

DUNPENDER COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER WINTER 2020/2021

River Tyne Giant Hogweed Eradication Project - East Lothian Countryside Volunteers

Last year we started what seemed like a hugely ambitious project of removing all Giant Hogweed from the River Tyne and its tributaries in East Lothian and Midlothian.

This project which involves 70 farmers and 20 spotters covers a river length in excess of 48 miles. Each one is a volunteer and does all this removal work in their own time and at their own expense.

We have been grateful this year again for some sponsorship from Bayer UK and supply of Roundup for use by our licensed sprayer farmers.

After a difficult start to the year when our spotters were unable to travel to the river, due to COVID-19 restrictions, there was a small but critical time slot when they were able to operate and we dealt with some missed plants and a particularly bad spot only reported late in the season this year upstream of last year's operations at Cousland. With help from our spotter volunteers we removed and sprayed these flowering plants at a critical time, and now with the farmer and his neighbour on board they will continue the good work next year.

Despite all the difficulties posed by this year we have once again achieved our objective of no flowering plants reported on our River Tyne and placed a green tick all along the river and tributaries length.

If anyone sees any such plants please report this with a precise location by email to hogweed@elcv.org.uk.

We have once again benefitted from the GPS on-line mapping tool developed by one of our volunteers to assist landowners to establish which areas of the river to search for plants - <https://www.elcv.org.uk/tasks/invasives/the-program/>.

We have continued with the removal of Japanese Knotweed along the length of the River Tyne and started spraying Himalayan Balsam from some areas of the river as we go through removing Giant Hogweed, where time permits.



This Giant Hogweed eradication scheme will take a number of years to complete but we are pleased and encouraged to have won the Scottish Land and Estates 2020 "Helping it Happen Award Scheme" in the Enhancing our Environment Award Section. It is great to get the recognition from them. www.tinyurl.com/ELCV-THE-SLE-Award

*James Wyllie
Project Co-ordinator
ELCV Giant Hogweed Eradication Project*



East Linton Fountain Repair

The fountain, which is such a feature of East Linton, is under repair, the work funded by Dunsper Community Council and DELAP (Dunbar and East Linton Area Partnership).

A new pump has been fitted, but the light units were found to be of thin copper and unsuitable for repair. The fabricator will fit new lights similar to the existing ones; meanwhile the top looks a little bare. The rest of the fountain is cast iron, and it is intended to restore it to the original bronze colour.

What with last winter's weather and COVID-19, restoration is proving a long-term project.

If you are ever in Dumfries, look for a sister fountain to this one.

From the Editors

Welcome to the 2020 edition of Dunpender News.

During our summer planning period, we wondered if we would receive enough material, given that so many local activities were affected by the COVID-19 situation. As you see many of them have continued, albeit in a different form, new ones have arisen and in general life has continued.

Since the early days of lockdown, many have taken up walking and cycling and discovered the pleasures of the East Lothian countryside. Unfortunately the coastal areas were badly affected by some visitors, particularly Tynninghame with an excess of wild camping in its broadest sense. Fortunately things have now settled down as we learn to live with the current, ever-changing situation and face the oncoming winter.

We would like to thank all our contributors and all the many volunteers who have made life more tolerable in these unprecedented times. Enjoy your read.



A View from the Chair

When we last met at the beginning of March with our usual agenda of planning matters, footpaths, traffic concerns and potholes we had no idea what was ahead. We knew it would be our last meeting in the Chambers, evicted by ELC after about 45 years, but we didn't realise that we'd all be learning new skills involving Zoom and staring at computer screens instead of real people. In spite of everything the Community Council has carried on as best we can. March to July was dominated by COVID response but since then we've been busy with business as usual (sort of).

Our new Treasurer has put all our accounts online and we've given funds to both Whitekirk and Tynninghame Halls as well as paying for plants and bulbs for the Horticultural Society volunteers to plant around East Linton. An anniversary which came and went in September was 20 years since the newly renovated Community Hall opened in East Linton. A great achievement on the part of the whole community and we wish the two hall committees in Whitekirk and Tynninghame the best of luck with theirs!

Seats and benches have been installed, repairs made to the 'white bridge' and St Baldred's Well steps and the Rennie Memorial seat have been replaced.

Our footpath network, which we restored and mapped in 2005 with the help of substantial grants, has been really well used these last six months. It's been fantastic to be able to just walk out of the house and go for a walk, especially during the early restrictions. It was a big project at the time but has proved well worth the effort.

Work on the Fountain finally began in August and new lamps are being sourced as the old ones proved impossible to repair (see article, page 1). The Fountain was last painted in 2007 and the lamps lit for the first time in many years. In 2004 the Square was redesigned and a new stone planter built to hide the ugly brick wall.

Speed and road safety issues in Tynninghame and Whitekirk are under discussion and we hope that the new Spaces for People initiative will help to solve some of these problems – also the corner at Prestonkirk, a continuing hazard.

Electric Vehicle charging points are being installed in Whitekirk and we'd like to find spots in other areas to put these new, less obtrusive chargers.

We've responded to various planning applications, with some success.

