nobel's Explosives Company Limited Regent Factory" that is in a poor state of repair.



To digress slightly, do you know the story about a Swedish Chemist, an Italian style factory, two World Wars, dynamite, Paris, the Nobel peace prize and Venezuela?

The connection between Linlithgow and the Nobel Peace Prize traces back to Alfred Nobel, a Swedish chemist, the inventor of dynamite and the founder of the Nobel Prizes. The money generated by his factories directly funded the massive trust fund left behind in his will, which still finances the modern Nobel Peace Prize. The 2025 prize was awarded to Maria Corina Machado, a Venezuelan politician, for her work promoting democratic rights for the people of Venezuela and her struggle to achieve a just and peaceful transition from dictatorship to democracy.

Nobel lived and worked in Paris for years, but in 1891, he was accused of high treason by the French government for selling his 'smokeless' gunpowder invention to the Italian military. Facing intense French political hostility, he sought refuge in Italy, where he renovated his 'Mio Nido' (My Nest). In his man cave he was able to continue chemical and weapons experiments away from government oversight.

In September 1902, Nobel's explosives company opened 'The Regent Factory' in the heart of Linlithgow, initially manufacturing safety fuses but changed to producing munitions and explosives during the World Wars. The factory was built in red brick with a multi-arched Italian piazza style façade, a two-storey building and chimney, probably influenced by Nobel's time in Italy. This was demolished in 1982 and re-developed as The Regent Centre.



Linlithgow's Munitionettes are also remembered as the unsung heroes of the World Wars, the local women who worked at the factory producing over 11 million incendiary bombs and other munitions. Operating in

hazardous conditions, these women handled dangerous and toxic chemicals like TNT, facing constant risks of explosions and long-term health. On February 5, 1943, a fatal explosion at the factory claimed the lives of four munitionettes, whose names are recorded on the Scottish National War Memorial Roll of Honour at Edinburgh Castle.

We're certain that the Linlithgow Munitionettes would be proud that the profits from their labour are helping the people of Venezuela to live in a free and democratic country through the Nobel Peace Prize. The next time you're enjoying a coffee in any of the food and drink outlets at the Regent Centre, spare a thought for all the women who worked on that same ground to help the war efforts back in the day. Also think about the rich history hidden in plain sight and stories to tell your children.

TIME AND TIDE WAIT FOR NO ONE

As time has marched on over a century, it's curious to think how the changes still resonate to some degree with the past. The tenuous link with Nobel's 'smokeless' explosive Ballistite invention and modern day vapes deserves a mention as there is a retail outlet offering this very service at the Regent Centre.

We're sure Nobel would have been fascinated by the technological advances in modern-day opticians and even more about the hearing services now offered by Specsavers, given the explosive nature of his manufacturing business.

It's also hard to argue that the Munitionettes wouldn't have loved a Greggs takeaway after a hard shift in the factory or even a pizza from Nero Pizza - the Italian connection.

Even the presence of a Debra charity shop fits, given the philanthropic aspects of his legacy.

The Regent factory has largely been replaced by the current Tesco supermarket, who are also very supportive of the efforts and projects by One Linlithgow. The local information rack is an invaluable resource to disseminate local printed information throughout the year and for our seasonal trails.



SPECSAVERS



Specsavers offers optician services for eyesight testing and sells glasses, sunglasses, and contact lenses.

Specsavers Linlithgow Hearing Centre offers hearing tests & hearing aid fittings. You can buy high-quality hearing aids in store.

HENDRY OPTICIANS



Hendry Opticians has been part of Linlithgow since 1978. While plenty has changed over those years – including a complete refurbishment of their practice in 2024 – the same approach is for every patient to receive excellent eye care, friendly advice and the time and attention they deserve.



The Star & Garter next to the Regent Centre was transformed into a coaching inn and hotel in the 1840s. The chances are that Alfred Nobel stayed here during the construction of the factory.

TURN PRE-LOVED GEMS INTO LIFE-CHANGING RESEARCH

The charity supports sufferers of Epidermolysis bullosa (EB), also known as butterfly skin. A painful genetic skin blistering condition that causes the skin to become very fragile and tear or blister at the slightest touch.



WHITE DOVE COFFEE ROASTERS

Opened in 2021, it is a highly rated, family-run artisan micro-roastery, cafe, and art space. They operate two distinct sites in the town: their main, spacious hub at the Regent Centre and a cosy, quiet branch on the High Street.



GREGGS

Greggs offer take away, Click and Collect and sit-in options. Known for classic sausage rolls and steak bakes, but their great quality menu offers a whole lot more. Freshly-ground Fairtrade coffee, salad, a tasty pizza slice, a sandwich freshly prepared in store or a sweet treat are available. Open every day from 6am (6.30am Sat. 7am Sun).



NERO PIZZA

Italian Pizzeria Restaurant & Takeaway. Pizzas, Pastas, Burgers and other delicious freshly prepared dishes and have them delivered to your door or ready for collection.



COMPLETE HEALTH AT THE MILLSTONE LTD



159 High St, Linlithgow

Paul and Sandra, the current owners of Complete Health in Linlithgow, have made the very difficult decision to retire and move closer to their extended family. Sandra has written a beautiful poem to say thank you to all their customers, fellow business owners and generally everyone from Linlithgow.

They are amazing people, with a genuine smile for everyone who has walked into their shop over the last 7 years since they took over. Their infectious positivity and welcoming nature will be sorely missed by everyone who has got to know them.

They have been very keen supporters of One Linlithgow over the years, and keenly took part in all our activities, as well as an official drop off point for our monthly Loyalty draw. We would like to thank them for this on behalf of all businesses in Linlithgow.

Complete Health is currently available as a going concern for equally positive and enthusiastic people to continue running this long-established and profitable business. There is an incredibly loyal customer base who would no doubt support any new owners would like to take up the reigns.



A poem from Sandra about leaving Complete Health.

*Leaving is the hardest thing to do
Complete Health was nothing without you
You held our hands and guided us the right way
You came to shop and see us, day after day*

*The chats about cooking, the recipe swaps
The dancing, the singing, the cuddles are tops
The laughs, the jokes, the stories we shared
The love you've shown us, you really have cared*

*You've supported us through thick and thin
How do we thank you, where do we begin
We will miss each and every one of you
Complete Health, we are a team that's true.*

PLANNING FORUM UPDATE SEPTEMBER 2026

Over the past month, the Planning Forum has been examining West Lothian Council's progress on the forthcoming Local Development Plan. Separately, at its August meeting, the Community Council agreed a policy on applications for a change of use of residential properties into short-term holiday lets. This article explains what both developments mean for Linlithgow.

Local Development Plan Evidence Report resubmitted: what it means for Linlithgow

As reported previously in this magazine, West Lothian Council is preparing a new Local Development Plan, known as LDP2, for 2028–38. This will guide where development happens and what services and infrastructure will be needed. Before the plan can be drafted, the Council must show that its evidence on housing, transport, healthcare and local services is sound. Its first Evidence Report was submitted in July 2025 but returned in November after the government-appointed Reporter found inadequacies in the data submitted. The revised report was submitted on 15 July 2026, and a response is expected by 14 October. If it passes this second check, council planners will present a draft plan in November to a full West Lothian Council meeting. Council approval of the draft plan triggers a 12-week public consultation.

"several issues matter directly to Linlithgow: traffic... air quality... heritage... GP"

The Planning Forum compared the revised Evidence Report with the concerns raised by the Reporters and sent its comments to the Council. Several issues matter directly to Linlithgow: traffic and air quality, public transport, pressure on GP services, access to everyday facilities, protection of the town's heritage and possible heat networks - all as set out in detail in the Linlithgow community's Local Place Plan. The revised Evidence Report gives more attention to public transport, walking and cycling, and reducing reliance on cars. It also rates

GP capacity in Linlithgow as "amber", meaning there is some pressure, and proposes a new way of identifying gaps in local services.

Although an improvement on the first submission, one significant concern remains. Apart from planned work at M9 Burghmuir Junction, the report says no wider changes to trunk roads are currently needed. However, new housing intended to help reverse Linlithgow's population decline could still require substantial improvements to local roads. A Reporter considering planning appeal PPA-400-2093 said this should be dealt with through the Local Development Plan, rather than through separate planning applications. This matters because, as the Reporter states, the combined effect of several developments permitted by the Local Development Plan may be greater than the effect of any one site taken as an individual planning application.

The report mostly looks at infrastructure across West Lothian as a whole. That is useful, but it can hide important differences between communities. The final Local Development Plan should therefore combine an area-wide strategy with a clear account of what each community needs. For Linlithgow, that means recognising local pressures, explaining how future growth will affect services and roads, and setting out the improvements required. The Planning Forum is preparing a detailed analysis so that residents can see what improvements Linlithgow needs and have a clearer basis for responding when the draft plan goes out for consultation.

The government Reporter's response on 14 October will therefore be an important milestone. If West Lothian Council is allowed to proceed with a draft Local Development Plan, the Planning Forum will prepare for a consultation event, which we expect to hold in mid-

January 2027. We anticipate providing a further update in the November Black Bitch.

Short-term lets and Linlithgow's housing stock

On a different subject, short-term lets have become a recurring issue for Linlithgow's Planning Forum. The Community Council is regularly consulted on applications to West Lothian Council to turn homes into holiday accommodation. Under new legislation, a short-term-let licence

application cannot proceed until West Lothian Council has received proof of planning permission, a certificate of lawfulness or written confirmation that planning permission is not required. The July 2026 register lists applications for 69 short-term-let properties in Linlithgow: 40 have been registered and licensed, 22 applications have been refused, and 7 are still under consideration.

Planning decisions are being made against the backdrop of the housing emergency declared by West Lothian Council in May 2024, which reflects a shortage of affordable homes and high levels of homelessness. Decision-makers must therefore weigh the loss of a permanent home against any tourism or economic benefit. National Planning Framework 4 policies on tourism and good placemaking, together with West Lothian's local policies on tourism and design, support proposals only where they fit their surroundings and do not harm residential amenity. Relevant considerations include noise, disturbance, frequent guest turnover and neighbours' quiet enjoyment.

"welcome more visitors... risk losing homes... undermining quality of life"

The key question is balance: can Linlithgow welcome more visitors without losing homes or undermining the quality of life in residential neighbourhoods? Each application will be judged on its own circumstances, but in a housing emergency the case for retaining permanent homes carries significant weight.

The Planning Forum is not opposed to every short-term let. It has said, as a general rule, that it will support proposals that add purpose-built visitor accommodation, bring a previously uninhabitable property back into use, or safeguard an at-risk historic building while preserving its architectural character. However, in the current situation of a lack of family housing, particularly affordable housing, and a lack of accommodation for the elderly wishing to downsize, any further loss of residential property will be opposed.

John Kelly Linlithgow Planning Forum

LOW PORT CENTRE TRANSFER IS NOW COMPLETE.

This month, the Community Asset Transfer of the Low Port Centre was finally completed, and the building is now fully in community ownership.

Once known as the Low Port Outdoor Education Centre, a place filled with countless memories of school trips and adventures for many, it shut down in 2021 and became a ghost-like building. However, a vibrant new takeover was on the cards. St John's Church had a vision for a space where church and community could come together, a place where people could be themselves and meet like-minded others.

The Low Port Centre has since transformed into something truly magical. The former Outdoor Centre now stands as a lively community hub, home to a collective of charities and businesses, with over thirty partners and groups regularly using the centre and around one thousand people entering the building in a typical week.

This was a building that might otherwise have become derelict, or been turned into another block of flats. With support from church members, the wider community, and the determination of the team, the space is now the heart of the community.

Heather Begarnie, a driving force behind the transformation project and chair of trustees for the new Low Port Centre charity, proudly shared:

"It is such a rewarding feeling to know that we have breathed new life into the Low Port Centre. I was a primary school teacher, not a project manager, but I have always had a desire to help people. In many ways, that work made me realise some of the needs in our community, and you start to see there are many. To have the privilege of being involved in something that brings that nurture to a wider group is just huge."

Heather explained that the team quickly realised the building was too big for just the church. This turned out to be one of the most important insights in the process, as the building now stands as an impressive community centre, home to organisations serving all age groups.



"Joining our church in the building," she said, "we have a wellbeing charity - The New Well - alongside drama, music, art and exercise groups, the Reed Band, the Alcoholics Anonymous group and the sailing club. Stuart, a personal trainer, transformed one of our rooms into what is now a gym. Katie upcycles furniture in her workshop, has a beautiful shop and runs regular markets. We have Sara and her group of scientists doing groundbreaking research into peptides. The Thread Counter is also in Low Port, and Nici runs a range of happy, creative classes."

Like many experiences in life, the refurbishment of the community centre was not an easy one. It came with obstacles, but the team gave it their best shot, continuing the journey to achieve their goal. After years of paperwork, fundraising, practical jobs and essential background tasks - writing the constitution, developing fire safety procedures, signing leases, sorting waste contracts - the keys finally landed in the team's hands in January 2024.

The staff, **Andy, Katherine, Steven, Ruth and Nelli**, now ensure that everything runs smoothly day to day. This month, ownership was transferred fully from West Lothian Council at the conclusion of the Community Asset Transfer. As part of this process, the Low Port Centre charity had to prove that the centre was providing at least £150,000 of community benefit per annum. When the numbers were calculated, it became clear that Low Port actually provides around £435,000 of benefit to the local community each year through the wide variety of activities and support given in the building.

The story gets even better. The team has refurbished the residential wing of the

old outdoor centre to create a very successful thirty-two-bed budget hotel - **Linlithgow Lodge**. The talented and dedicated individuals behind this transformation are celebrated, with each of the fifteen rooms in the Lodge named after someone who played a part in the transformation of the Low Port Centre. This summer, occupancy reached soaring heights, with the Lodge at 92% capacity in August. Guests are told the story of the Centre and are made aware that their stay directly supports the community through the phrase, **"When you stay here you do social good."**

Some of that good involves employing local people, creating positive outcomes for many individuals. A full-circle moment has happened several times when former pupils of Heather have been employed as Lodge staff, often in their first ever job.

