# MORE ELECTION FEVER

FURTHER CONVINCING NARRATIVES FROM OUR LOCAL POLITICIANS: PAGES 8 - 10

Scottish Labour

Scottish Liberal Democrats

Scottish Conservatives

Eskdale & Liddesdale Advertiser

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## BRIEFING

NEWS

### Derelict land blight hope

A NEW £50m Scottish government fund will help transform thousands of hectares of vacant and derelict land in Scotland and signal commitment to tackling the legacy blighting communities.

Full story: Page 7

NEWS

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# £500k price tag stops Holmwood flood plan

## Residents to be offered individual protection measures instead

**A PROJECT to prevent flooding in Holmwood in Langholm will not go ahead because it will be too expensive.**

Dumfries and Galloway Council has decided that it can't afford to spend £500,000 on protecting people's homes from the surface water which runs down the hill and into their gardens before running down the road.

A report by Steven Herriott, head of roads and infrastructure, to the communities committee, revealed a design had been completed and the anticipated cost was about £500,000 which was far more than the initial estimate.

Mr Herriott said: "There is no funding identified for this estimated cost work and, furthermore, it would not be eligible for Scottish government grant-funding at 80 per cent because the benefit cost ratio is significantly below the threshold of 1.0.

"The flood risk management team is currently looking to offer flood resilience protection to any interested property and will engage with all the residents over the next year to enable us to monitor flood incidents and the effectiveness of the resilience measures.

"Given that a number of properties are owned by Dumfries and Galloway Housing Partnership, officers will engage with the registered social landlord in developing property flood resilience measures.

"Ward members and this committee will be kept advised of progress on these lower-cost intervention measures which will be met from the Flooding budget."

Councillor Archie Dryburgh, Annandale East and Eskdale, said he would not give up on getting the work done.

He said the former environment and infrastructure committee had set aside £250,000 for the work and, while some of that had been spent on a survey, he wanted to find out where the rest of the money was.

### Another project

He believed it could have been spent on another project.

At one point, the Holmwood project was included in the main Langholm flood protection scheme.

If it had been a stand-alone project, it would not have met the criteria for the government funding.

He said: "We have to have another discussion about Holmwood and the flood team will speak to residents.

Water has poured down off Meikleholm hill into people's gardens in Holmwood

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## Deaths

**RODDICK**

Neil, born and bred in Langholm, after a brave fight, sadly passed on the 30th March 2021.
Greatly loved by wife and best friend Eileen, will be sadly missed by daughters Caroline and Sandra. Papa to Judith, Laura, Cameron, Lewis and Laurie and great papa to Skye, Millie and Tristen
Forever in our hearts.
Our families thanks to the Doctors and staff in ward B2, Dumfries hospital for their care and friendship. Thanks also to Dr Taudevin and nurses at Langholm Heath centre
Donations in Neil's memory will be collected to buy respiratory equipment for ward B2.
If you would like to donate please give online www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/neil-roddick
Or donations dropped into Eileen.

## Thanks for Sympathy

**FARRER**

Sandi and family would like to thank everyone for the flowers, cards, messages and kind words following the sad loss of Richard.
Also to David Erskine for his support and Morag Crossan for the lovely service.

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## Thank You

***To the staff at Thomas Hope Hospital***

*Tony Reid would like to say a big thankyou to all nursing staff for looking after him, they are like family and a credit to their profession.*
*We need the community hospitals to stay open, as this pandemic has proven how vital this service is.*

*Thankyou very much*
*Tony*

## Happy Birthday

**Happy 80th Birthday**

**Mam (Adrienne) on 13th April.**

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# Peacocks saved

## EWM Group supports bid

The sale will save 2,000 jobs and 200 stores will reopen when the lockdown rules are eased

**EWM Group, the private investment group controlled by the Day family, has agreed to support the sale of Peacocks to rescue it from administration.**

The group is supporting a bid by an international investment consortium to buy the discount clothing chain from administration.