We've continued to represent Dunpender on various groups such as the Joint Laws Advisory Group, Viridor and Dunbar and East Linton Area Partnership.

Work has restarted on progressing East Linton Station and you can read more about this elsewhere in *Dunpender News*.

Many projects have simply stalled, agenda items such as the School expansion, new skatepark, Knowes Weir, Tynninghame Links restaurant, Whitekirk Hill holiday lodges, are all just parked for who knows how long?

We welcome a new member for East Linton, Vera Hoban, a long-time resident who is keen to help look after our area but we say goodbye and thank you to Alan Reid. So we now have a vacancy for the Whitekirk/Tynninghame area.

All our activities can be seen on our website, www.eastlinton.uk.com. As ever, many thanks to Alastair Seagroatt for running this and to Jill Taylor who allows us space in ELDA each month for a summary of our meetings and activities. And thanks also to all members of the Community Council who volunteer their time, energy and expertise to Dunpender CC.

Judith Priest, November 2020

Climate Action East Linton

A few months ago East Linton Melting Pot made the decision to change its name to *Climate Action East Linton (CAEL)* to be clear what the group is about. However, the values that 'Melting Pot' represented are still central: we are all in this together, with no judgement, at different stages on our 'sustainability' journeys.

Climate Action East Linton has launched its new website <http://www.cael.community> where you can find out more about how to get involved, resources and what's going on.

The Fixing for a Future project launched earlier this year, with Rosie Harrison as Project Officer. One of the key activities within the Fixing for a Future project is the Repair Café, alongside other activities. More on all of these can be found on www.repaircafeeastlinton.org

Climate Action East Linton is working together with the Horticultural Society and Parent Council to explore options for how we could all help the local natural world flourish ('Earth's own safety net'). Options include a network for wildlife through our gardens, a community garden and a garden share scheme. Please take time to fill in the short survey to share your ideas and thoughts and give direction to what action can be taken.

The survey can be found by taking a photo of this QR code or using this link <https://forms.gle/2YnXd6XkRPkpf4g8> to fill it in online, or a printed version of the survey can be found in November 2020 ELDA.



If you would like to help the steering group be as dynamic, engaging and active as possible, please get in touch by emailing info@cael.community

Repair Café East Linton and the "Fixing for a Future" Project



The "Fixing for a Future" project, a collaboration between Climate Action East Linton and Sustaining Dunbar and funded by the Climate Challenge Fund, officially began on the 1st April, coinciding almost perfectly with the start of lockdown. Our plans for a monthly Repair Café and Skills Workshops in East Linton Community Hall were scuppered and we needed to come up with an alternative plan of action fast!

In May a series of online conversations was designed and delivered to provide a forum for people in the community to stay in touch around climate crisis concerns. "What Matters Post COVID-19?" consisted of the three pertinent topics of Consumption (with a focus on food supply chains), Use of Time (with a focus on the shift to working from home) and Nature and Environment (including discussion of an increased appreciation of nature during lockdown). Throughout June Sheena Carss of Dunbar-based business 'Seams Sew' provided a series of educational and entertaining sewing classes online for people of all ages and abilities. Beginning with the inevitable class on 'How to make a facemask', Sheena guided us with patience and humour through a further three classes: how to make hairbands from fabric scraps, a rag doll from old clothes and a yoga bag from a trouser leg.

In July eight people from Climate Action East Linton and Sustaining Dunbar embarked on an odyssey to become trained Carbon Conversation Facilitators and are ready to deliver Carbon Conversations to local community groups. The aim is to enable people to support each other in reducing our carbon footprints and living as sustainably as possible. Most recently, in September, we hosted two Bike Repair Cafes at The Mart. It was wonderful to finally have some in-person events and for bike mechanics Andy, Mark and Dan to teach basic repair skills to the community, including a number of children from East Linton Primary.



Andy and Mark teach the younger generation the art of bicycle maintenance

We have a wide range of activities lined up for the coming months, including a series of online sewing classes, addressing issues of hemming, patching and zipping. We'll be posting regular videos on our website: interviews with local businesses with a focus on repair, reuse, recycle. We've started an intergenerational toy-making project. If you've been doing any DIY at home and would like to share lessons you can send us photos and diary entries to go on the website. If you're in a community group or are a group of individuals interested in reducing your carbon footprint, we can set up a series of online Carbon Conversations for you. Despite the limitations of lockdown much has been achieved since April. We don't know when we'll be able to host our first real life Repair Café but until then the "Fixing for a Future" project wants to be as much by and for the community as possible.

Please visit www.repaircafeeastlinton.org for more information and contact Rosie repaircafeeastlinton@gmail.com. We'd love to hear from you!

Rosie Harrison, Project Officer

East Linton Whisky Society

The last quarter of 2019 and into the beginning of 2020 saw some fantastic developments for the East Linton Whisky Society. Membership grew to nearly 100, we had a tasting in a new exciting East Linton venue, complete with special guests, and we organised our first Society outing with a trip to a whisky distillery.