The Low Port Centre's success is shining brightly, with recent mention from our local MP, **Kirsteen Sullivan**, at Westminster, using the centre as an example of inspirational community ownership and social enterprise. Winchburgh Community Centre's management committee had been exploring how to secure the future of their own centre and approached Andy, the Low Port Centre manager, for advice. As a result of these discussions, the Low Port Centre charity is proposing to lease Winchburgh Community Centre and use their skills and knowledge to operate it for the benefit of the community.

It is exhilarating to see what has been achieved through the dedication of the team. The Low Port Centre has brought together all kinds of people under one roof. It is exciting to look forward to the future and all that is still to come in Linlithgow and in Winchburgh.

Joanna Begarnie

Young People

Leading Change at Linlithgow Academy

LINLITHGOW ACADEMY



Student Voice Driving School Improvement

When people think about school improvement, they often imagine plans written by staff and implemented in classrooms. However, some of the most important improvements are being shaped by the people who experience school every day, our young people.

Over the past few years, pupil voice has moved from being something we listen to, to something that actively drives change. Through our Pupil Parliament, focus groups, rights-based learning and leadership opportunities, our young people are helping shape decisions about learning, wellbeing, inclusion and the future direction of the school. That is why the Academy's key improvement priority for 2026-27 is to further develop student agency, ensuring that young people can participate fully in all aspects of their learning and school life.



Pupil voice has already played a significant role in several improvements across the school. During learning rounds, pupils took part in focus groups and provided feedback on classroom experiences. Their views helped shape improvements to learning and teaching, including a greater emphasis on reflection, discussion and helping learners understand their progress and next steps.

Recent pupil representations also contributed to updates to the school's S.A.F.E. Uniform Policy, including the introduction of polo shirts as an approved uniform option. While a relatively small change, it reflects a wider commitment to ensuring that young people's views are not only heard but acted upon.

Young Environmental Champions

Another exciting example is the launch of the new Eco Club, a pupil-led initiative born from students' desire to make both the school and wider community cleaner, greener and more welcoming.

After identifying issues such as litter around the school grounds, underused wildlife areas and opportunities to improve biodiversity, pupils have developed their own action plan to work towards gaining another Eco-Schools Green Flag. Their proposals include monthly litter picks, creating pollinator-friendly wildflower areas, restoring bird feeders, fundraising through second-hand book sales and working alongside community organisations including Linlithgow Community Development Trust and Burgh Beautiful.

By taking responsibility for planning and leading these projects, Eco Club members are not only improving the school environment but also developing the leadership, teamwork and civic responsibility that will benefit

the wider Linlithgow community for years to come.

Creating an Inclusive School Community

Young people have also helped strengthen the inclusive culture that exists across the school. Learner feedback has informed developments to positive relationships, wellbeing initiatives and equality work. Staff and pupil surveys show that students increasingly feel their views are valued and acted upon, while participation in decision-making continues to grow. Our upcoming Culture Day entirely organised by pupils is another example of how the school is embracing diversity and building community.

This commitment to participation extends beyond the classroom. Our young people have contributed to the school's Rights Respecting Schools journey and helped ensure that children's rights are embedded throughout school life. Their work has supported learning about equality, inclusion and respectful relationships while creating opportunities for pupils to speak up about issues that matter to them and their peers.

Making a Difference Beyond the School Gates

Perhaps most inspiring is the way many Linlithgow Academy students are using their voices to make a difference far beyond the school gates.

Junior pupil Elsa has spoken at events across Scotland commemorating the Bosnian genocide, including engagements at the Scottish Parliament. She has also contributed to national media and educational resources, raising awareness and encouraging others to learn from history.

Another pupil, Poppy, has combined fundraising, art and advocacy through work with mental health organisations, presentations at Scotland's

Children's Mental Health Conference and contributions to mental health podcasts. Her efforts demonstrate how young people can use creativity and personal experience to support others and spark important conversations.

The school's Young Carers group has delivered whole-school awareness presentations, helping fellow students better understand the experiences and challenges faced by young carers. At the same time, students involved in debating and public speaking have represented the school in local and national competitions, developing the confidence and communication skills needed to contribute to public life.

Leadership and service are also evident in initiatives such as the creation of more than 200 equity packs for incoming S1 pupils and mentoring programmes linked to STEM Racing, where senior students supported younger pupils and primary school teams to succeed.

Student Leadership Shaping the Future

Helping to drive this agenda is the Academy's Student Leadership Team. Head Students Hannah and Malachy, together with Depute Head Students Yashvi and Cameron, have set out a clear ambition for the year ahead: to ensure that the voices of pupils are not only heard, but acted upon.



Their focus on communication, inclusion and strong relationships mirrors the school's wider commitment to student agency. They see their role not simply as representing their peers within the school, but as helping

strengthen connections between Linlithgow Academy and the wider community. Their weekly video diary is already making a positive impact by sharing key messages in an engaging and interactive way.

Looking Ahead

These examples remind us that school education is about much more than qualifications. It is about helping young people develop the confidence, empathy and leadership skills to make a positive contribution to society.

Looking ahead, the Academy will continue building on this strong foundation. Plans for 2026-27 include

expanding learning conversations so every young person can better understand their progress, strengthening opportunities for participation in decision-making and deepening understanding of equality, inclusion, children's rights and respectful relationships.

At Linlithgow Academy, improvement is increasingly something done with young people rather than for them. Their voices, leadership and activism are helping to shape a more inclusive, ambitious and compassionate school. In doing so, they are not only improving life within the Academy, but we hope also helping to build the future of Linlithgow itself.



2026/2027 School Calendar

August 2026							September 2026							October 2026						
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February 2027							March 2027							April 2027						
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May 2027							June 2027							July 2027						
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31																				

= pupils on holiday = pupils on holiday & staff in-service
 = public holiday - everybody off = Linlithgow Marches (Linlithgow Schools only)
 = Spring Day = Procession Day (Bathgate Schools only)



Grant Abbot,
Head Teacher



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

LINLITHGOW BOWLING CLUB: A COMMUNITY TRADITION THRIVING FOR MORE THAN 160 YEARS



Linlithgow Bowling Club has been a cornerstone of community life in the Royal Burgh, combining sporting excellence with a strong commitment to health, inclusion and social engagement for more than 160 years. Founded in 1865 by a group of local businessmen, the club has evolved from its original green off Provost Road into one of West Lothian's most respected and community-focused sporting organisations.

taking their first competitive steps of representing the club in the **Almondell league** and opportunities of playing at other clubs in a competitive and friendly environment.

The benefits extend far beyond competition. Participation in bowls can improve concentration, support cardiovascular health, reduce stress, aid balance and muscle tone, and contribute positively to mental wellbeing. Just as importantly, it provides a welcoming environment where people can meet

groups. This investment has already produced impressive results.

Among the club's rising stars is **Jack McKeown**, who earned selection for the Rosebery squad contesting the Rosebery Cup and regularly competes in the Almondell League. Another notable success story is **Rebecca Orr**, who has represented Scotland at Under-17 level indoors and Under-18 level outdoors as part of the national team. Both have also represented West Lothian Bowling Association at U25 County Level. In addition, in recent years **Emma Fleming and Chloe Hutchinson** have also played at County Level and both are regulars at the National Championships held at the National Centre for Bowling at Northfield, Ayrshire.

Investing in the next generation, isn't just about youth but extends beyond and bowls is something that can be enjoyed by the whole family.

Ladies top six plus sub



The club relocated to its current home in Philip Avenue in 1900, with its modern clubhouse officially opening in 1911. Throughout its long history, Linlithgow Bowling Club has remained dedicated to providing facilities, enjoyment and opportunities for people of all ages, from young beginners taking their first steps in the sport to experienced bowlers who have been playing for decades.

Today, the club is affiliated with the **West Lothian Bowling Association, Bowls Scotland and ClubSport West Lothian**, reflecting its active role within both the local and national bowls community.

Challenging Perceptions

A key focus of the club has been changing outdated perceptions that bowls is exclusively a sport for older generations. Linlithgow Bowling Club actively promotes bowls as an inclusive activity that can be enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities. As a club there is something for everyone, be it as a social bowler enjoying a hat night, or someone

others, build friendships and combat social isolation.

Our bowling club is also a social hub where the camaraderie extends both to on and off the green where members can enjoy a blether over a drink. A warm welcome always awaits.



Rebecca Orr

Investing in the Next Generation

The club places considerable emphasis on youth development, with fully qualified coaches delivering bowls sessions in local schools and offering free coaching opportunities for all age

Colin Stein & Peter Maguire



At the Heart of the Community

Community engagement remains central to the club's ethos. Linlithgow Bowling Club works closely with organisations including Linlithgow Link, the Caring Café and the Tuesday Club, ensuring that people from across the community have opportunities to participate and connect.

The club has also welcomed groups from the Sporting Memories Club, as well as visitors from Broxburn and Livingston, providing introductory bowls experiences designed to encourage participation and enjoyment.

Throughout each season, the club hosts a variety of "Try Bowls" events aimed at introducing newcomers to the sport. In addition, it supports numerous

charitable causes through fundraising competitions and memorial events. These include the David Cochrane Memorial event in aid of Cardiac Risk in the Young (CRY), the Ronald Meikle Memorial supporting myeloma charities, and the Joe Cunningham Memorial organised in partnership with Linlithgow Deacons Court. These charity events are open to members and non-members alike – details can be found via our club social media on Facebook.

The club also proudly provides facilities for events and quizzes run by Walk for Jock.



Lorna Smith

A Proud Sporting Legacy

While community involvement is a defining feature of the club, Linlithgow Bowling Club has also built an enviable record of achievement on the green, producing players who have competed at county, national and international levels.

Among its most notable milestones:

1981 – Malcolm Graham became Scottish Junior Singles Champion.

1985 – Malcolm Graham earned international honours for Scotland and later competed at the 1986 Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh, becoming the club's first international representative.

1987 – Elizabeth Ann Meenan (née Wallace) became the club's first female international, representing Scotland at junior level before progressing to the senior team in 1991.

1989 – The club enjoyed one of its most successful seasons, winning the **National Scottish Triples Championship, the Scottish Fours title, the Rosebery Cup and the Livingstone Trophy.**

1997 – Linlithgow captured the **National Scottish Triples title** for a second time.

Gents Rosebery Trophy winners for 2026



2008 – Gary Smith represented Scotland, having previously represented England, while Lorna Smith joined the club following a distinguished career that included being ranked World No.1 while living in South Africa.

2014 – Lorna Smith made history winning the Scottish Ladies Singles Championship for a record-breaking third consecutive year before becoming the first Scottish woman to win the World Champion of Champions.

The milestones continue year upon year as the club continues to produce and support high-level competitors, with players regularly representing their county and country. **Current and past members who are or have played internationally for Scotland include Nicola Fleming, Liz Meenan, Lorna Smith, Gary Smith, Ewan Shearer, Andy Dunnett, John McDermott, Frazer Muirhead, Paula Preston and Rebecca Orr. Former internationalist John McDermott also plays a significant role within International Para Bowls and serves as a director supporting visually impaired bowlers.**

Looking Ahead

As Linlithgow Bowling Club continues to grow, its mission remains clear: to provide an inclusive, welcoming environment where people of all ages and abilities can enjoy sport, improve their wellbeing and become part of a thriving community. With a proud heritage stretching back to 1865 and a forward-looking approach focused on participation, coaching and community partnership, the club is well positioned to remain a vital part of Linlithgow life for generations to come.

In an ever-changing world and demands



Martin McCalley, current green champion

of locals we are evolving to meet the demands of a modern world but one in which we are also proud of our past. Whilst we are proud of our past, we are equally invested in the longevity of the club well into the future.

Of course, none of these activities would be possible without the ongoing commitment of our members, the dedication of our committee and strong values that continue to guide the club's development and success.

To support our wider community role, the club offers its hall to a variety of local organisations and activity groups, hosting classes such as art, drama and yoga. The venue is also available for functions and special occasions, including baby showers, engagement celebrations, birthdays, weddings and funeral receptions.

As well as providing excellent sporting and social facilities, the club remains committed to serving the wider community.

Anyone interested in participating in bowls, hiring the hall, or learning more about the club's community activities is encouraged to make contact by email for further information – email us on info@linlithgowbowlingclub.co.uk

David Hamilton & Dick Spowart

ALEXANDER ADIE

Bruce Jamieson

Close to the south entrance of St Michael's Church is a large headstone bearing the inscription "Alexander James Adie, 1808 -1879".

Alexander Adie's grave marker in St Michael's Cemetery.

He was the son of a renowned medical and mathematical instrument maker also called Alexander (born in 1775) who, amongst other scientific devices, is credited with the invention of the sympiesometer, a compact and lightweight type of barometer which used oil as its hydrostatic fluid, together with a column of gas.

It was particularly useful as a marine instrument as its sensitivity provided early warning of weather changes at sea, and its construction meant that it was less likely to break in violent storms.

This Adie sympiesometer sold recently at Roseberys Auction House in London for £1690.

Alexander Adie the elder lived in Edinburgh and operated an optician's business at 58 Princes' Street from where he supplied many of his specialist wares to several eminent scientists of the time including botanist and explorer Joseph Hooker, eminent inventor and Principal of Edinburgh University, Sir David Brewster and world-famous biologist Charles Darwin. He was also appointed Royal Optician in Scotland to King William IV and to Queen Victoria. In 1819 he was nominated by many of his clients and then duly elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh

In later life, he lived at Canaan Lodge in the Morningside area of Edinburgh and his son remembered being brought up there with his brothers, John and Ritchie, and his surviving sister, Elisabeth, (five girls died at or shortly after birth). Alexander grew up surrounded in the house by scientific

and medical objects and, in the garden, an observatory and accommodation for many animals including a lizard, a cow, hens, pigs and many different species of birds kept in aviaries.



Canaan House in Morningside.