The deal has been negotiated by FRP, Peacocks' administrator.

The bid is led by Steve Simpson, the chief operating officer of Edinburgh Woollen Mill.

It is being backed by a consortium of international investors who have agreed to provide sufficient working capital to enable the business to emerge from administration.

As the leading secured creditor, EWM Group has agreed to use its security and provide a deferred loan to the consortium.

The transaction will give another chance to Peacocks Stores, which was placed in administration last November because of the devastating effects of the COVID-19 lockdown on the business.

The Peacocks' management team hopes that, with the support of its partners, suppliers and landlords, it will be able to reopen up to 200 stores when the lockdown rules ease and protect about 2,000 jobs.

The company hopes that all 1,850 store staff currently on furlough will be able to return to work once stores reopen.

In addition, more than 150 colleagues in head office and support will be able to go back to their jobs.

No job losses are planned as a result of the deal.

# The fight goes on

**> From Page 1**

"There've been hardly any complaints over the past couple of years but we've not had the same amount of rain which caused massive problems in the past.

"I hope residents will tell the team what the issues are so we can move forward with it. It's taken far too long to get anything done.

"I would like to see something in place to reduce the chance of the worst happening.

"We also need to wait and see what will happen with the flood protection scheme (for the Esk) and whether it can be fitted in there.

"I'll keep on fighting until something is done."

The ward members have been kept up to date with progress on the flood protection scheme by officers.

The scheme's publication is scheduled for September or October 2022.

Mr Herriott said: "This will follow a period of engagement with the community later this year and the completion of the required Environmental Impact Assessment.

"Consultation with those directly affected by the works and the necessary mitigation measures will be undertaken in Q2 and Q3 of 2022.

### Inquiry

"These stages are affected by the possible need for an inquiry or hearing.

"The project plan, with timescales, will be updated when there is sufficient clarity from which to develop the appropriate project management arrangements."

The flood team is also installing CCTV cameras at the golf course because of surface water flooding emanating from the course.

The work will establish the route(s) of drainage in the area.

# Survey shows gunfire inaudible at monastery

## Noise survey measures the sound of shots from five locations

**GUNFIRE could not be heard at four of the five locations chosen for assessing noise from a rifle range in Eskdalemuir, a report has revealed.**

The report was commissioned to determine the current noise impact of the existing rifle range at Clerkhill on nearby residents and the Kagyu Samye Ling Tibetan Monastery.

It sought to investigate the validity of residents' complaints, based on excessive noise levels from the range.

A retrospective planning application for Clerkhill was submitted by landowner Eskdalemuir Forestry. It will be run by Gardners Guns of Longtown.

Dozens of people have objected, saying a rifle range does not fit into an environment where people live and visit because of the peace and quiet.

A second retrospective planning application has been submitted for nearby Over Cassock, owned by E Glendenning and operated by the Fifty Caliber Shooters Association.

The investigation at Clerkhill was based on Clay Target Shooting: Guidance on the Control of Noise, the most-closely associated standard.

James Flitton, technical director at E2 Consultants, Wakefield, carried out the assessment at the five locations.

A noise survey shows gunfire from the Clerkhill shooting range can't be heard from four of the five test locations

They were at the entrance area for the monastery, next to the B709; on the range side of the monastery, close to the White Esk; at the Retreat, close to the White Esk and B709; at Mid Raeburn, north west of the rife range; and Holm Farm Forest, south west of the range and next to the B709.

### Sensitive

These locations were chosen based on what had been determined as the noise sensitive receptors (NSRs), on previous complaints or objections to the site or were considered by the site owner as likely to be areas of disturbance from the range.

He said consideration was based on both the noise impact on the inside people's homes and in gardens/on patios.

He said: "The main range 'hut' is at the summit of the hill and the targets in the valley below. Targets range from 200m to 2km away, with most users firing under 600m.

"The area around the hut is surrounded by a 10-feet-high bund, giving some acoustic screening to the north west and round to the south west of the range."