SOCIETY EVENTS CALENDAR 2019-2020

- Tasting No.1 took place on 27th June at East Linton Bowling Club. Six whiskies, one each from Dufftown, Aberlour, Deanston, Edradour, Springbank, and Benromach.
- Tasting No.2 took place on 12th September at East Linton Bowling Club. Six whiskies, one each from Glenallachie, Glen Scotia, Glenglasshaugh, Glenrothes, Arran, and Port Askaig, with food provided by the Filling Station, Longniddry.
- Tasting No.3 took place on 22nd November at East Linton Auction Mart. This tasting was sponsored by Deanston Distillery; their two representatives brought six Deanston whiskies for the Society to taste. Between drams, Master at Arms and swordsmith, Paul Macdonald, told stories of ancient battles and presented a collection of historical weapons. Staff from The Mart provided a sumptuous traditional spread of haggis, neeps and tatties. The Deanston Distillery Outing took place on 7th December. Deanston organised a coach to take 30 Society members to the distillery in Doune. The day began with a tasting of three whiskies from the parent company Distell (Tobermory, Bunnahabhain, and Deanston) and this was followed by a guided tour of the distillery. After lunch we made our way to the dunnage warehouse where we were treated to samples of three more whiskies drawn directly from the cask before heading to the shop where our trip ticket price could be exchanged against a bottle of whisky.
- Tasting No.4 took place on 6th March 2020 at the East Linton Bowling Club. Six whiskies were sampled from Bunnahabhain, Aberlour, Glen Scotia, Tamdhu, Balvenie, and Caol Ila.

SOCIETY PLANS FOR 2020

The Society Committee had already booked Tomatin (Speyside) and Springbank (Campbeltown) distilleries to come to East Linton in June and November 2020, with the latter tasting to have been held in Tynninghame Hall - another new venue for us. These events are on hold, but will be re-scheduled as soon as possible.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to anyone who is aged 18 years or over and lives or works in East Linton (or surrounding district). We offer a 'Society Membership' for an annual fee of £10 which gives priority access to tickets and helps to provide financial support to the Society. If you are interested in joining, please email us at: committee@eastlintonwhiskysociety.org.

The Society uses the free website and 'app' called 'TeamApp' to organize membership, sell tickets and provide event details.

The following links can be used to access public areas of the site, including our Whisky List, which details all whiskies tasted so far, along with tasting notes. We welcome anyone who is interested to join the site (it is free to register).

Links:

TeamApp site: <https://eastlintonwhiskysociety.teamapp.com>

'Whisky List': https://eastlintonwhiskysociety.teamapp.com/player_profiles

Look out for more information on our East Linton Whisky Society Facebook page.

The East Linton Whisky Society Committee members are: Phil Tsang (Chair); Matt Bishop (Secretary); Paddy Burns (Membership Secretary); Richard Mosley (Treasurer); Cam Murray (Executive Officer); Norrie McKinley (Executive Officer).



Deanston Distillery trip (dunnage warehouse tasting)



Tasting Number 3 at the Auction Mart

Gilmerton House Kitchen Garden

Heritage Apples in the orchard at Gilmerton House Kitchen Garden, Athelstaneford, include these three interesting very old varieties:

Pitmaston Pineapple is the oldest variety; a small russet dessert apple originating in the 18th century. **Scotch Bridget**, an interestingly shaped cooker, and **Beauty of Bath**, (crisp and juicy when sampled in early September), were both developed in the Victorian era. **Lord Rosebery** is a delicious dessert apple, the favourite with our volunteers. Many more of our apples are ready for picking than we can eat immediately. Good "keepers" will be carefully wrapped and stored in a cool dry shed, but the others must be put to good use now. We are making apple jelly with some of them, and sending some on to Chris Brace at Athelstaneford village to be turned into juice, or possibly cider.

Recently David Affleck visited our garden and identified one of the old wall-trained apples surviving from the original garden. It is **White Melrose**, a useful cooker. We also have a massive **Bramley** crop, and our first apples on the espaliered **Seaton House**, an October-ripening cooker. Discussing apples with David is always an informative and enlightening experience. We speculated that carrying out a survey of all the apple varieties currently planted in orchards and gardens in this area would be a useful exercise. The full list of which varieties we have in the garden can be found on our website growingatgilmerton.org.

During the last decades of the 19th century apple growing in Scotland was a competitive business. The gardener at Gilmerton, Mr John Brunton, was proud to present his new seedling variety, named **Lady Kinloch**, at the Apple Congress of 1885. Unfortunately, we cannot trace this apple, of which he was particularly proud, although there is a very detailed description of it, and maybe it will turn up in a local garden. He described it as a crisp, juicy dessert apple not unlike a **Ribston Pippin**. We'd love to know if you happen to have it!

John Brunton appears to have come to Gilmerton as master gardener in his early twenties. He is listed in the 1861 Athelstaneford census as unmarried, aged 23, and seems to have had three journeyman under-gardeners working with him, all lads aged less than 20 years old.

Currently the garden is worked by volunteers, most of us in active retirement, or in part-time work. We are returning the garden to productivity after a long period of disuse, taking pleasure in designing a garden suitable for the 21st century. As well as the apple orchard, we are developing cut flowers, shrub borders, willow for weaving, and a vegetable garden.