In May 1828, Alexander, the son, wrote an illustrated memoir concerning an Indian grey mongoose, which, as a child, he had kept for about a year. The article was published in the first issue of "The Magazine of Natural History" – a piece which later inspired Rudyard Kipling to write about the mongoose Rikki-Tikki-Tavi in "The Jungle Book".



Adie's drawing of his mongoose.

The children called themselves "The Canaanites" and revelled in the freedom they received roaming the extensive gardens. Later, their residence became a children's home and is now an administrative building and office space for the Astley Ainslie Hospital.

In his retirement, the elder Alexander Adie became a keen horticulturalist, transforming the Canaan House gardens and trying many propagation experiments, growing, for example, several new apple species. He lived into his eighties, deriving the greatest pleasure from his garden works and in the cultivation of his plants and flowers. He died in 1858 and was buried in Greyfriars Cemetery in the Old Town of Edinburgh

Alexander Adie's headstone in Greyfriars Cemetery.

His daughter, Elisabeth, married the astronomer Thomas Henderson (1798–1844) whom she met when he visited

the family shop in search of scientific instruments. His son, Alexander James (named after his father) was born at 11 Lothian Street in Edinburgh's South side on the 16th of December, 1808.

After an early childhood, largely being educated at home, Alexander James went off to receive an education at the High School of Edinburgh and then at Edinburgh University before training as a civil engineer under eminent technologist James Jardine, learning his trade on the Edinburgh and Dalkeith Railway and on several reservoirs around Edinburgh.

In 1836 he was appointed Resident Engineer on the Bolton, Chorley and Preston Railway in Lancashire. One of his many designs was for Chorley Station which survived until the 1980s when a modern facility was built on top of the original structure.



Chorley Station in the 19th century.

Alexander also designed an impressive skew railway bridge to cross the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. But it was not all work and no play as he met his bride-to-be while working in England.

He is registered as marrying Louisa Sinclair (originally a London girl) in the church of Saint Mary the Virgin in Bolton-le-Moors, now just known as Bolton. The officiating vicar was the Reverend David Hewitt.

Louisa Adie.

With his new wife, Alexander moved back to Scotland and worked for a while in his father's shop, living above the premises in Princes Street, and then at 7 St Andrews Square. Later, he secured employment as a civil engineer working for the Monklands Railway Company who were in the process of expanding their network from Kirkintilloch to Causewayend, on the Union Canal, and onward to Bo'ness Harbour.

His work saw him being proposed by James David Forbes, the celebrated physicist and glaciologist, as a member of the Royal Society of Edinburgh (as his father had been before him.)

His prowess as an engineer saw him being head-hunted by the Edinburgh

and Glasgow Railway Company which had been set up in 1842. In 1847 he rose to the rank of General Manager - a post he held until 1863 throughout a period of crucial Scottish railway expansion, overseeing, maintaining, and expanding the important, 46-mile, intercity route

It made sense for him to live in a place from which he could visit any stretch of the railway and so he chose Linlithgow, moving into the large, 1820s stone-built residence of Rockville - just above Linlithgow Station.



A 19th century view of Linlithgow Station.

Like his father, he took a keen interest in the surrounding area and, with his engineering precision and planning skills, he developed the grounds and gardens. He was a regular attender at St Michael's Church until he died in his family residence on the 3rd April, 1879. His Death Register lists the cause of his demise as "cerebral apoplexy", (a stroke), the death being reported by his niece Ms E. Henderson.

His funeral took place in St Michael's Church and was conducted by the Rev John Ferguson, in his first year in office. He was to serve for 34 more!

An obituary I came across records that, "He died in Rockville Villa where he had had an opportunity of cultivating his taste for horticulture and the fine arts, and of receiving visits from many who esteemed his friendship and valued his accomplishments." He left an estate valued at £38,414.

His widow, Louisa (Sinclair) lived on in the dwelling until her death in 1896.



The site of Rockville House on a 19th century map.

Sadly, the building was demolished around the year 1973 and only the lodge house remains. I have never been able to find a photograph of the mansion. The site was developed into Rockville Grove in the early 1980s.

19th Century maps show the house, along with an extensive garden which boasted a rain gauge, a fountain and an "astera" - which was probably an observatory-based "star-tracker".

The construction of the existing housing estate has now obscured almost all traces of the Rockville Arboretum but some idea of its contents can be visualised in the adjoining Rosemount Park where over 90 species of trees and plants have been recorded.



The planting in Rosemount Park of a tree to commemorate Averil and Gavin Stewart - two very active Burgh Beautiful volunteers.



Alexander Adie's father's silver membership badge of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. It is now in the Science Museum in London.

1879. DEATHS in the District of Linlithgow in the County of Linlithgow

No.	Name and Surname. Rank or Profession, and whether Single, Married, or Widowed.	When and Where Died.	Sex.	Age.	Name, Surname, & Rank or Profession of Father. Name, and Maiden Surname of Mother.	Cause of Death, Duration of Disease, and Medical Attendant by whom certified.	Signature & Qualification of Informant, and Residence, if out of the House in which the Death occurred.	When and where Registered, and Signature of Registrar.
52	Alexander James Adie	1879 April 3rd	M	70	Alexander James Adie, Optician	Cerebral Apoplexy 6 days	E. Henderson, 1879	April 4th at Linlithgow
	Married to Louisa Sinclair	Rockville Linlithgow			Deceased	as cert. by George Hunter M.D.		Alex Murray Registrar

Alexander Adie's death certificate, certified by local GP, Dr George Hunter.



LINLITHGOW REDS KICK OFF NEW SEASON

The Reds have recovered well from an initial set back in the opening league match against Hamilton Bulls, winning their two subsequent league matches by 47-19 over Dunfermline and 38-12 over Kilmarnock, scoring 13 tries over the two matches!

The initial setback was partly down to a pre-season "dry out", when the RFU (English Rugby Football Union) forbade full contact rugby across England in August and early September, because of dried out rock hard pitches - a major safety concern. This announcement was only made on the day that the full Linlithgow senior squad were travelling down to Keswick for a pre-season match against Keswick RFC. Too late to change, the squads from the two clubs ended up with a joint training session and a touch rugby match - far from ideal for a pre-season match!

Meanwhile, the depth of the Reds senior squad has been well illustrated by the performance of the 2nd XV who have started the season with two fine wins (43-5 over Hamilton 2s and 52-21 over Lasswade 2s) in addition to a walkover against Hawick Force, who were unable to raise a team to travel up to Linlithgow for the Reserve League match.



Youth Rugby conference league underway

Linlithgow Youth have started the season well in their Conference (teams across

the 5 age groups play against conference league opponents each weekend), with strong performance in particular from the u18s, u16s and u15s. It's also encouraging to see the younger u13 and u14 squads gain in strength over the past few weeks. The u18s had a tough loss against Dollar Academy midweek in the Scottish Schools Cup, sandwiched between two fine wins against Morrisons Academy and George Watsons B team. It should be noted that the Dollar side contained 5 recent signings (on full scholarships) from the Glasgow Warriors age grade pathway system.



Girls Host Tournament at Mains Park

Girls Rugby took a big step forward in Linlithgow, with our u14 School of Rugby squad hosting a 7-a-side tournament at Mains Park at the end of August. A massive congratulations to our first Linlithgow Girls Squad shown in photo. They did brilliantly for their first time out. The girls welcomed teams from Boroughmuir, Peebles, Currie, Penicuik, Berwick, Dunbar, Dalkeith and North Berwick. The Rugby Club is looking to build on this and if you know someone who might be interested in joining, then email our Development Officer Grant at ghrugby@outlook.com for more information.



Town Fireworks Display on Friday 6th November

This year's Town Fireworks display will be held on the Friday night (6th November) at the Rugby Club, as Scotland play the All Blacks on the Saturday and most of the 50 plus volunteers we need to run the event will be otherwise occupied!

Tickets now on sale online at Eventbrite - click on the QR code.



Super Coaches and other volunteers

As we are now well underway in our new season, this is an opportunity to say a massive thanks to all our volunteer coaches, referees and other helpers (well over 100 in total), who put in a power of work to train, develop and coach youngsters across the 13 age bands. **A truly super group as the photo representation of our u18 coaching team shows!**



Fly Half
www.linlithgowrugbyclub.co.uk



SOMETHING DARK LURKS IN LINLITHGOW

Oorie Linlithgow: Buried, Beheaded & Bewitched

A NEW DARK HISTORY AND GHOST TOUR COMES TO TOWN THIS HALLOWEEN

A new dark history and ghost tour is coming to the Royal Burgh, created from a shared love of history, ghost stories, great storytelling - and Linlithgow itself.

Oorie Linlithgow: Buried, Beheaded & Bewitched will take visitors into the darker corners of the town's past, uncovering tales of murder, witchcraft, executions, body-snatching, restless spirits and some of the more unusual characters who have called Linlithgow home over the centuries.

Behind the new venture are award-winning writer and veteran tour guide **John Kielty** and writer and heritage creative **Jordanna O'Neill**, who specialises in bringing the past vividly to life through performance, events and tours. Jordanna also wrote and manages Edinburgh's highly successful, five-star

Blood and Guts: History of Medicine tours at Surgeons' Hall Museums.

Together, they are bringing a mix of historical research, theatrical storytelling and a healthy dose of the unexpected to Linlithgow.

Linlithgow may be famous for its Palace, royal connections and picturesque loch, but scratch beneath the surface and there is another side to its history.

And it is considerably darker.

Beginning at the historic Cross Well, the evening walks will explore the ancient heart of the town and the Peel, uncovering stories from Linlithgow's blood-soaked and war-torn past.

Expect tales of **witch burnings, body-snatching, torture, executions and ghostly apparitions**, alongside the real people caught up in some of the town's most gruesome moments.

And when it comes to ghosts, John has experience few can match.

For more than **25 years**, he has led

thousands of visitors through Edinburgh's Greyfriars Kirkyard and into the notorious Covenanters' Prison - reputed lair of the infamous **Mackenzie Poltergeist**.

"I've seen many a strange thing happen over the years," says John. "People faint, collapse or run out screaming, claiming something has tapped them or pulled their hair."

"It's all documented. Last week I had three people collapse. You get used to it."

Now a Linlithgow High Street resident for nearly ten years, John has turned his attention to the darker stories much closer to home.

"I walk my dog around the Peel, often at night, and it can be

a lot of fun along the way."

Whether you are a believer, a sceptic, a history buff, or simply someone who enjoys a good horror story on a dark night, **Oorie Linlithgow: Buried, Beheaded & Bewitched** promises a very different way to experience the town.

It's history - just not necessarily the version you were taught at school.

Tours launch this Halloween and continue into early November, with evening walks beginning at **8pm at the Cross Well**, before venturing through the historic town and into the Peel.

"This year is a trial run," says John, "but if it proves successful, we'll keep it going and make tours available for private bookings during the day."

"It's exciting."

And the name?

"**Oorie**" is a wonderfully Scots word for something gloomy, eerie, chilly or slightly unsettling.

Which, after dark in Linlithgow, feels rather appropriate.

Especially if John is right.

Oorie Linlithgow: Buried, Beheaded & Bewitched

Buried, Beheaded & Bewitched

This Halloween & early November | 8pm
Meet at the Cross Well

BOOK YOUR PLACE: [<https://OorieLinlithgow.eventbrite.co.uk>]

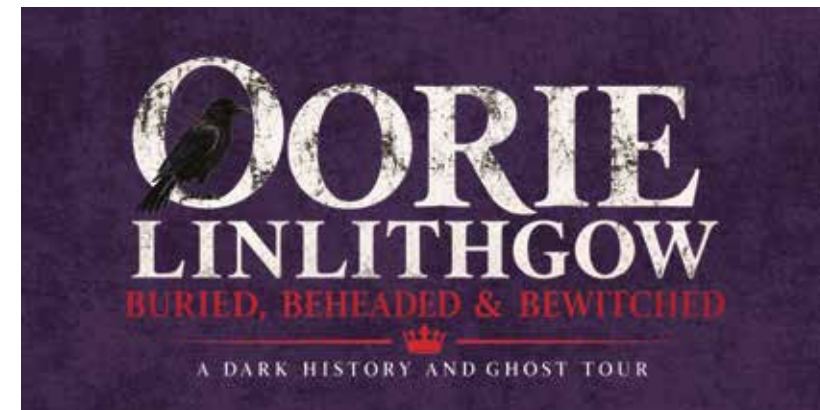
Have a Linlithgow ghost story?

John and Jordanna would love to hear it. Local legends, family stories and unexplained experiences are all welcome.

Contact:
Johnhenrykielty@gmail.com

Come and discover the darker side of Linlithgow.

YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED...



wonderfully eerie - bats overhead, the Palace against the sky and strange lights across the loch.

"The more you dig into Linlithgow's past, the stranger it gets."

His research has even left him wondering whether something about old Linlithgow might not be entirely at rest.

Ghost? Legend? Overactive imagination?

Or something a little more sinister?

Visitors will have to make up their own minds.

But ghosts are only part of the story.

At its heart, Oorie Linlithgow is about bringing the town's remarkable history to life - including stories, characters and events that have slipped from view.

"History is full of brilliant stories - funny, frightening, tragic and completely bizarre," says Jordanna. "Linlithgow has all of that and more."

"We want people to discover another side of the town and have

BURGH BEAUTIFUL CELEBRATES BATTLE 500

The 500th anniversary of the Battle of Linlithgow Bridge has been visualised on the High Street with the Vennel Bed featuring a beautiful representation of the River Avon surrounded by meadow plants such as Meadow buttercup, Yarrow, Poppies, Cornflower, Ox-eye daisy and Red clover amongst others that would have been native to the area where the historic battle was fought back in 1526. The team of **Moir, Corinne, Jacquie and Alison** expertly grew all the wildflower plants on display from seed or took them from their own gardens.

The shields on display represent the coats of arms of the Earl of Lennox and the Earl of Arran, who fought for custody of the young King James V.

