

Eskdale & Liddesdale Advertiser

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BRIEFING

NEWS

EWM denies it has treated staff badly



STAFF made redundant by Edinburgh Woollen Mill say the company was heartless not to re-employ them after the UK government introduced a scheme to retain workers laid off because of the coronavirus.

Full story: Page 5

NEWS

**The way we were...
...the way we are**



An E&L Life feature looking at how people's jobs have taken a different slant over the intervening years. Gilly Fraser looks at life in Border TV.

Quizzes: Pages 8 & 9

SPORT

**Hughes is crowned
champion jump jockey**



BRIAN Hughes, who rides regularly for James Ewart Racing of Langholm, has been crowned champion jump jockey for the first time in his career.

Full story: Page 24

Virus setback for Murtholm housing

Scheme is delayed by three months but could still be on time

THE construction of extra-care sheltered housing on the Murtholm in Langholm has been delayed for three months.

This is because of the Scottish government's instructions to close all development sites for an initial period of three months because of the COVID-19 crisis.

Loreburn Housing Association, which is building the complex, intended to start on the site later this year or in early 2021 but the lockdown may result in revised timescales.

Up until now, Loreburn was progressing towards the submission of a detailed planning application in July.

The planning applications include the bridge across the Esk and phase one, which is the extra-care housing. Both applications will be submitted concurrently.

The foot and cycle bridge will link the housing with the town.

Loreburn's development programme currently sits within the timescales set out by Sustrans for funding applications and a bid to the fund is planned.

Sustrans is a charity which promotes walking and cycling in the UK.

Dumfries and Galloway's Health and Social Care Partnership has confirmed its support for the development.

Gary Sheenan, Integration Joint Board locality manager for Annandale and Eskdale said: "The development is welcome and

much-needed and will enable more people to remain living in their own homes as independently as possible.

"We look forward to working with Loreburn on this exciting and innovative new service."

Once Loreburn has a better understanding of the impact of the crisis on key developments, its design team will be instructed to package engineering enabling works which it hopes will allow work to still start as scheduled but this decision is out of its hands at the moment.



Lorraine Usher of Loreburn H A

Once instructed, the works will include access improvements from the A7 onto the site, service diversions and the creation of a service road to enable the bridge works.

The Scottish Environment Protection Agency has allocated a window of May to September

2021 for the bridge works.

Lorraine Usher, Loreburn's chief executive, said: "The Murtholm is an exciting and ambitious project for both Langholm and ourselves and we're delighted with the community support which has been shown to date.

"With this unprecedented situation and these difficult and worrying times having such a wide impact, it's important, now more than ever, to look to the future.

"Once the crisis is over, Loreburn is keen to be in a position to progress this ambitious, inspiring development as soon as possible so we can contribute to building a positive, healthy future for Langholm."

One of the UK's leading manufacturers of personal protective clothing (PPE), Alpha Solway of Annan, has gone back to school to help speed up the huge growth in demand for its products.

The company approached staff at Annan Academy and asked whether its science department staff could help.

PPE is even more vital during the COVID-19 crisis and Alpha Solway is working flat out to prepare face-mask, fit test kits for the NHS, which is stretching this already busy business.

About 20 staff, scientists and technicians from schools in the area volunteered to use the chemistry department at the school to help prepare Bitrex, a solution



Last September Loreburn carried out groundworks to assess the best place for a footbridge over the Esk

used to ensure respiratory protective equipment is fit for purpose.

It's hoped this will ease the burden on the company and provide more of the equipment the NHS needs so desperately.

The team has already completed the first run of 40 litres of the solution, equivalent to 190 bottles, which are already on their way to the NHS.

Steven Binnie, director of Alpha Solway, said: "We're working hard to get critical PPE

products to frontline workers and have been amazed by the community support we have received.

"One fantastic example of this is the school support and teaching staff who, co-ordinated by Ghislaine Duncan from the council, are making these test solutions critical for anyone who needs a respirator.

They are directly contributing to the safety and well-being of countless healthcare professionals in Scotland."