We welcome visitors to our garden during volunteer sessions on Monday morning and Thursday afternoon. Opening times and directions can be found on our website - growingatgilmerton.org.



*Do you know this apple variety?
Please let us know if you do!*



White Melrose variety

East Linton Horticultural Society and the Heritage Orchard



The attractive summer displays only tell part of the story of our work in this difficult time. Seventeen years ago, the Society received a grant to develop an Orchard in Preston Road. Orchards used to be part of the market garden industry in the area. They reflected efforts in the 19th Century to grow apples as a food crop based on the work of the Benedictine monks before the Reformation. The present Orchard was a collaborative project with the primary school. Ten varieties of cooking apples are now to be found on the site as well as a crab apple. A small team of members are active in the management of the Orchard, pruning the trees in the winter, controlling diseases, thinning the crop and then harvesting the apples between mid-August and the end of September.

While the project is an attractive site especially at apple blossom time, the local Day Centre and the primary school kitchen were to benefit from the apple harvest. The link with the school was lost after school kitchens were centralised but a strong link with the Day Centre has continued. Apples are provided between August and mid-December. Some varieties are best for baking, some for sauce and one variety for apple jelly. Orchards need to be managed and we have been impressed by the limited examples of vandalism and unauthorised removal of the apples over the years. One of our aims is to install a better information board on the aims of the project. Stewart Milne are marketing their new housing development as "The Orchard", maybe they could finance a board to tell the story of the Orchard in Preston Road.

You can find out more about the project on the web site for East Linton Heritage - <http://eastlothianheritage.co.uk/eastlintonheritage/east-linton-heritage-orchard/>.

UPDATE FROM RAGES (RAIL ACTION GROUP EAST OF SCOTLAND)

Work is proceeding on the preparation for the two stations project, Reston in Berwickshire and East Linton. Reston's planning application is submitted to Scottish Borders Council, while in East Linton preparatory work by Network Rail was completed some time ago, and it is hoped that the planning process will start during Winter 2020.

A Project Manager has been appointed to liaise with both communities and he is based at Dunbar Station on a part-time basis. The Community Council submitted a number of questions to him on matters such as parking at the station, access, and the possibility of additional traffic, and the answers to these are below.

Scotrail would like to provide an hourly service to Dunbar. A different rail company will be serving Reston.

- *Car Parking – there will be 126 parking spaces and 19 bicycle spaces. None of these spaces will be in East Linton Park, but will be on land already allocated for parking.*

- *Access to the Station – will be through Andrew Meikle Grove as already identified by the Council.*

- *What will happen at Markle Level Crossing – this will be upgraded to a manually controlled barrier with obstacle detection.*

- *Will there be lights on the platforms all night - Each platform will have shelters/ lights/ help points/ ticket vending machines and validators. Platform furniture will be in line with other stations in Scotland. Lighting will be on during hours of darkness up until the station is no longer operating for services.*

- *Where will the platforms be located - Platforms will be near the existing underpass. A footpath will be provided across the park, providing access to local shops and allowing easy access to the station. Access to platforms will be from both sides of the railway.*

- *What about lifts – there will be lifts on each side and the design will be shared as soon as it is available.*

- *Impact of additional travel on East Linton – The Council has put in place traffic calming measures in the new development. Network Rail is working to provide cycle facilities and access to encourage active travel.*

Further information on the length of time the building of the station will take will be provided once it is available.

Network Rail will keep local people informed at all stages.



Do you recognise this man? We don't think he's the signalman. Please let us know if you know who this is!

52nd East Linton Art Competition September 2020



Helen Wyllie, Salisbury Crags

Eighty artists submitted work for the annual art show, some of whom submitted up to the maximum number of five works each. All 280 pieces in the show could be viewed online and were available for sale.

The successful way in which the team organised a different format for the show was impressive, including such detail as offering to photograph artists' work ready for uploading to the website.

The work was split into four categories:-

Drawing and Painting
3D and Sculpture
Photography
Printmaking

Damian Callan was this year's judge and prizes were awarded in each category as well as to an overall show winner. Thank you to Eve's Foundation for once again sponsoring the prizes.

Fewer pieces of work were sold than usual but this in no way diminishes the achievement and success of the event which not only raised a total of £1,753 for East Linton Community Hall but also provided an opportunity for many people to have a creative focus when other aspects of life were unsettling.

The East Linton SHED and Ground Force Team

The East Linton SHED was generously provided by the Mart owners for local people to make or upcycle old items or just socialise. Some support was provided initially by STRIVE, but as funding reduced, a small group – including women – set about providing a facility where anyone could join. Donations of tools and equipment have been forthcoming which are checked over and maintained. Examples made by the SHED include; up-cycled items from old goods; bird tables and boxes, planters, benches and a "plant theatre." Participants come along when they can but a regular session is always available between 2-4 on a Thursday afternoon. Occasional sale stalls of these items help to fund some of the equipment and tools needed.