Atop the display board are two crows or ravens – the Twa Corbies, a famous anonymous traditional Scottish ballad first published by Sir Walter Scott in 1802. It tells a grim story of two scavenging crows discussing a newly slain knight whose hawk, hound, and lover have already abandoned him to nature. These together with the pikestaff on display are a nod to the gruesome aspect of the battlefield.

*As I was walking all alane, I heard
twa corbies making a mane
The tane unto the t'other say,
'Where sall we gang and dine the
day?'*

*'In behind yon auld fail dyke, I wot
there lies a new slain knight;*

*And naebody kens that he lies there, But
his hawk, his hound, and his lady fair.*

Burgh Beautiful volunteers who worked hard to design and create this incredible display.



Photography by Kristen Burdett

Burgh Beautiful members, **Rusty and the Curle family** care for the permanent memorial to the battle, the Lennox Cairn, situated opposite the entrance to Xcite at Kettilstoun.

The beech hedge, expertly cut every year was included in the original planting scheme as it has traditionally been used within memorial plantings in Scotland over several centuries. A number of the trees and plants found there have symbolism associated with the two armies. The **oak tree** planted in the hedge was the Hamilton heraldic symbol and represented strength and endurance (it was Sir James Hamilton who killed Lennox). **Eryngium or Sea holly** resembles a thistle or knapweed which would have been growing and in flower on the battle site and can be seen in the Vennel bed display. The **Red Rose** is a Lennox heraldic symbol, the variety we have in the back bed is 'Precious Ruby'. Juniper, a Ross heraldic symbol can also be found. Lord Ross was among the

prominent local lords and landowners who gathered men to support the Earl of Arran. These symbols or witters were worn by soldiers to distinguish friend from foe in chaotic hand-to-hand combat.

For the future we are holding a session on October 3rd at 2pm at the cycle slope by the canal above Xcite where we cut and remove all the excess growth of summer flowering wildflowers. This acts to impoverish the soil and encourages further growth of wildflowers which would otherwise be outcompeted by grasses. Please come and join us if you can to help keep our Burgh Beautiful.

**SAT
3
OCT**

We can't do any of this work without our volunteers and are always looking out for people who would like to join us. Please contact bbl@lbt.scot in the first instance.

Margaret Harrison



LINLITHGOW FILM SOCIETY NEW SEASON

We are now in our 52nd year of providing community cinema in Linlithgow, and look forward to welcoming new and returning members to the start of the new season on

**MONDAY THE 26TH OCTOBER
7.30pm - THE ROSE CLUB**

This season's films commence with:
THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA 2

and then include:

**RENTAL FAMILY, I SWEAR,
THE HOLIDAY, SONG SUNG BLUE,**

**A BIG BOLD BEAUTIFUL JOURNEY,
TUNER, HAMNET,
NOUVELLE VAGUE (SUBTITLED),**

**THE SHEEP DETECTIVES.
All dates to be confirmed.**

**Come and join us,
any enquiries to :
gkylochend@gmail.com**

**Maureen
Sellers**

**FROM
26
OCT**



What is Linlithgow Burgh Trust?

The Trust is Linlithgow's leading voluntary environmental/heritage organisation with 375 members, nearly 180 active volunteers and over 300 financial supporters, but no paid staff. It deals with:

- Conservation and enhancement of Linlithgow's built and natural heritage
- The town's floral displays – Burgh Beautiful plants and maintains 122 hanging baskets, 98 planters/barrels and 23 flowerbeds, commended in past Britain in Bloom awards
- Tree planting, orchard maintenance and wildflower areas, also through Burgh Beautiful
- Furthering its role as 'planning watchdog' through consideration by Linlithgow Civic Trust of planning applications and input to the community's Local Place Plan
- Organisation by Linlithgow Civic Trust of the annual 'Perambulation of the Marches'
- The delivery of public art such as the sculptures of the 'Black Bitch', Dudley and St Michael
- Publication of the 'Black Bitch', Linlithgow's community magazine

Under the 'umbrella' of our Board of Charity Trustees, our activities are delivered through our Burgh Beautiful, Civic Trust and Community Magazine Committees. Our website: <https://new.lbt.scot>

How can I help with all of this?

We always welcome new members and volunteers. As well as encouraging enthusiastic people to help with such activities as gardening, magazine production and organising events, we offer rewarding opportunities for people with an interest in the town's heritage and environment to:

- Join our Board of Charity Trustees to fulfil a valued overseeing role. In particular, we invite expressions of interest from people with the necessary experience to act as Chair or Secretary.
- Join one of our committees to get more involved in our exciting activities to improve the town. We would be delighted to hear from Linlithgow residents interested in leading our Civic Trust Committee or acting as planning spokesperson.

Whether you have professional expertise or simply a passion for Linlithgow, your contribution could help ensure that its heritage and environment continue to be understood, appreciated, protected and improved for generations to come.



To find out more about volunteering with Linlithgow Burgh Trust and to offer your services, please get in touch: welcome@lbt.scot

THE SUPER SCRIBBLERS

JOINTLY RESEARCHED AND WRITTEN BY THE SUPER SCRIBBLERS - PUPILS OF SPRINGFIELD AND LOW PORT PRIMARY SCHOOLS.



Here in Linlithgow, we have a vast selection of wonderful wildlife on our doorstep. Keep your eyes peeled and you might just spot some of them. Watch out for hedgehogs hiding in leaf piles and try not to disturb them. All sorts of beautiful birds live on the loch and the canal, but we need to be mindful of what we feed them. Rabbits can be seen at parks, but they run away quickly from humans and dogs. Newts and frogs can also be found in ponds, but they are tricky to spot due to their camouflage.



We've chosen a handful of common wildlife you might see around the town and have found out some fascinating facts about them. We hope you enjoy learning a bit more about our furry and feathery friends.

Red and grey squirrels

Squirrels are fast, furry little rodents that live all around the world and have front teeth that never stop growing.

A red squirrel's lifespan is about 2 to 3 years.

A grey squirrel's lifespan is about 2 to 5 years.

Red squirrels are the rarest squirrel in the UK - 75% of all red squirrels in the UK live in Scotland, with most living within the pine forests of the Highlands, Perthshire and Dumfries and Galloway.

Some red squirrels in Scotland can have a distinctive blonde tail in the summer.

Grey squirrels can be found in almost any local public park, urban garden or woodland across England, Wales and central Scotland.

Squirrels can fall from heights of up to 100 feet without getting hurt because they use their tails as parachutes.



Robins

Robins are fierce, popular garden birds, known for their bright red chests and are surprisingly aggressive when defending their territory.

Robins are known as 'gardener shadows' because they follow people digging in their gardens to grab unearthed worms.

Because of streetlights and loud noises, robins often sing well into the night.

Robins have amazing hearing - they can actually hear earthworms moving underground.

They sing all year round, to protect their homes from predators.

Robins usually remain in the same territory throughout the year, so they don't migrate like other birds.

Every adult robin has a slightly different pattern on its red chest.

Young robins do not have red breasts - they are brown and speckled to camouflage them and keep them safe.



Gulls

Gulls can drink salt water because special glands near their eyes turn it into fresh water.

Gulls can recognise human faces.

Gulls drop hard shells onto rocks and pavements to break them open, use breadcrumbs as bait to catch fish, and stomp their feet to mimic rain and trick worms to the surface.

Gulls copy what humans eat and are twice as likely to choose food that they've seen a human eat already.

They use the earth's magnetic field and the sun to fly long distances without getting lost.

Black headed gulls change colour and they're not even black - they only grow dark chocolate brown hoods during the summer breeding season.



Wildlife on the Loch Facts!

1. The Loch is a designated **Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)** because of its wildfowl populations and rare aquatic plants.

2. One of the loch's most iconic birds is the **Great Crested Grebe**. In spring, pairs perform a weed dance.

3. During winter, the resident birds are joined by species such as **Goldeneye ducks, Pochards, and Greylag Geese**.

4. The two small islands visible on the loch, known as **Cormorant Island and the Rickle**, are the remains of ancient crannogs, prehistoric dwellings built on artificial islands. Today they provide undisturbed habitat for birds.

5. **Bats** can often be seen feeding over the water at night during the warmer months, taking advantage of insects emerging from the loch ecosystem.



Linlithgow Wildlife Poem

*In Linlithgow are so many animals to see,
From under the water to up in the trees.
Tweeting, quacking, splashing all day long,
Enjoying themselves with their own song.*

*Fish brought in from different places,
All with new and interesting faces.
Here to fill and swim in the loch,
Swimming in a big group shaped like a sock.*

*Ducks in the loch dip their heads for a wash,
And they dip for a snack but aren't very posh.
They watch the other birds up in the sky,
And maybe they'd join them if they could fly.
Songbirds sit in the trees and tweet a tune,
Then they sing by the twinkling light of the moon.
Their tunes are enjoyed by everyone,
Because they are as sweet as a bun.*

Birds by the Loch Word Search

R L D L S T N A R O M R O C R
E A S R E S N O R E H A M R N
B N S E B S R G E S E R S E E
N C E S W S S R D T L C A E N
S B N R T C I G U U O O M L N
R T D B R T R M O O R H E N S
O T A M A E E A S K E G D L N
E N A U B U T K B H R U S E A
S E B E R G E L T T I L W A W
S N S S R S S S E C O A R O S
S I M C B E N C R N O O D E T
E S O N O B T G G A U U A E N
R U E U R A S I A N C O O T S
O R I C R B R L E K E S O S C
R M A L L A R D S C R B D T N

Swans	ducks
moorhens	little grebes
herons	
mallards	Eurasian coots
grebes	cormorants

QUICK QUIZ

1. **Are moles rodents?** (answer - No, they are more closely related to bats)

2. **True or false - do hedgehogs have tails?** (answer - true)

3. **What is a group of squirrels called?** (answer - a scurry)

4. **True or false - do the spots on a ladybird tell you their age?** (answer - false)

5. **True or false - a baby rabbit is called a kit?** (answer - true)

6. **Are a duck's feathers waterproof?** (answer - the under feathers are waterproof and these keep the duck dry).



Songbirds

There are many different songbirds present in Linlithgow; here is a list of a few.

Black bird - rich, flute like evening songs.

Robin - frequently spotted near paths.

Chaffinch - known for their colourful appearance.

Blue tit - small, energetic blue and yellow birds.

Dunnock - a brown ground feeder bird.

Goldfinch - highly colourful finches.

Wren - tiny brown birds with a loud song.

Chiff Chaff - named after their chiff-chaff song.

Songbirds give life and soul to our loch, otherwise our mornings would be dull and silent. Without the warbling of the robin and the twittering call of the goldfinch the days would be grey. The glimpse of a blue and yellow bird in the trees or a flash of black in the grass makes my day. These charming birds are a great asset to our town, and it is impossible not to love them.

A fun local challenge

If you walk the full circuit around the loch, you can often spot more than a **dozen bird species in a single visit**, including swans, grebes, herons, coots, moorhens, ducks, gulls, and woodland songbirds. Why not give it a go and see how many you can spot?

Specsavers put community support in focus with Linlithgow Rose FC



Specsavers

Football is for everyone, and a new partnership between Specsavers Linlithgow and Linlithgow Rose FC is helping more supporters experience the excitement of matchday.

The team at Specsavers Linlithgow has become the first sponsor of the football club's new **Community Corner at The MV Commercial Prestonfield Stadium** - a dedicated space designed to provide a welcoming and accessible area for supporters.

The Community Corner includes a covered space for wheelchair users and has been created to help make matchdays more comfortable and enjoyable for everyone attending games.

The idea was developed by **Linlithgow Rose FC and Cycling Without Age Scotland Linlithgow**, with support from local businesses and community organisations helping to bring the project to life.

As a locally owned business based at the Regent Centre, Specsavers Linlithgow has a long-standing commitment to supporting initiatives that bring people together and make a positive difference in the town.

The store is now proudly represented pitch-side at The MV Commercial Prestonfield Stadium, with prominent branding on the Community Corner wall as part of its sponsorship.

Diana Kelly, store director at Specsavers Linlithgow, explains why supporting the initiative was so important.

Why did Specsavers Linlithgow decide to support the Community Corner?

Diana says: 'Specsavers Linlithgow is proud to support local organisations that bring people together and promote community wellbeing.'

'This sponsorship with Linlithgow Rose Football Club builds on our ongoing commitment to supporting local initiatives across Linlithgow. We are passionate about supporting projects that make our community more inclusive and accessible, so we were delighted to become the first sponsor of the club's new Community Corner.'

Why are projects like this important for the local community?

'The Community Corner is a fantastic example of local organisations working together to create something that benefits everyone.'

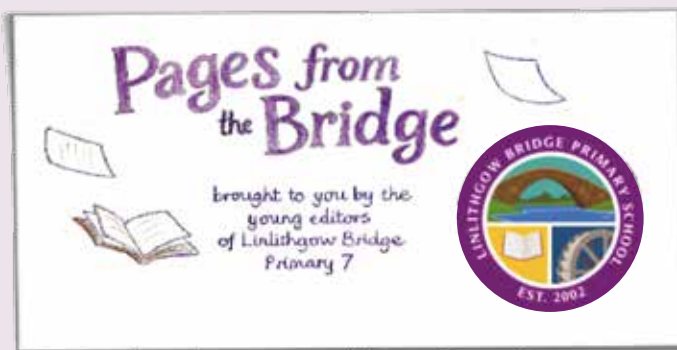
'Sport has an incredible ability to bring people together, and initiatives like this help ensure that more people can be part of those shared experiences, regardless of their individual needs or circumstances.'

'We are delighted to play a small part in helping create a more welcoming environment for supporters at Linlithgow Rose FC.'

The partnership between Specsavers Linlithgow and Linlithgow Rose FC highlights the positive impact that can be achieved when local organisations work together.

By supporting accessible spaces and community-led projects, Specsavers Linlithgow continues to demonstrate its commitment to helping make Linlithgow a welcoming place for everyone.

To book an eye test at Specsavers Linlithgow, call 01506 534 484 or visit www.specsavers.co.uk/stores/linlithgow.