Measurements were taken over 30-minute periods and shots fired throughout that period, with a minimum of one every minute. It was a sunny day with a low wind speed.

Mr Flitton said: "Locations one, three and five are all areas from where complaints have emanated in the recent past.

"At each location the dominant noise source was from passing traffic on the B709, particularly tractors. No gunshots were audible at each of these locations.

"At location two most of the high levels measured and which can be heard on the audio recordings are from birdsong.

### Not audible

"Most of the ambient noise level is from the river intersection perpendicular to the monastery. Gunfire was not audible during the measurements.

"Location four, one the edge of the grounds of Mid Raeburn, was the only place where the gunshots could be heard.

"The measurement location was about 50m from the house. Not all the gunshots fired were heard at the measurement location because there was a mix of rifles used.

"In each case, the levels measured at the property were below guidelines for noise levels in the garden/patio areas and below where the guidelines suggest there would be justified levels of annoyance."

Mr Flitton suggested some mitigation measures to be taken such as insulation in the hut which was a wooden structure on a concrete floor and with a metal corrugated roof.

### Barrier

He also suggested an acoustic barrier such as a six to eight-feet-high wall was built on the north-facing side of the hut.

In his submission Marc Gardner of Gardners Guns said: "The development is well supported nationally and internationally and the interest generated for this specifically-designed site is huge.

"I would question the objectors and their asserted entitlement to exclusivity in this environment which has always supported diversification, forestry and enterprise, to their own benefit as much as to others.

"The training centre benefits those who choose a different path to personal freedoms and recreation and, as such, it holds equal validity."

## Roadworks schedule

SURFACE dressing will be done on a number of minor routes in Eskdale in the next year.

They are the B6357 from Broats to the C44a; B709 at North Burncleuch, U257a at Potholm and B709 Cote towards Enzieholm.

Resurfacing work will be done on the B7068 at Scroggs Bridge, B6357 Canonbie School, B6357 Kirkpatrick Fleming Church and B6357 at Broats.

The B7068 Langholm will have drainage work done.

The programme of work on forestry routes is co-ordinated with the timber industry and the South of Scotland timber transport officer to target high priority timber routes.

It gives the council the opportunity to bid for external match-funding to maximise the budget.

The fund for 2021/22 will include the B709 at Nether Cassock, from the sign at the boundary to the end of the safety barrier and at Glendearg, Foulbog and Enzieholm Bridge.

## Breach of guidelines

POLICE officers have spoken to a number of people breaking COVID-19 rules in the Newcastleton area.

A report of a breach of the regulations led to two men from England being traced. Their details were noted and they were told to return home.

Another vehicle from England was reported. Police attended, engaged with the driver and advised them to travel home.

On their way to this incident officers stopped four vehicles. The occupants were on a 'jolly' and were reminded of travel restrictions and turned back.

A man was issued with a ticket in the village, also for breaching regulations.

Police attended an incident of reported sheep worrying.

The sheep had not been attacked but the dog owner was spoken to and advised to keep it under control at all times.

# Fond farewell to popular postie

Linda and her colleagues drink a toast to longer lies as she hangs up her postbag after 13½ years

**THERE was an emotional send-off for Linda Irving when she retired from work at Royal Mail after 13 and a half years.**

After returning from her final delivery to Eskdalemuir last Saturday, she was clapped back into the yard at the sorting office by her colleagues.

She said: "The best part of the job was meeting and talking with different people and driving out on the rural routes, too.

"I will definitely miss my fellow posties and the banter and laughs in the sorting office while getting ready to go out delivering the mail but I won't miss the dark, wet mornings.

"I really have enjoyed my time with the Royal Mail and, hopefully, I'll catch up with everyone when out and about in Langholm."

A cake was baked for Linda by Dot Hughes at Clerkhill Cottage, Eskdalemuir.