The Ground Force Team comprises of a small group of volunteers who have been working together since 2017 with an aim to improve areas of the village which appear to be neglected. Firstly, the team approached the Council and were asked to clear moss and debris from the railway bridge. A small border beside the Bowling Green was tidied up and replanted, The Linton Garage owners supported the renovation and replanting of the four borders which now enhance the entrance to the village. Two tubs at the Fire Station, acquired by the staff are also maintained by the team. Plant sales help to fund the purchase of potting compost, bulbs and seeds.



With Remembrance time in November many knitters responded to a request to knit poppies for display in the village.

Two years ago the polytunnel and raised beds became vacant at the Mart and the Team offered to maintain these and the carpark border. By recovering many of the plants which had been neglected for some time, some delightful specimens have been nurtured to good health. Vegetables and fruit are now regularly grown in the polytunnel together with the raising of seeds and some propagation – all for use in and around the village. As the Mart continues to introduce new cabins, the produce we have are offered to the others at the site.

The SHED team work closely with Ground Force in maintaining equipment, designing garden work benches and any woodwork that needs done. With the restrictions required for safety during the pandemic we have not been able to involve the school children yet, but having already spoken to the Parent Council at the Primary School we hope to have the children come along to do some planting in the future.

Anyone interested in coming to the SHED or to help Ground Force should contact: Joan at carmichaeljbb@yahoo.co.uk or Barry at Craigheadmargaret@hotmail.com tel: 01620 861765.

Girlguiding – Rainbows, Brownies and Guides



Guiding in East Linton is proving resilient despite the disappointments and challenges that 2020 has thrown at us. Before lockdown, the Rainbows had great fun playing games and working together to gain their Drawing badge, while the Brownies chose the Skills for my Future or Leadership badge. The older girls in Guides have been exploring their creative sides, finding out ways to look after themselves and others and their bodies and minds, trying lots of activities from mindfulness to getting active. They have been working towards badges too of course: campaigning (learning about how to get their voices heard and helping to make change happen), first aid and communication. They have also been lucky to welcome some guests who've run workshops on dancing, drumming, engineering, and bat spotting!

The Brownies dipped into online meetings for a while during lockdown - with a virtual pet show, scavenger hunt and den-building - until enthusiasm for living life online started to wear a bit thin, but we have been back together recently for a few low-number, hand-sanitised outdoor sessions like bramble picking and a beach campfire, which have been a welcome taste of almost-normality.

The darkness and weather are working against us now, so it will be online Guiding only until after Christmas, when we really hope we will be able to start indoor sessions again.

We have spaces available in Rainbows (5-7) and Guides (10-14) and a waiting list for Brownies (7-10). If you'd like to sign a girl up please search for 'Register your daughter' on the Girlguiding website.

We are always looking for adult volunteers to help run sessions or help with admin behind the scenes. We're particularly short on leaders for the older girls at the moment. So if you are enthusiastic about helping girls be their best, and can spare a couple of hours on a schedule to suit you, please have a chat with Lucy Daniels on eastlintonstentondc@gmail.com. All ages welcome and you don't have to have a daughter in Guiding – come and join us!

Important Milestone for Whitekirk

In 2019, The Whitekirk Community Company (see below) applied for grant funding from the Scottish Land Fund to help us acquire the village hall. Earlier this year we were delighted to be awarded a substantial grant (circa 40K) towards its purchase. The grant was dependent on us raising at least £20,000 towards the purchase price of the hall.

Thanks to the hard work and generosity of the village residents and despite the arrival of a global pandemic, we were able to raise the additional funds of £25,000 to become the owners of the village hall in October 2020.

Whitekirk's village hall was originally a 'Tin Tabernacle' built in the East Lothian town of Gullane in 1901. Purchased in 1927 by the Women's Royal Institute, it was dismantled, moved seven miles and reassembled at its current location in Whitekirk. It became the home to the WRI's regular meetings, as well as to entertainments including whist drives, amateur dramatics and an annual panto. Later acquired by the Church of Scotland, it was used as a session house, and was made available to members of the local community for private and social events. It is still regularly used as a polling station for national and local elections.

For the last seven years thanks to fund raising efforts of many villagers we have made substantial improvements inside and out of the village hall. This has been possible due to some practical skilled villagers who have been extremely generous with their time and expertise. We have taken care to preserve the village hall's original structure and unique character. Improvements to date include the installation of a modern kitchen and accessible toilet facilities, upgrading of electrics and plumbing and heating, external painting and roof repairs. The improvements have been supported by Dunpender Community Council (new cooker) and Area Partnership (accessible toilet). Many things remain to be done and day-to-day maintenance continues.

Since 2014, the hall has been managed and maintained by the Whitekirk Community Company and is home to regular quiz nights, Burns suppers, the village's Christmas party and other social and community events. Founded in 2009, the Company's principal aim is to "promote the sustainable development of Whitekirk to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". Please see <https://whitekirkvillage.com> for more information.



East Linton Christmas Lights

Sadly this year like many other groups we have had to cancel all our fundraising events. We had a lot of things planned so hopefully we can do them all in 2021. We were unable to have a switch on event this year but were delighted to be asked to take part in the Living Advent Calendar organised by Gill Robertson, details on our Facebook page of the houses taking part.