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

Our School Values Respect, Kindness, Responsibility

Welcome from Primary 7 Welcome to the latest edition of Pages from the Bridge from a brand new Primary 7 Editorial Team!

Across the school, pupils have enjoyed a fantastic start to the year through reading, writing and creative learning. One exciting focus for every class has been our school mini-topic, *The Battle of Linlithgow Bridge*.

Bringing Local History to Life

Over the past two weeks, pupils across Linlithgow Bridge Primary School have been exploring the Battle of Linlithgow Bridge through a variety of literacy and interdisciplinary learning activities.

From classroom displays and artwork to research, discussion and writing, each class has been learning about this important local historical event while developing their literacy skills. The topic has encouraged pupils to think about the history of the area around them and make connections between the past and the present.

We are delighted to share some of our learning from across the school.



Primary 1F:

Settling Into School

The children were thrilled by a secret visit from a friendly Fairyland Dragon who left a cuddly baby dragon and an important letter.

P1F have enjoyed beginning their school journey and are developing their early literacy skills through stories, classroom discussions and play-based learning experiences.

The Battle of Linlithgow Bridge

As part of our school mini-topic, P1F have been working on a wall display linked to *The Battle of Linlithgow Bridge*.

Primary 1W:

Exploring Feelings Through Stories
P1W have been enjoying listening to *The Colour Monster* and *The Colour Monster Goes to School*. These books have helped us learn

about different feelings and emotions. As part of our transition programme, we have also enjoyed reading lots of stories about starting school.

Our Class is a Family

As we began the school year, we read *Our Class is a Family*. This helped set the scene in our classroom and reinforced our school values of Respect, Kindness and Responsibility.

Rhyming Fun

P1W have been developing their rhyming skills and have enjoyed listening to books that rhyme. Our favourite rhyming stories so far are *Oi Cat!*, *There's a Bear on My Chair* and *Holey Moley*.

Early Writing

We are focusing on adding detail to black-pen drawings and sharing our stories with an adult who scribes them for us. We are also working hard to learn the correct formations for the sounds and numbers we are learning.



Primary 2:

Martha Maps It Out

P2 have been enjoying reading *Martha Maps It Out* by Leigh Hodgkinson.

Mapping Our World

Inspired by *Martha's* adventures, we have been creating our own maps and thinking carefully about places that are special to us. We have explored how maps can help us tell stories, share information and show important features of an area.

Sharing Our Ideas

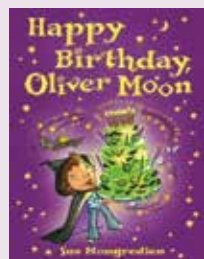
The children have been developing their writing skills by describing places, explaining their choices and presenting their ideas clearly. We are very proud of our colourful wall display showcasing our maps and written work.

Primary 3: Oliver Moon Adventures

P3 are currently enjoying *Happy Birthday Oliver Moon* by Sue Mongredien. The class are loving the *Oliver Moon* series and are already reading their fourth book since returning

to school in August.

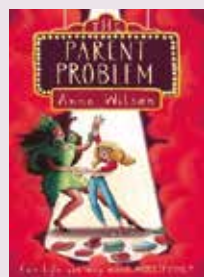
Super Descriptions
We have been focusing on descriptive writing and learning how adjectives can make our writing more interesting and engaging for our readers.



Describing Bubble Success

The class have been using a describing bubble to help generate ideas and choose exciting vocabulary for their writing.

"We love finding powerful describing words to add to our stories!"



Primary 4: The

Parent Problem
P4 are enjoying their class novel, *The Parent Problem* by Anna Wilson.

Improving Presentation

The class are focusing on joining their handwriting correctly and taking pride in the presentation of their work.



Primary 5:

A Girl Called Joy

P5 are reading *A Girl Called Joy* by Jenny Valentine, the story of a girl who has a special talent for finding the good in every situation.

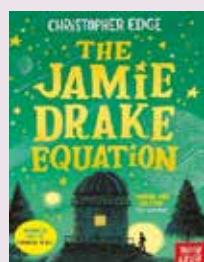
Finding the Silver Linings

Inspired by the novel, the class have been exploring positive thinking and discussing how we can look for silver linings when challenges arise.

Powerful Language

Our class novel is full of similes and metaphors, giving us lots of opportunities to explore figurative language and use it to inspire our own writing.

"We have enjoyed using similes and metaphors to make our writing more interesting."



Primary 6:

Reaching for the Stars

P6 are reading *The Jamie Drake Equation* by Christopher Edge alongside comprehension activities linked to our interdisciplinary

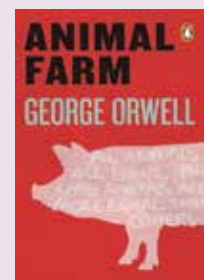
learning on the Solar System.

Writing Across the Curriculum

We are developing our writing skills across a range of genres while exploring fascinating facts about space and our solar system.

Postie Pal Excitement

The class are also preparing to begin the *Kidlit Scotland Postie Pal* scheme with author Barbara Henderson. We look forward to receiving our first postcard and writing our reply.



Primary 7:

Exploring Animal Farm

P7 are reading *Animal Farm* by George Orwell as our class novel. Through our Reflective Reading

approach, we are making predictions, asking questions, identifying important themes and discussing the author's choices and their impact on readers.

We have been exploring characters, analysing key events and supporting our ideas with evidence from the text. Pupils have also been developing their understanding of vocabulary, inference and symbolism while considering the wider messages within the novel.

Class discussions have been lively and insightful, with pupils showing increasing confidence in sharing and justifying their opinions.

Writing: Historical Fiction

As part of our learning about the Battle of Linlithgow Bridge, P7 have been creating historical fiction.

We began by writing detailed setting descriptions, using sensory language

and powerful vocabulary to create atmosphere and engage the reader. We then developed characters, created tension and used historical research to help make our stories more authentic.

Through drafting, peer discussion and editing, we refined our work and transformed our original descriptions into complete historical narratives. We are proud of the creativity and effort shown by all our young writers.

Looking Ahead

From rhyming stories and emotional literacy in Primary 1 to historical fiction and literary analysis in Primary 7, pupils across Linlithgow Bridge Primary School have enjoyed a wonderful start to the year. We look forward to sharing more reading, writing and learning successes in our next edition of *Pages from the Bridge*.

The Primary 7 Editorial Team

LOCAL ARTISTS IN PINEWOODS PROJECT

Linlithgow locals are among a group of artists involved in an imaginative art project to record the trees at Kinneil Pinewoods in Bo'ness before they are removed.

The pinewoods were planted after the Second World War to provide pit props and now are too tall and long overdue for harvesting. Whenever there is a storm, a large area of them gets blown down like matchsticks. The long-term plan is to replace them with a mix of deciduous trees, encourage far greater biodiversity, and create a new, better, natural amenity woodland.

Leading the art project is Megan Lyall, who is well-known for her art classes and Arch painting in Bo'ness. She told me:

"In late 2025 I first heard of the proposal to restructure Kinneil Pinewoods. Many, many people use the woods and love them. They have a sense of history and grandeur; they feel like another world far from modern life."

"This project is an attempt to make artwork which will encapsulate the place and its atmosphere, giving us as artists - experts and beginners alike - strong memories and huge challenges, and sharing the results with others who love the woods."

All through the summer, Megan has been meeting up with others in the woods to make art inspired by the setting. A whole variety of people have been involved, including established and beginner artists, children and families, photographers and dog walkers. Megan explained:

"Some participants are making their own mementoes to keep; others intend to share and sell their work. Spending time outside trying to paint surrounded by trees (and midges) has been an enriching experience, even when it goes wrong!"

An exhibition of some of the artwork that the project has inspired will take place from 31st October to 14th November 2026 at Firefly Gallery, 105 North Street, Bo'ness (open daily 11-4pm) and at Bo'ness Library (usual library opening hours). Work at Firefly will be available to buy. Further information about the Pinewoods project and the exhibition can be obtained from Megan Lyall at c.m.lyall@gmail.com. Tel. 07982414953



Murdoch Kennedy

ART WORK BY
MARTINE STEAD

FROM
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Far From The Madding Crowd Bookshop

Far From The Madding Crowd Bookshop is welcoming an outstanding number of talented authors of both fiction and non-fiction (plus one large Gruffalo!) to Linlithgow this autumn, so here's a round-up of the authors we couldn't cover in the last edition!

Calling all cat lovers! **Alex Howard**, the best-selling author of *Ghost Cat* and *Library Cat* has a new book out and he's heading this way to tell us all about it! The Ship's Cat has been described as The Odyssey for felines, so join us for this epic tale on **Wednesday 30th September at 7pm in St Peter's Church!**

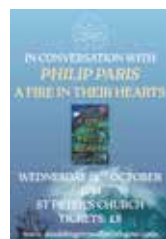
A reminder that both **Ian Rankin** and **the Gruffalo** are visiting Linlithgow in the **first week of October**: not together, though that would be fun! The Gruffalo is now sold out, although we're running a waiting list, so do get in touch if you're interested.

On **Wednesday 14th October** we're offering another afternoon event with the best-selling author of The Last Witch of Scotland and The Italian Chapel in Orkney. **Philip Paris's** latest novel, *A Fire in their Hearts* centres around the

turmoil in Scotland during the 1660s as Charles II tightened his grip on the church and state. It's going to delight fans as well as new readers, and we're very much looking forward to welcoming Philip to Linlithgow for the first time.

Next up, on **Thursday 29th October** join us for a really special evening celebrating the power of cold water! **Brigid Lowe's** *Shiver* charts her pledge to swim in 1000 Scottish lochs, while **Beth McDonough's** *A Year in Water* is a mixture of poetry and prose, recipes and tips all based a calendar year of cold water swimming. We'll be hearing from both Brigid and Beth throughout the evening, so shake off your dry robe and head to St Peter's to embrace the healing power of a cold water dip!

The *perfect* way to start the Christmas season! **Coinneach Macleod**, otherwise known as the Hebridean Baker, is coming to Linlithgow to celebrate his latest book: *Hebridean Baker: A Scottish Christmas!* And even better, Coinneach will be interviewed by **Sue Lawrence** - one of

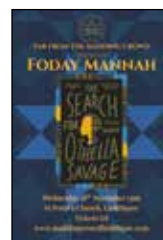


our favourite writers and of course, a hugely talented cookery writer herself! So come and

get into the Christmas spirit with us on **Wednesday 4th November in St Michael's Church!**

Finally, we're delighted to welcome **Foday Mannah** to talk about his brilliant *The Search for Othella Savage*. Foday is a teacher at James Young High, and his thriller is set between Edinburgh and Sierra Leone, where Foday is originally from. **Callum McSorley**, author of the Ally McCoist thrillers, will be interviewing Foday as a special treat on **Wednesday 18th November in St Peter's Church.**

Tickets for all our events are available in the bookshop, or online at: www.maddingcrowdlinlithgow.com



THE WILLOW TREE LINLITHGOW

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Acoustics Bruce JAMMING SESSION
FRIDAY 2ND OCTOBER
8PM - LATE

Saturday Entertainment

3RD OCTOBER	Will Treeby
10TH OCTOBER	Euan Russell
17TH OCTOBER	Ryan Lamie
24TH OCTOBER	Sammie Lee
31ST OCTOBER	Gerry's Karaoke
Sunday 1st November	Under Cover 5PM - 8PM

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FAIR TRADE Jerry O'Dwyer

A Customer Assistant and young customer sporting their Fair trade Badges at Grow Wild Organics, Bonnyton Farm.



In March 2026, The Sunday Times named Linlithgow the overall best place to live in Scotland in its annual Best Places to Live guide. Our historic West Lothian town was praised for its family-friendly atmosphere, medieval high street, and easy commuting. Although we are in the midst of a "cost of living crisis" most of us are fortunate to live in relative comfort.

On the other hand our TV, Press and other media coverage keeps us acutely aware and allows us to see that there are other areas within our own country that are much less fortunate. Plus we cannot fail to be moved by the horrors we see in the many troubled areas such as Ukraine, Iran, Palestine etc where the environment is terribly war torn and people suffer great hardships.

This makes the news headlines for all the wrong reasons.

However, no less news worthy is the fact that there are even more people around the globe who currently appear compelled to suffer in silence. They live in seemingly relatively peaceful conditions, working extremely hard, being overall economic contributors to their societal economies, yet they themselves, their families and often times their environments, suffer greatly as a result of their labours. They can be trapped in these terrible circumstances, subsisting yet without an alternative for themselves or their children. They are employed by organisations making products and foods that may ultimately sustain our way of life... sustaining our "best

way of living" here in Linlithgow. We can therefore end up, inadvertently, contributing to sustaining their misery when we buy these products.

Fair trade aims to create fairer and more sustainable global business systems. It helps farmers and workers in developing countries earn stable pay, secure safe working conditions, protect the natural environment, and gain more control over their own futures.

ECONOMIC AIMS

Fair Prices: Set a minimum price that covers the average cost of sustainable farming.

Extra Funds: Provide a financial bonus (the Fairtrade Premium) for community and business investments.

Long-Term Support: Build lasting trade partnerships and offer financial advances (pre-financing) for harvests.

SOCIAL AIMS

Safe Labour: Ban forced labour, child labour, and workplace discrimination.

Worker Rights: Support safe conditions and the freedom to form worker unions.

Equality: Promote gender equality and empower women in local economies.

ENVIRONMENTAL AIMS

Eco-Friendly Farming: Reduce harmful chemicals and cut down won waste.

Our local Linlithgow Fair Trade Partnership seeks to publicise these efforts and create awareness

throughout our town by working with Schools, Libraries, Churches and other Organisations to this end.

But you can help directly!

You may have already helped by Supporting Fair Trade fortnight...

Fairtrade Fortnight 2026 took place from Monday, 21 September to Sunday, 4 October 2026. Under the banner "Do it Fair," the campaign focused on championing fair pay, supporting producers against climate change impacts, and securing sustainable futures for global farmers and workers. Look for publicity and contacts in your local church and other organisations plus around the town.

And you can definitely help now by buying Fair Trade Products locally. In order to help you, we have attached a list of products and locations locally... look out for the Fair trade marque and help by purchasing these items for your family's weekly shop.

Make it a regular habit to seek out Fair Trade products.

"Do It Fair"... please!

FAIR TRADE PRODUCTS AVAILABLE LOCALLY

MARKS & SPENCER

TESCO

GROW WILD

OXFAM

ALDI

LIDL (BO'NESS)

SAINSBURY'S

CALLUNA FAIR (FORMALLY - FAIR TRADEWINDS)

Produce includes:

Chocolate, Coffee, Tea, Sugar, Spices Chutneys, Jams Mustard, Nuts, Wine, Salad Dressings

For more info look online M&S Fairtrade Products. Same for ALDI, TESCO, LIDL etc.



CLOCKING IN FOR LAMP'S HILARIOUS PRODUCTION OF 9 TO 5 THE MUSICAL!



FROM
20
OCT

Pour yourself a cup of ambition, Linlithgow - the workplace revolt of the decade is coming to town! This October, Linlithgow Amateur Musical Productions (LAMP) is taking over the Linlithgow Academy Theatre to stage the ultimate high-energy, high-comedy show: 9 to 5 the Musical. Expect big hair, bad bosses, 1970s office fashion and a whole lot of sweet revenge.

Based on the hit 1980 film, 9 to 5 the Musical follows three very different women who find themselves pushed to breaking point by their sexist, egotistical boss. Violet, Doralee and Judy may come from very different backgrounds, but when they discover they have plenty in common, they decide it is time to take matters into their own hands. What follows is a hilarious story of friendship, empowerment and three women determined to take control of their own futures.

Of course, no production of 9 to 5 would be complete without the iconic music of Dolly Parton. From the instantly recognisable title song 9 to 5 to musical numbers including Backwoods Barbie, Shine Like the Sun and Get Out and Stay Out, audiences can expect a score packed with Parton's trademark warmth, wit and infectious melodies. With its themes of friendship, equality and women finding their voices, the show feels just as relevant today as it did when the original film first hit the screen.

Leading the workplace rebellion is a dream-team trio: Siobhan Smith steps into the shoes of Violet, the ultra-capable, ambitious supervisor who is tired of watching less-qualified men step over her on the corporate ladder. Hannah Allan (who directed last year's

hit Anything Goes!) jumps into the spotlight as Doralee, the warm-hearted, country-glam secretary who proves there's a whole lot of brain behind that big blonde hair. Completing the trio is Fiona Scott as Judy, serving up pure comedy and heart as a nervous, newly single newcomer who transforms into a fierce, confident powerhouse.

Of course, every great story needs a boss you love to hate, and John Knox is brilliantly tackling Franklin Hart Jr. - the arrogant, self-important CEO who gets his very hilarious comeuppance. Stealing scenes alongside him is Rebecca Holmes as Roz, the hyper-loyal office manager harboring a hilariously unrequited crush on her boss.

Rehearsals have been full of energy, laughter and, perhaps unsurprisingly, plenty of dancing! With a score filled with Dolly Parton's irresistible music, the cast have been throwing themselves into the choreography and discovering the fun and heart at the centre of the show. As one member of the company puts it, "There is something uplifting about singing and dancing to Dolly Parton's music. This show tells a story about women finding their voices and the strength that comes from working together. It is a really fun show, but underneath all the laughter is a wonderful message about friendship, empowerment and the importance of being a team."

At the heart of this high-energy production is a talented creative team. Claire Withnell takes on the role of Director, bringing her vision and experience to a show that balances comedy, music and very important themes. Eddie MacLennan returns as Musical Director, helping bring Dolly Parton's distinctive score to life, while Sarah-Louise Donnelly as Choreographer ensures that the

production is packed with movement, energy and plenty of 1970s style.

Behind the scenes, the LAMP team are working hard to transport audiences straight into the world of a 1970s office. From costumes inspired by the era to the scenery and office set being created by the dedicated set team, every detail is being brought together to capture the look and feel of the period. As always, the work of the backstage, costume, scenery and technical teams will be an essential part of bringing the story to life.

This year's production takes on an added poignancy following the recent passing of Dolly Parton. Parton died aged 80 on 25 August 2026, leaving behind an extraordinary musical legacy that stretches across generations. Her music, humour and ability to champion ordinary people made her an especially fitting voice for a story about three working women discovering their own strength. LAMP's production therefore offers not only an entertaining celebration of one of her most famous works, but also a heartfelt tribute to the woman behind the music.

After last year's acclaimed production of Anything Goes, LAMP is once again preparing to welcome audiences to the Linlithgow Academy Theatre for an evening of live music, laughter and community theatre at its finest.



So, leave the office behind! Gather your colleagues, friends and family and join LAMP for a celebration of friendship, teamwork and sticking it to the boss!

SHOW DETAILS:

Dates: 20th - 24th October

Times: Nightly at 7:30pm, Saturday matinee 2:30pm

Venue: Linlithgow Academy Theatre

Show rating: PG

Tickets: Book via the website; <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/linlithgowamateurmusicalproductionsboxoffice> or using the QR Code.

Team LAMP



Photography: Abbie Holmes



Falkirk & Linlithgow Hockey Club wants you on the pitches. New players welcome at every age and every level. No experience needed, and taster sessions are free.



Falkirk & Linlithgow Hockey Club is looking for new players this season, and you do not need to have picked up a stick before. The club runs hockey for children from primary school age right through to adults of all ages, with squads for men, women, boys and girls. If you have ever fancied trying it, or getting your child into a team sport, this is the invitation.

Go along to Linlithgow Academy on a Saturday and you will see why most afternoons the senior teams are out playing league hockey, and the two groups usually stay on to watch each other.

The club was formed in 2017, when Falkirk GHG Men, Linlithgow Ladies and Linlithgow Juniors decided they would be better off together. It now has over 280 members across the Falkirk and West Lothian districts, multiple senior squads and a thriving junior academy, holding Scottish Hockey Gold Club Accreditation since 2022.

Juniors get kitted out from day one

Parents know the drill with a new sport. You are buying kit before your child has even tried it.

Not here. Every new junior member is given shinguards, a gumshield, a club hoodie, a training top and socks as part of their membership. There is nothing to buy first. Local businesses Westport Veterinary clinic, Hendry Opticians, AGL Architect and M.F Scaffold & Inspection back the junior academy directly, so no child is kept out on cost.

Children start in the Yellow Sticks group and work up through Orange, Red, Navy and Sky. They move on confidence rather than age, so nobody gets pushed along before they are ready. From there come the U12 and U14 sides, East League matches and youth festivals, then school hockey and eventually a senior team.

A first session could not be simpler. Your child turns up in trainers, gets handed a stick, and a coach takes the group through the basics. Parents are welcome to stay and watch. Every coach is PVG

checked, trained in first aid and holds child wellbeing and protection training.

Here is what one parents recent feedback was:

"I can't believe the difference hockey has made to our child. Not just her hockey skills but her confidence and social skills. Thanks so much to the coaches for making sure she's able to get involved and be herself" and its summed up by 7yr old Abigail perfectly "I don't know why but after I've been at hockey I always feel like a superhero!"

Adults, it is not too late

The club fields eleven senior squads across men's, ladies', veterans and indoor hockey. Some play national league. Others are development sides where the point is to learn the game and enjoy the Saturday. Almost everyone finds a level that fits.

If you have never played or last played twenty years ago and have quietly

wondered about going back, the Back2Hockey sessions are made for exactly that. Bring trainers. The club will lend you a stick and nobody minds a bit of rust.

Senior training is on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings at Linlithgow Academy, with matches on Saturday afternoons.

And plenty beyond the hockey

Ask the members what keeps them coming back and few of them mention results. They talk about the summer mixed hockey on Tuesday evenings, indoor hockey during the winter, the 7s festival that brings out old players and half their families, and the awards dance every May. Hockey has always been a sociable game and the club has kept it that way.

Come and give it a go

The season is up and running and the club is looking for new players now, junior and senior alike. Taster sessions are free with no obligation to sign up afterwards. Bring a friend if it helps. Most members did.

To arrange a session or just ask a question, email : FALHCinfo@gmail.com, or visit www.falkirkandlinlithgowhockeyclub.co.uk You will also find the club on Facebook, Instagram and X.

Scott Ferguson

TRAINING TIMES:

Junior Training Primary School
Age Group: Wednesday or Thursday
6:15pm – 7:15pm

Junior Training Secondary School
Age Groups: Wednesday 7:15 – 8:15pm

Junior Training at Falkirk High:
Thursday 6:15 – 7:30pm

Ladies Club Training:
Wednesday – 8:15pm – 9:45pm

Mens Club Training:
Thursday – 7:15pm – 9:15pm

JOIN US:

Club contact:
FALHCinfo@gmail.com

Website:
www.falkirkandlinlithgowhockeyclub.co.uk

Socials:

Facebook /FalkirkLgowHockey
Instagram @falkirkandlinlithgowhc
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SIXTY YEAR MILESTONE FOR LINLITHGOW PRIMARY SCHOOL Murdoch Kennedy



2027 will mark the sixtieth anniversary of the Linlithgow Primary School building on Preston Road and the staff are keen to celebrate this milestone in fine style.



A number of events are being planned for the summer term, and in preparation for this, an appeal is being issued for old photographs and memorabilia, which will help to illustrate the story of the past sixty years.

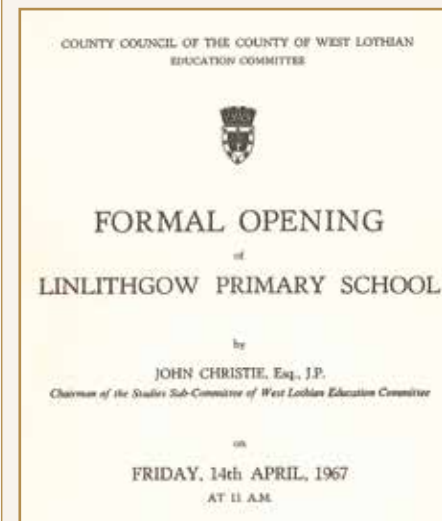
I met up recently with the head teacher, Miss Laura Baillie, who told me:

"Our plan is that in the summer term, we will be opening up our school to the community and allowing people to come in and celebrate the memories of the sixty years of Linlithgow Primary on the Preston Road site. That will be a chance for former pupils to reflect on their own school days, to share stories of the teachers, janitors, dinner ladies and cleaners of the past, and to celebrate the school's history. We are looking for people in Linlithgow and beyond to send in any photos or snippets of information, or funny anecdotes or stories and we will keep an electronic file. We will use all that information as part of our celebrations and to tell the story of the school".

Miss Baillie also regards 2027 as

the perfect opportunity to see the completion of two projects the school has been working on, namely the restoration of the bell, which originally hung at the old Linlithgow Public School at the West Port – the

luxury of inside toilets and school meals cooked on the premises, was tempered in the autumn term by news of the Aberfan disaster. This was the catastrophic collapse of a colliery spoil tip in the Welsh village of Aberfan,



forerunner of Linlithgow Primary – and the replacement of the stage curtains, which have been in place since 1967. It is hoped that fundraising events next year, as part of the sixtieth anniversary celebrations, will see these projects finally come to fruition.

In another initiative, a reminiscence group is being established, where 1967 pupils – people born between 1955 and 1961 – can recall their memories in a relaxed and informal atmosphere. These memories can then be shared with children currently attending the school. If you were at Linlithgow Primary School in 1967, the school would love to hear from you and would encourage you to meet up with others in the reminiscence group.

The new Linlithgow Primary School on Preston Road first opened its doors to pupils on Monday January 9th 1967, but the formal official opening, led by the Headmaster, **Mr William Alexander**, did not take place until Friday April 14th. I was in P3 at the time, with **Miss Whyte** as my teacher, and we started the 1966-1967 session the previous August in a hutted classroom beside the old school building at the West Port.

My excitement at the imminent move to a brand-new school, with the

near Merthyr Tydfil, that killed 116 children and 28 adults on 21 October 1966. The collapse was caused by the build-up of water in the accumulated rock and shale tip above the village, which suddenly slid downhill in the form of slurry, destroying the village school and adjacent houses. Our new school lay next to the Union canal and to an impressionable seven-year-old, the fear that the canal would burst its banks and engulf the whole building was very real.

This is a story that I would like to share with the pupils of 2026-2027 and I am sure that my contemporaries must have many others. A former class mate – **Jill Old (nee Thom)** - tells me, for example, that she was the very first pupil ever to be inside the school, as her grandfather was the night watchman and he used to take her round to see how the building work was progressing.

Anybody who thinks they may be able to contribute to the 60th anniversary, either with photos, memorabilia, or reminiscences, should contact Linlithgow Primary School by email at willinlithgow-ps@westlothian.org.uk or by telephone on 01506 842686.



LINLITHGOW & DISTRICT COMMUNITY DAY CARE CENTRE

“People Who Care” is located in the Partnership Centre in the middle of Linlithgow High Street providing day care support for up to sixteen frail older people with varying degrees of dementia, each day **(Mon – Thurs) from 09.00-5pm**; 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 ideal intermediate local caring service.

Our regular daily activities tailored for individual clients include games of bingo, quizzes, carpet bowls, dominoes, and reminiscence work with famous faces from the past bringing back special memories for the clients.

Also, our recent acquisition of an

interactive table similar to a giant tablet or pad 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 at Linlithgow Cross**, providing ‘a happy, joyful atmosphere for both those with memory loss and their carers’.

Coming up shortly is one of our key annual fund raisers - our **Prize Bingo in Linlithgow Rose Social Club on 14th October**, to which everyone is cordially invited for the fun and games.