We have also organised for Santa to visit the town on Sunday 20th of December this will be a socially distanced visit following strict government COVID-19 guidelines. If you have not already registered your child to receive a small gift, please contact Hilary at hilarymwhite@icloud.com ASAP.

Thanks to everyone who helped make the greenery this year the village is looking lovely again, also thanks to our East Linton Firefighters for putting up our lamppost lights, we couldn't do it without their help. The East Linton Christmas Lights Committee wish you all a Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year.



East Linton Curling Club

An account of the History of Curling in East Lothian is about to be completed. It will give details of the original East Linton Curling Club for the period 1838 to 1956 and the Tyneside Curling Club formed in 1910. They played on an artificial pond on the site of the former bowling green off Lauder Place while the older club played mainly on Smeaton Lake. In October 1931, the two clubs amalgamated. There was then a period of inactivity until the East Linton Club was reconstituted in 1968. Women curlers played a significant part in competitions from then on. It is now the oldest Curling Club in East Lothian and uses the upgraded Curling Rink at Murrayfield in Edinburgh. In March 2020 it had twenty-two members including three women. The fixture list for the season October to March 2020 had forty-two curling games listed, the last three had to be postponed due to COVID-19.

The Scottish Government allowed curling as an Indoor Sport to recommence in September subject to conditions on social distancing and modifications to the game. Players are asked not to share cars unless passengers are from the same family. The East Linton Club had its first game for the new season in October. It is too early to predict how the sport will develop this season although there are two new members. In the longer term, the recent prediction that there may be colder winters because of changes in the sun's activity could see a return to outdoor games. Hopefully, normal curling will reappear after a vaccine is found.

David Affleck

Tynninghame

2020 has proven a difficult year for many communities. Tynninghame and the surrounding areas rose to the challenge and responded by setting up a COVID-19 group to help and support neighbours. Regular zoom meetings were held and the village was divided into zones to ensure that needs could be catered for as and when required. Barbara Schofield ensured that there were regular phone calls to check on well-being.

The Crunchy Carrot in Dunbar arranged weekly deliveries co-ordinated by Lucy Aykroyd which offered a time for people to see each other at a suitable distance and shout a few greetings. Erica Wimbush created a beautifully illustrated map of the village to assist delivery people. This is now on display in the noticeboard outside the village hall.

The Itinerant Harpist, Elinor Evans featured on Forth Radio's "Our local Heroes" having played Happy Birthday outside the homes of those unable to spend time with their families. One particular rendition was accompanied by singing cyclists who happened to be passing! Happy Birthday grew into a weekly Friday evening concert involving her family. The local singing group also used Zoom to enable the music to go on. Many more embraced or discovered their creative side, while others discovered the joy of sourdough baking – with thanks to Shireen Green and Rae Goode. Some took the time to enjoy the local area and watch the primroses along Ladies Walk or red-breasted merganser and chicks on the river. Shireen and Rhys Green created a wildflower border along their fence (behind the village hall). It was enjoyed by local residents and visitors as well as many bees and butterflies.



At Easter, Carol Crowther organised a name the chicken competition, *Merryweather* ensured success for Gracie and Evie who also won the sunflower competition. Of course, it was not so relaxing for everyone there were new challenges; working at home and home-schooling children but Maria Kemp came to the rescue providing suitable resources.



As lockdown restrictions eased, we started to look to the future with the *Art in the Bus Stop* project, arranged by Rae Goode and Carol Crowther - with the theme of *My Future Planet*. The response was huge as residents of all ages contributed to the display of collages, water colours and models - all topped off with a Piñata! Winners were declared after a ballot and prizes were awarded at the Community Engagement Open Day held in the village hall where the arts and crafts were displayed. The winner Hester had great fun bashing the Piñata made by Erica Wimbush at the Open day with the amazing Eco house in the background. Charlie was a worthy runner up.



All these small acts came together to strengthen the resilience of the community. Hoping to build on this we conducted a Community Engagement survey, aimed at discovering what people thought were the most important issues facing Tynninghame and how we might engage with the community as we return to normality. In the forms returned, the most valued attribute was the strong sense of community spirit, with the main concern being speeding through the village and along the A198 (69%). 56% commented that they would like to see more community activities.

In order to progress some of the initiatives a Community Engagement Open Day was held on October 3rd in Tynninghame Village Hall. Following a rise in the R number the original plan had to be scaled back and the exhibitions limited but despite the rain we saw a good turnout who enjoyed viewing what people had done during lockdown. The art exhibition was displayed along with information on various groups and activities. These included a local history display which followed, through census documents, one householder from innkeeper and grocer at The Crown Public House (now part of Old Ale and Porter House) to a widow taking in laundry and residing in Widows Row. There was a great display of wildflowers, bark rubbing and leaves for identification along with a wildlife quiz and wonderfully varied crafts from the Craft and Connect group. A survey of people's views on speeding confirmed the results of the survey with most people favouring a 20mph limit through the village.

Maps of local walks attracted a great deal of interest and will be soon be available on the Tynninghame Village Hall website. In order to take advantage of the beautiful countryside which surrounds us and sustained many during the lockdown, a weekly informal walk and talk group, Wednesday Walkers, has been formed by Lucy Aykroyd and Erica Wimbush; open to all, walkers will leave the coffee shop in Tynninghame at 1.30pm, observing current guidelines when meeting up.

Searching for a vehicle to bring everyone together we started *Tynninghame Times* with the intention of uniting the community at a time when physical events are not possible. It aims to feature recipes, family activities, gardening tips, good news stories and general articles. The first edition was produced in September and the next edition is due out in December and will include details of how to get involved with the various local groups. Contributions welcome to Tynninghamevillagenews@gmail.com

Early in 2020 Tynninghame Village Hall hosted a series of Tea Concerts on the first Sunday of each month showcasing the talents of young musicians under the age of 30 who had studied at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. The series included Elinor Evans, a clarsach player, who entertained with a varied programme of traditional and contemporary music highlighting the versatility of this instrument. Osian Penry Dance and Greg Crowley on clarinet and bassoon respectively, both of whom returned with their wind quintet a month later much to the delight of the capacity audience. Many commented on the success of the venture and it is hoped to establish it as a regular monthly event during January, February and March 2021/22 as restrictions allow.

Plans to refurbish the hall have been submitted for planning and building warrants and we await further developments. Some work has been carried out and the new lighting and secondary glazing now ensures a warm welcome. We hope to see you at future events as restrictions across Scotland ease.

Margaret Jane Evans

Lynton Day Centre

When the staff were told on Friday the 20th of March that we had to close the Day Centre on Monday the 23rd of March for an undisclosed period of time, we were devastated, not knowing how we could support our clients during a complete lockdown. We had a staff meeting late that afternoon and we decided that staff who felt confident and safe could come to work that Monday. During the weekend we worked out a plan of action and came up with the idea of trying to prepare a meal for our clients to deliver to their homes. It was a bit of a struggle in the first two weeks, as it was difficult with rationing to get enough supplies in to provide 70 to 75 meals each week. With the help of local shops and the creativity of our staff we managed to set up a system to support our clients at home. We now deliver the meals in biodegradable containers and paper bags on a daily basis. Lynton Private Hire have been a great help by driving us to locations such as Biel, Stenton, Monks' Muir and East Linton. When we visit our clients, we check if they are healthy, safe and warm, or if they need some extra help with shopping, medication etc. If we feel there are problems, we contact the families and/or carers or, if needed, the Community Nurses, Care Organisations or the GPs in the surgery.

We hand out little specialities and try to do something extra for special occasions. Recently all our members received a 'Lockdown 2020 Hero' medal. Every week we supply word surge puzzles and other games. One of our volunteers bakes fairy cakes at least two or three times a week to add as an extra item. Another group of volunteers has set up a phone befriending service. They call our clients and have a nice chat with them, some almost daily. The Management Committee of Lynton Day Centre have been supportive towards the staff in every way during this process. The local shops, businesses and community have helped out when needed. It will be no surprise that we are now also supplying meals to other people in our community who need help, and will hopefully become members of our Day Centre when we are allowed to open again.

This lockdown has been really hard for a lot of people, but we feel our clients have been hit particularly hard. However by seeing our clients regularly and keeping up to date with their situation, and being cheerful and happy when we visit, we have managed to get through this with the help of a lot of people in our great community. COVID-19 is a terrible disease, but it has also brought out the best in the people that surround us, and are part of our daily lives.

I would like say a specially big 'Thank You' to the great staff we have in Lynton Day Centre who have been working very hard while keeping a high level of hygiene and safety regulations to make sure the elderly people are kept safe. The staff have displayed great discipline and have worked fearlessly during this crisis, they have been exceptionally brave and are a happy upbeat group to work with. It is my pleasure to have known them, and I am very proud of them.

Margriet Ramakers, Manager



VE Day

Some kind-hearted volunteers had the idea of organising a takeaway afternoon tea for East Linton's older residents on VE Day, as there would be no communal celebrations in the village.

The idea quickly gathered strength and a group got together to do baking while others organised packaging and a card for each person written by local children.

Delivery routes were worked out and a delivery group met in the Village Hall on a beautiful sunny afternoon - many people in 1940s outfits - to distribute the tea to residents.



Volunteers, suitably distanced, in the Hall ready to give out the goodies for delivery

A great idea, and a lovely result which was much appreciated by the many recipients.



A delivery volunteer in 1940s outfit

East Linton Drama Group

The drama group started in 1999 with a pantomime put on to raise funds for the refurbishment of East Linton Community Hall. It has since gone from strength to strength and now there are three shows a year in the Hall – the all-child pantomime in late January, and a play in May and in October for the grown-ups. The May play can be serious or comedic or even both - "The Steamie", "Calendar Girls" and "The Odd Couple" are some examples. The October play is usually a Murder Mystery with dinner where the audience are both fed and entertained as they try to guess "whodunnit".

We started 2020 in the normal way with our pantomime, *Snow White and the Seven Lumberjacks* (see photo) starring the usual highly talented cast of P5 to S5 pupils from East Linton and the surrounding area – and not forgetting the highly talented adult backstage directors, producers and crew! A huge success which was much enjoyed by the cast and crew and audience.