Our recent visits for the clients have included days out to Fife and lunch at the Red Lion in Culross, and fish suppers have been much enjoyed from Corvi’s in Bo’ness and Benny T’s in Falkirk. We’re also planning a visit shortly to Bo’ness steam railway where the clients will also be entertained by the classic cars of Linlithgow Classics car club.

We’re a registered charity depending upon raising funds to provide equipment and summer outings for the clients; and for the various donations



from 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.

Dave Keddie



LINLITHGOW ROSE SPORTING MEMORIES CLUB BRINGING SPORTING MEMORIES TO LIFE

Finally in the top three sponsors this year was Scottish Power who donated £205 via Sarah Gordon (my son Harry’s girlfriend). A big thank you to you all, but big or small, we welcome all donations and guarantee they will be put to good use for our members’ enjoyment.

like-minded sports enthusiasts. All sexes are welcome. We have sports quizzes, sports crosswords, music, days out and the numbers just keep growing. Our recent canal trip was very enjoyable and our thanks go to **Skipper Martine Stead** and her crew.



Photography: Martine Stead

Our club provides a welcoming environment where people can come together, enjoy a cup of tea and biscuits, have a chat, - but most importantly, relive some of their happiest memories through sport.

A huge thank you must go to organisations, businesses and individuals, both local and further afield, who have supported us.

These include Linlithgow Bowling Club, Kingsfield Golf Club, The Linlithgow Union Canal Society (LUCS), the local Rotary and Round Table tables, Chris Blyth Joinery, Cycling Without Age, Lockton Insurance, Scottish Power and J & W Harris.

Some special sponsors are worth a shout-out; A special mention to Kirsty McLean from Lockton Insurance, whose father Alex is a much-loved regular attendee. Lockton gave the club £1,000 and we have already started to eat into these funds by having a day out on the Union Canal and a small brunch at the Park Bistro.

Also, to Chris Blyth of Chris Blyth Joinery who raised £750 for us by walking the West Highland Way recently.

The club also relies on a team of volunteers; the founding members myself (**Peter Maguire**), **Jon Mahoney** and **Drew McErlean** have now been joined by a growing list of great volunteers / helpers in **Ken Gardiner, Stephen Hallows, Anne-Marie and Mark Barron, Murdoch Kennedy, Neil MacDonald and Charlie McPhillips.**

Our volunteers carry out a variety of tasks ranging from organising events, providing teas and coffees and biscuits, setting up the room, arranging transport, and sourcing sporting heroes to come and chat to us. They are also the fore in providing entertainment through sing-songs and recitations.

There is one very important rule at Sporting Memories – you have to have a very thick skin. There is a good mix of supporters of differing teams, but the banter is all good natured. However, you definitely want your team to win the day before we meet!

The club is much more than sport, it’s about friendship, companionship, laughter and sharing memories from the past.

For many people, those memories of football, golf, cycling, athletics, rugby, even cricket can bring back happy times and provide a real sense of connection. The club welcomes anyone who suffers from dementia or Alzheimer’s or indeed anyone who is lonely or bored or simply just wants to get out and mix with

LINLITHGOW ROSE F.C. FORTHCOMING FIXTURES OCTOBER 2026

SAT. 3 Scottish Cup 1st round – Clydebank Home 3pm

SAT. 10 South Challenge Cup – to be confirmed

SAT. 17 Lowland League – Berwick Rangers. Away 3pm

SAT. 24 Scottish Cup 2nd round – to be confirmed

TUES. 27 Lowland League. Musselburgh. Home. 7.45pm

SAT. 31 Lowland League. Stirling University Home 3pm

NOVEMBER 2026

SAT. 7 Lowland League. Hill of Beath Away 3pm.

If you fancy giving it a go – or are a business who would like to help - we are based at the Linlithgow Rose FC ground (boardroom at halfway line under main stand) every Thursday from 1.15pm to 3.00pm. Alternatively contact me at pedromaguire57@hotmail.com

Once again, thanks to everyone who donates, attends and helps out, it is all greatly appreciated.

Peter Maguire



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OAKWELL ALLOTMENTS IN OCTOBER

LINLITHGOW AND DISTRICT ALLOTMENT SOCIETY



This has been a bumper year for crops and many of us grow too much for personal use. We are fortunate to have a well-established link with Jerry O'Dwyer who runs the growing space at St Michael's Roman Catholic Church. This project is funded and managed by the Society of St Vincent de Paul. The old tennis courts at the church have been repurposed using raised beds on the courts to grow vegetables for the food bank in Bathgate. We donate surplus fruit and vegetables to the Foodbank via Jerry.

We also have a link with the Salvation Army in Falkirk. They feed about 60 people a day. When our link with Jerry finishes for the year (usually later on this month) any further donations go to the kitchen in Falkirk.

Our thanks to all for helping us support those who can use our surplus produce rather than it going to waste.

What to do in October

> Autumn cauliflowers should be ready to harvest.

> Some varieties of broccoli, cabbage and spinach are also ready to pick.



> And there's always kale/kalettes for picking which is a good winter crop. Kalettes are a cross between brussel sprouts and kale. They produce little florets all the way up the stem in the same way that brussel sprouts grow. Just break them off and stir fry or steam – delicious! They are very hardy and last all winter.

> Some apple/pear varieties are still being picked in October.



> There is still time to plant peas and bean seeds to overwinter.

> Garlic can be planted up until November.

> Winter lettuce can still be sown outside and spring onions can be sown under fleece or cloches.

> Spring greens can be planted out about 15 cm (6 inches) apart. Spring greens are the first cabbages of the year. They have fresh, loose heads without the hard heart of other cabbages. They can be thinned to 30 cm (12 inches) apart in spring using the thinnings as greens and allowing the ones left to grow on as cabbages. It is always wise to cover all brassicas with netting as the birds love them, particularly over the winter.

> Harvest squash and pumpkins. A good test of when they are ready is if the stem has gone brown and hard and a finger nail does not penetrate the skin. Cut the stem leaving about 3 cm attached to the plant. This helps them store better. Pumpkins are traditionally used at Halloween but they are a great crop to keep over the winter for soups, stews and just roasted in the oven. Store in a cool, dry place. I store in shredded paper in boxes in a dark, dry, cool cupboard. I can still be using them as late as April. They must be checked regularly for any that may be going soft.



> When the green fronds of asparagus turn yellow cut them down to the ground. The asparagus bed always benefits from a good layer of mulch (compost, wood chip or manure at this time of year) – about 10 cm deep if possible.

> When the blackberries are finished fruiting they can be pruned.

> Between now and the end of February is a good time to plant rhubarb crowns.

> This is a good time to buy strawberry runners (plants that have grown from the parent plant) to replace old plants or to fill gaps. Strawberry plants usually only have a life of about four years before they begin to lose vigour and the fruit tends to be smaller and not as abundant.

> Sowing green manure on bare soil will continue to work for you over the winter months.

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

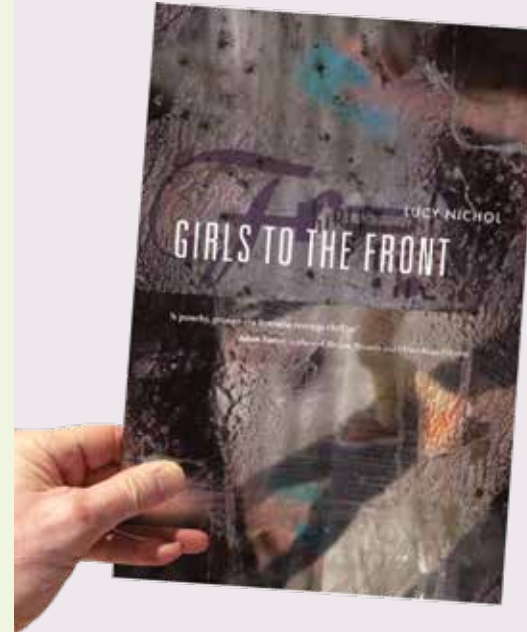
IMPORTANT NOTICE: There is a waiting list for plots. Please contact us using the CONTACT US page on our website.

Val Corry
Chair LADAS



GIRLS TO THE FRONT

LUCY NICOL



"A dead body. A woman with blood on her hands. Will footage on an old videotape and some dark magic uncover the truth?"

Roma is a twenty-something music enthusiast who works in Electric Dreams, a vintage music shop. She has worked there for the best part of 10 years, since graduating with a computer-science degree, and after a brief period doing a digital communications apprenticeship. The owner of the shop, Richard, is passionate about ensuring they stock only musical relics and retro items that will "excite obsessive fans and hardcore geeks".

This novel centres around a decades-old mystery that is unearthed when Roma finds an old VHS tape in a house clearance box that arrives unexpectedly in Electric Dreams one day. With a peeling and fading label, it is difficult for her to know what is recorded on the tape. It is accompanied only by a cryptic and slightly sinister note, written on the back of a newspaper article about an old rock band - "Shhh...loud girls get what's coming to them".

When Roma watches the video, it becomes clear that the footage has been recorded by a person unknown and has captured a terrible crime – a violation against another human being. Roma feels a personal connection to the crime that has been committed, and this leads her on a quest to uncover more about the people she has seen on the video. Who are the rock band? Where was the footage filmed? Who is the girl with the distinctive tattoo in the video? Who was, or perhaps still is, the loud girl referenced in the note?

The people around Roma attempt to help her delve into the past to solve this historic crime. As she becomes more consumed by her mission to uncover the truth and seek justice, so too do we become drawn into the narrative.

Author **Lucy Nicol** ensures the novel remains pacy and compelling by switching between Roma's life in 2024 and the perspective of Kat, whose account gradually reveals the events leading up to those captured on the VHS tape in 1995. Through Kat's eyes, we understand the context of the events and get to know the key protagonists involved in this disturbing story. Nicol sets out to shine a spotlight on past attitudes towards men and women, and the inequalities and injustices faced by women in the last century.

Girls to the Front is a compelling blend of mystery, social commentary and nostalgia, with its 1990s music scene providing a vivid backdrop to a dark and unsettling story. Nicol keeps the pages turning through her dual narrative structure, while exploring themes of sexism, power and justice. Fans of character-driven crime fiction and music-centred novels will find much to enjoy here.

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



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St Joseph's Primary has had a fantastic start to the new school term, with pupils taking part in a range of exciting learning opportunities. We would like to share some of the highlights from our recent learning.

Battle 500



We were delighted to welcome Sally Pattle to St Joseph's Primary to talk to pupils about the special commemorative events taking place to mark the 500th anniversary of the Battle of Linlithgow Bridge, which took place on 4 September 1526.

The children were fascinated to learn about this important event in our local history and were excited to discover how our community is coming together to commemorate such a significant moment in the story of our town. Through these experiences, pupils have been developing their understanding of Linlithgow's rich heritage and the importance of remembering local historical events.

As part of the wider Battle 500 programme, our Primary 6 pupils were invited to attend the 'While the Battle's at the Brig' performance by the Linlithgow Players, while our Primary 7 pupils had the honour of attending a special memorial service commemorating the battle. These valuable experiences brought history to life and helped deepen pupils' understanding of the events of 1526 and their significance to Linlithgow today.

We are incredibly proud of the enthusiasm shown by our pupils and look forward to continuing our Battle 500 learning throughout the year. Below, St Joseph's pupils share some of the interesting facts and insights they have discovered through their learning.



Primary 4/5

After learning about the battle, the Primary 4 and 5 pupils enjoyed creating their own shields and reenacted the battle in the playground.

Pupil Voice

"All of Primary 6 joined other schools at Linlithgow Palace to see a play about The Battle of Linlithgow Bridge. Primary 6 thought that the play was very funny.



We learned how the conflict split the town itself, forcing ordinary people of Linlithgow to choose between the Earl of Lennox and the Earl of Arran. The Earl of Arran won the battle even though their army was outnumbered greatly. 10,000 men from Stirling came to fight for Lennox and 2,500 men came and fought for Arran.



The Resilience & humour of the play was through the characteristics of the cheeky "Lithgae" fruit seller. Pupils learned how ordinary citizens used humour and

community spirit to cope with extreme fear, duty, and uncertainty."

Angus and Frankie, Primary 6

"We went to Linlithgow Palace, where a man welcomed everyone and told us that we were going to learn about the Battle 500, which took place in Linlithgow. Then another man spoke to us about the Battle 500 and said a prayer.

We learned that around 3,000 Scottish soldiers died during a power struggle for control of the young King James V. King James V was only about 14 years old and was too young to rule on his own. Two men, the Earl of Arran and the Earl of Lennox, both wanted power. They fought a battle, and the Earl of Arran won because he was better prepared. The Earl of Lennox lost, and many of his troops ran away. Lennox also died during the battle.

After that, we went to St Michael's Church, where some people told us stories about the young king and his mother. Some parts were very funny. We heard about a time when the prince had to choose someone for an important job. He could have chosen his mother, but he did not really want to!

We also got to see the poppy wreaths, including the one that we had helped to create. We were told that there would be a Battle 500 show that evening and the following day. Unfortunately, all the tickets had sold out, so we were not able to go. It must have been very popular!"

Melissa, Primary 7

Jillian Bryce

STILL TIME TO PLANT SOME 'BURIED TREASURES'...

There's still time to plant some 'buried treasures'. These treasures are the spring flowering bulbs that you plant now and the 'forgotten' treasure appears as sparkling blooms next spring. Tulip bulbs are happy to be planted until Christmas, although like most bulbs they will be sold out once we get into November, get hold of them now!



Some tulip varieties will flower year after year but many should really be treated as bedding plants that only perform once, especially if you grow them in pots. Lesley's cutting garden has some varieties that reappear each year, like orange Ballerina, the white and

green Spring Green and rich purple of Queen of the Night. The shorter varieties of tulips Greigii and Kaufmanniana, some with lovely markings on the leaves, reliably reappear each spring.



The potager is just the place for growing varieties to cut and bring indoors without denuding the rest of your garden displays. This Tulip Pretty Princess, with white markings on the edge of the lovely leaves, is growing amongst the strawberry plants in a raised bed.