The pandemic has put paid to the two plays and to the 2021 panto, but we are very much looking forward to treading the boards again sometime later in 2021 and seeing everyone front stage, backstage and especially in the audience. The 2022 panto is being planned already.

We are a friendly bunch and welcome new members to act, paint the sets, make costumes, sell tickets and so on, or even direct. All are welcome!

You can find our contact details on the inside back page of the ELDA magazine, on the Community Council website www.eastlinton.uk.com. You can also follow or message us on www.facebook.com/pg/EastLinton-DramaGroup.



Dame Patchouli; "I think you're in love with me, Mr. Chambers!"

East Linton Art Group



East Linton Art Group, like everything else, came to an abrupt end during lockdown.

Our artists continued to produce artwork at home and sent them electronically to our email address. This saw the beginning of the 'Revolving Gallery' which has been circulated to all the Members weekly. So far there has been more than 260 drawings/paintings produced by the Group. This has been a positive way to keep everyone involved.

Some of our artists have been going to local attractions to draw and paint, COVID-19 rules are checked weekly and we are adhering to social distancing and number of households.

East Linton Golf Club

The East Linton Golf Club's AGM and Prizegiving was scheduled to be held just as the lockdown restrictions resulting from COVID-19 came into force in early March. Along with all golf clubs, the course at Dunbar East Links, where we play our golf, was closed for several weeks. When golf was allowed again, it was only for individual golfers not club competitions.

However, in August we were able to play as a club and enjoyed a good afternoon's golf, not just for the golf, but also to meet up with members, several of whom we had not seen since last year. Fortunately none of our members have been ill with the virus. Hopefully we can stay safe and be ready to enjoy a full season in 2021.

Geoff Cusden, Secretary

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Meetings are on the first Thursday
of every month (except July
and August) at 7.30pm,
in Prestonkirk Stables, East Linton*
*when COVID-19 restrictions allow

Barry's Benches

The bench project started 3 years ago when Dunpender Community Council allocated £600 for the repair of existing benches and materials for construction of 3 new benches beside the Tyne.

Subsequently DELAP (Dunbar and East Linton Area Partnership) provided £3,600 towards benches and seats in the Dunbar and East Linton Area, stretching from Whitesands to Hailes Castle. To date 22 benches have been made and installed, including refurbishment of the Rennie Memorial bench at Dunbar Road, East Linton, installation of two benches at Cherry Tree Nursery, Dunbar (an Area Partnership request) and a bench and seat at Tynninghame village's former cricket ground. One seat and three benches are yet to be put in position.



All the benches have been made by Dunpender Community Councillor Barry Craighead using wood supplied by Drem Timber, and various helpers have assisted with their installation. A familiar-looking bench can even be seen at the Great Polish Map of Scotland in Eddleston, made and installed by special request.

The benches have been a boon in these times when so many people are out walking, two ladies encountered at Hailes Castle were "glad to stop and get their breath back" on the bench there. They are also useful just to sit and watch the world go by, e.g. at Preston Mill weir or at the metal bridge further downstream (see photo).

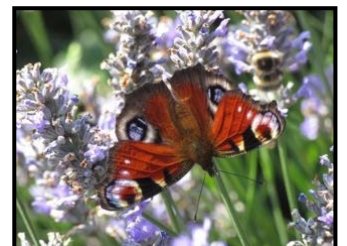
East Lothian Countryside Rangers

Sometimes the onset of autumn can make us feel a little flat after the long days and warmth of summer. However, autumn is a time full of excitement as the season changes wildlife moves with it. We may need to say goodbye to the amazing offshore spectacle of diving gannets, the scream of swifts or the fabulous sound of skylarks singing in the dune grasslands, but there is so much we have to look forward to.

For me, nothing says autumn in East Lothian more than the arrival of pink-footed geese. The sound of them calling "ang-ank" high up in the sky in their distinctive "V" flying formation marks their arrival from Greenland and Iceland. About 400,000 geese migrate and approximately 30,000 stay in East Lothian for the winter. They will roost on the coast at night then in the morning head off inland to feed on fallen grain in stubble fields, before returning to roost again at night. It is at these times you can witness thousands of them flying overhead in what is to me one of the most amazing wildlife spectacles.

Whilst some are undertaking huge journeys, others decide to have a much slower pace of life by hibernating. Animals such as bats and hedgehogs who feed mainly on insects would struggle to find enough food to survive the winter, therefore they slow their bodies' right down and go into torpor to greatly reduce their energy usage. Some insects also hibernate for the same reasons. The majority of butterflies and moths will overwinter or hibernate as caterpillars, a chrysalis, eggs and lastly as adults. The adult butterflies you are most likely to find hibernating in your house or log store are small tortoiseshell and peacock. However, some species like the painted lady butterfly have evolved a completely different strategy, just like pink-footed geese, and migrate to a warmer place, often flying thousands of miles in the process.

So just as wildlife adapts to the changing weather, we too must adapt. Grab your jacket, hat and scarf and take a look outside and see what changes in nature you can spot. You don't need to go far to discover some fascinating wildlife and once you find it I guarantee you will feel all the better for it!

**Dunpender Community Council Newsletter Winter 2020/2021**

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