Most bulbs are happy to be cut and brought indoors. Lesley's tablescapes featuring tulips uses the variegated foliage of Euonymus Emerald Gaiety as the unifying element in the posy pots supported by wallflower blooms.



We always plant the Hyacinth bulbs we have enjoyed inside into our borders, having first left them in the cold greenhouse for the leaves to feed the bulbs with next year's flowers before they die down. These flowers are much more elegant than the rather buxom ones produced in the first year indoors, but equally fragrant and long lasting in the vase.



Daffodils are best planted before the end of October. There are any number of different daffodil varieties to choose, but we tend to favour the shorter ones like this dwarf variety Sailboat, because you can easily fit them into borders, pots and window boxes, and the clumps get fuller each year.



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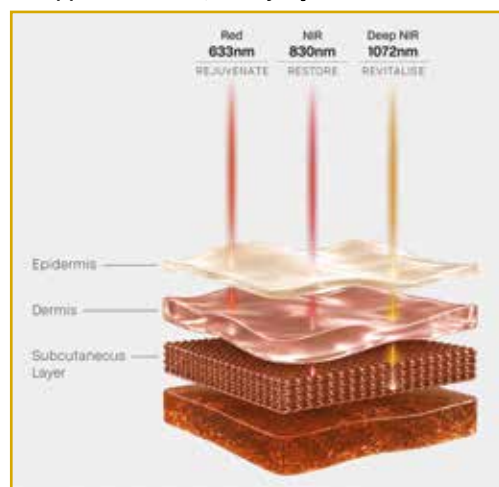
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PAUL ROLFE

HOUSING MARKET COMMENTARY | SEPTEMBER 2026

Paul Rolfe
SALES AND LETTINGSCOTLAND'S ENERGY EFFICIENCY AMBITIONS:
What it means for Homeowners and Landlords

The Scottish Government has reaffirmed its commitment to improving the energy efficiency of homes as part of its wider strategy to tackle fuel poverty and achieve net zero emissions. While improving insulation and reducing energy waste remains a key priority, ministers have acknowledged that energy efficiency measures alone will not be enough to meet Scotland's climate targets. A significant shift away from traditional heating systems towards cleaner, low-carbon technologies will also be required.

With approximately 2.45 million homes across Scotland, ranging from historic stone-built properties to modern new-build developments, the scale of the challenge is considerable. Differences in property age, construction type, location and existing energy performance mean there is no one-size-fits-all solution.

The Road to EPC B

To help reduce fuel poverty, the Government's long-term ambition is to maximise the number of fuel-poor households achieving the equivalent of an EPC Band B rating by 2040. Alongside this, it has committed to fully decarbonising heat in buildings by 2045.

The focus is understandable. Heating homes and buildings accounts for around one fifth of Scotland's greenhouse gas emissions, making residential property a crucial battleground in the fight against

climate change. The vision is for homes that are cleaner, greener, easier to heat and significantly cheaper to run.

Social Housing Leads the Way

The social housing sector has already seen considerable progress. The Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH), introduced in 2014, has driven substantial improvements, with the Government reporting that 85% of social rented homes now achieve an EPC rating of D or above.

Building on this success, the proposed Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing post-2020 (EESH2) seeks to maximise the number of homes reaching EPC Band B by 2032, provided this can be achieved without negatively affecting environmental quality or indoor air standards.

The consultation also proposed that no social housing property should be let after 2025 if it has an energy efficiency rating below EPC D, alongside additional funding support for social landlords to help meet the new standards.

Greater Challenges in the Private Sector

While progress has been made in social housing, the Government believes the private rented sector contains a higher proportion of properties within the lowest energy efficiency bands. As a result, improving standards within private rentals remains a key priority to ensure tenants can live in warmer, more affordable homes.

Owner-occupied homes face similar challenges. In 2019, owner occupiers accounted for 62% of Scotland's

housing stock, yet only 42% of these properties achieved an EPC rating of C or better.

To address this, the Government has proposed legislation requiring privately owned homes to meet minimum energy efficiency standards before the end of 2033. Further proposals include phasing out polluting heating systems by 2045 and potentially requiring homeowners to replace existing systems when purchasing a property or when a heat network becomes available within a designated Heat Network Zone.

What Does This Mean for the Housing Market?

For homeowners, landlords and prospective buyers, energy efficiency is becoming an increasingly important consideration. Future regulations could influence purchasing decisions, renovation priorities and property values, particularly for older homes requiring significant improvements.

While many details remain subject to consultation and legislative approval, the direction of travel is clear. Energy performance is moving from being a desirable feature to becoming a central part of property ownership and management. As Scotland progresses towards its 2045 net zero target, the housing sector will play a pivotal role in achieving that ambition.

For buyers, sellers and landlords alike, understanding a property's energy performance today may prove just as important as its location and size in the years ahead.



PETS' CORNER

This month Westport Vet's Pet of The Month is Kali Monie...



Kali is a four year old Australian Labradoodle.

Kali's owner describes her as friendly, clever, inquisitive, and always ready for fun! She loves meeting people, playing with her doggy friends, and eating tasty treats.

Kali makes her owners smile when she proudly brings them her favourite squeaky toys whenever she wants to play. Her enthusiastic tail wagging always brings a smile to your face! Kali loves learning new tricks (especially if treats are involved!). Her favourite is "paws up", which she happily performs on walks whenever she spots the perfect place.

Her cheeky habit is her love of carrying things around and proudly delivering them to people. Freshly washed socks are irresistible - usually stolen straight from the drying rack! Kali adores her teddies, but her cuddly octopus with its scrunchy, squeaky legs is her favourite for playtime fun.

The beach is Kali's happy place - whether she's zooming across the sand, digging enthusiastically, or paddling in the water - beach days are her favourite kind!

This summer Kali and her owner have been trying out gun dog and scent work classes, which Kali has absolutely loved. She's also been mastering World Cup-themed tricks at her weekly Dog Club (at Lothlorien) and making the most of plenty of beach walks. They are really looking forward to a dog-friendly holiday in the north of Scotland later this year. Kali is already preparing for the important job of inspecting every beach, sniffing all the new smells, and making sure no café goes untested for dog treats!

Kali's coat always looks beautifully maintained - and super clean! We asked her owner how she manages this?

Kali's owner Carol says:

"Kali has an appointment at the groomers every six weeks for a full groom and trim. She gets a shorter haircut in the summer to help keep her cool, and between appointments we keep on top of her nails and trim the fur around her paw pads

and eyes."

"She only gets a bath at home if she's had a very muddy adventure! We brush her every day to keep her coat in good condition and prevent mats. During the summer, every walk ends with a thorough brush and seed check because Kali really enjoys a run through the long grass!"

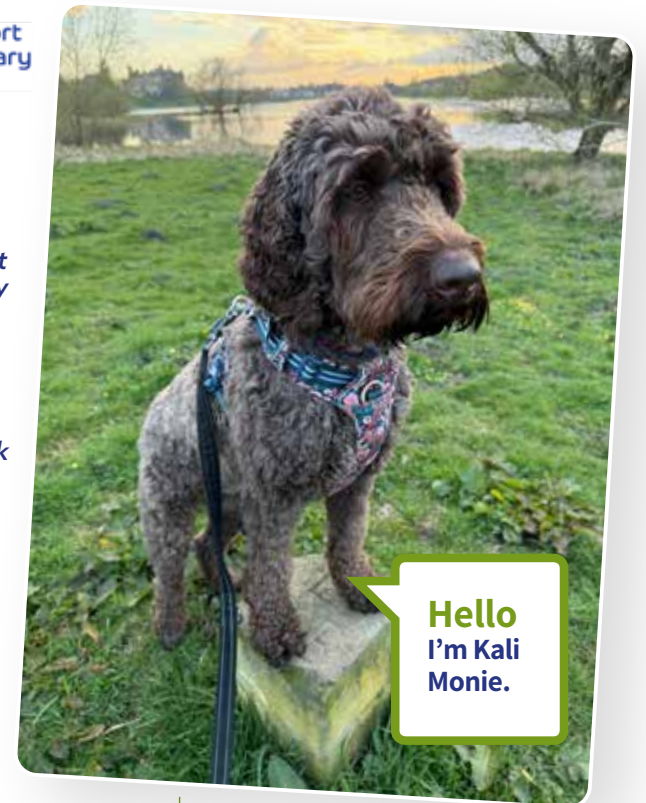
Carol's advice if you are considering getting a dog with a coat like Kali:

"Start looking for a groomer early - they're often very busy. We found ours before Kali even came home and booked her in for puppy sessions. They were a brilliant way to introduce her to the grooming salon, equipment, sounds, and her groomer, so her first full groom felt much less daunting."

Grooming and coat care are an essential part of pet care for every coat type.

Grooming stimulates natural oils in the skin and hair which helps to keep coats healthy. Regular grooming helps prevent matting, removes dirt, dead hair and dandruff. It's also an excellent way to closely monitor pets, checking for any changes, lumps, bumps, or injuries. Start grooming training as early as possible to help pets feel confident being brushed, cleaned, for environments and being handled by someone other than you.

At home they key to building confidence is with patience, consistency and high-value rewards. Daily coat care is essential - some coats attract foliage like a magnet just from the garden and mat easily. Ensure to use the appropriate grooming tools for your pets coat type - they all differ! For dogs who require professional grooming maintenance like Kali, it's vital that this is trained for like Kali's owner has done so they feel confident and to prevent stress. Do your research - ensure you choose a reputable groomer and plan ahead - they can be booked up weeks/months in advance.



Hello
I'm Kali
Monie.

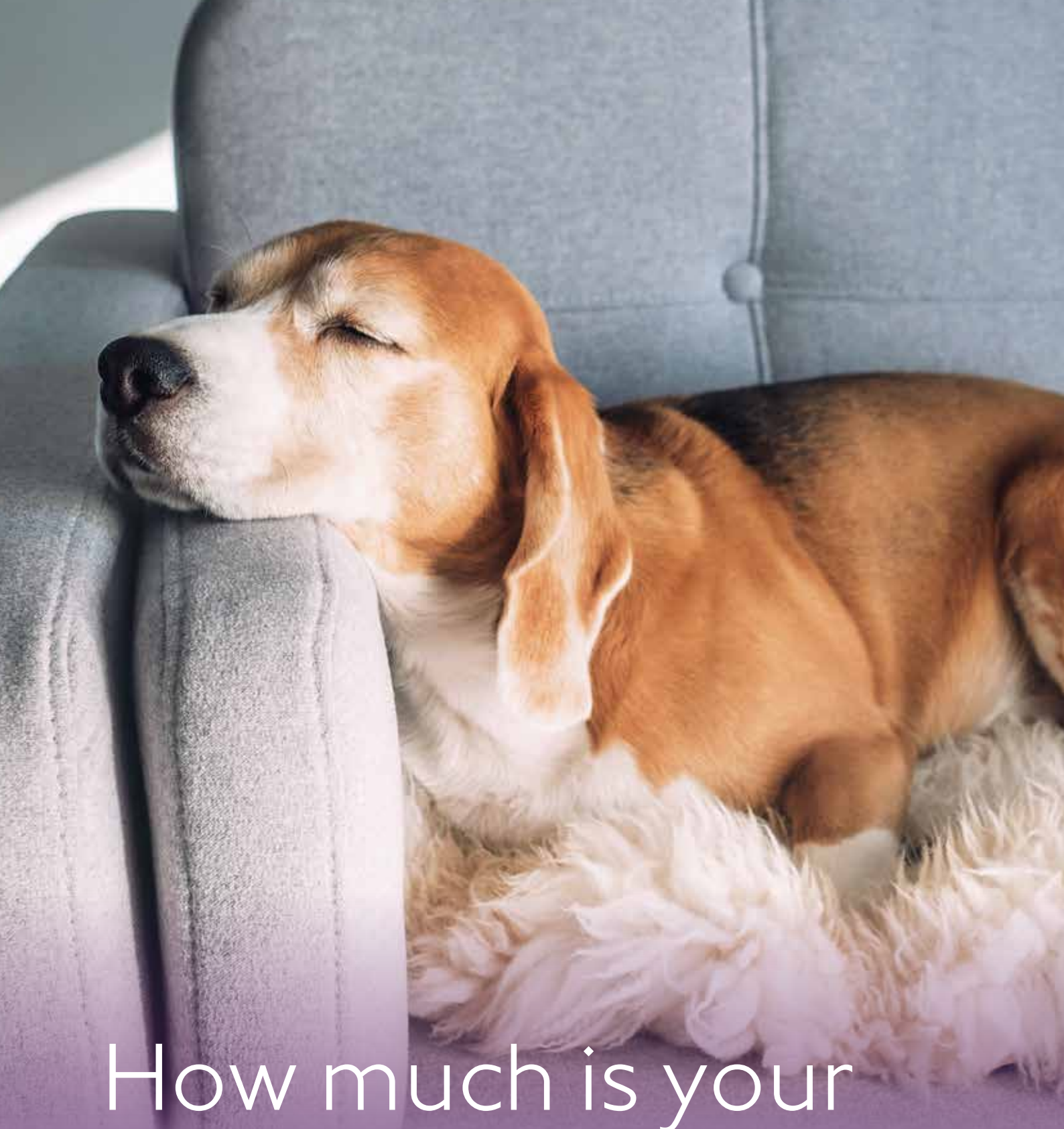
In the same way we recommend doing mini visits to the practice - popping in with your dog for a treat and/or for attention from the team, groomer visits should also be built up. You want your dog to learn that a visit to the groomer is a positive thing!

On a mini-visit the dog learns something good happens and nothing scary happens. Continuing these between appointments is vital to continue this process. If every time your dog visits you leave and they get things done, anxiety and stress builds up.

Coat mats pull on the skin, risk causing skin issues and injuries and are painful. Mats should be dealt with caution and promptly, often require removal from a professional. Never use scissors at home. You can book a nurse appointment for help with grooming or a mat removal or speak to your groomer. Pets over-grooming or under-grooming themselves or excessive licking, can be a symptom that something else is going on, this should always be checked by a vet.

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