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Session Clerk..013873 25255
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07469 397065

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Canonbie
.....013873 71336

### CHEMISTS
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.....013873 80220
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Saturday 8.45am-12.30pm.
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.....01228 792859
Monday-Friday 9am - 6pm.
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### DENTISTS
Mark Buddy 013873 80521
Emergency - outside opening hours
01461 202508

# Library provides update

**t2020, the year of the pandemic, brought much of Westerkirk life to a halt but quite a bit of library-related work has been done at the parish library.**

The trust couldn't have an AGM last October and, through the courtesy of the E&L Advertiser, is providing this update for everyone in the community.

Some of the trustees and a volunteer checked all the library stock and identified some missing books. The catalogue has now been brought right up to date.

The website has a list of missing books and they would be delighted if some of those could find their way back to Westerkirk. http://books.westerkirkparishlibrary.org/

While checking and logging the contents of a cupboard, the book Westerkirk 2000 was rediscovered and the trustees decided to create another book to show the changes which have happened in the area in the past 20 years.

Last summer Mairi Telford Jammeh, chairperson, and Paul Bonser, a trustee, tried to photograph all the houses and buildings in the parish.

There were one or two photos still to do when lockdown came again in December but the work is now nearing completion.

Various people of the parish have provided written contributions and the trustees are very grateful for those.

Lorraine Luescher has provided a lovely piece documenting changes from a farming perspective.

Once finalised, the book will be published on the library website. www.westerkirkparishlibrary.org

Research being carried out by a member of staff from Stirling University was also done in 2020.

The subject being studied is the reading habits of Scottish people towards the end of the 18th century and the early 19th century.

It is good to know the library records are able to support this research and the trust looks forward to receiving reports as it progresses and sharing the information with people in the future.

The trustees have tried to make progress with plans to create an annexe to the library which will include a toilet, reading room and an exhibition space.

They recognise that library members, researchers and visitors need some facilities if they want to spend time browsing and studying there.

Some work has been done by a community member on a voluntary basis to look at a design for such a space.

In dialogue with the council's planning staff, it has been recommended that there be some excavation of the mound to the north side of the library to ensure it is not a prehistoric site.

Although the trustees believe it is simply a 'spoil heap' of soil taken from the site where the library was built, there are so many prehistoric sites in Eskdale that the county archaeologist has recommended this be done.

He will oversee any 'dig' to check this out and make sure the work is done according to guidelines.

Without this being done, the trust would be unlikely to get planning permission from Dumfries and Galloway Council to put up a new building.

The existing library building is listed and there is no room within it to create the kind of facilities needed.

## Little disruption

The trustees anticipate very little disruption to the rest of the community while this is being done but recognise there may be concerns because of a lack of understanding of what is proposed.

Mairi said: 'Westerkirk Parish Library is a gem at the heart of the Esk valley and we are keen to share it with other people and invite visitors to appreciate it with us in years to come.

"We're keen to bring it up to date so members and visitors can see and enjoy it in comfort and so we can tell the story of Westerkirk through small exhibitions.

"As well as the story of Thomas Telford, there are so many other interesting characters and places to tell people about.

"We are planning to hold an AGM by Zoom as soon as we can."

Burnfoot of Westerkirk

Burnfoot Bridge

Westerkirk War Memorial

The ruins of Upper Stenieswater

# 75-turbine windfarm plan for Teviothead

## Fund will benefit Langholm, Newcastleton and Eskdalemuir

**NEWCASTLETON community councillors will next week discuss a proposal for a windfarm east of Teviothead.**

The plan for up to 75 turbines, ranging from 180m to 220m high, is put forward by Muirhall Energy.

The company is behind the windfarms at Crossdykes, Loganhead and Hopsrig, all near Langholm.

The company has also leafleted householders in Langholm about the windfarm.

The windfarm will generate £144m for groups within 15km as part of the UK's largest community investment fund and net communities £3.6m a year.

The fund will enable communities, including Langholm, Ewes, Westerkirk and Eskdalemuir, to develop and support projects of their choice.

Priorities could include job creation and training opportunities, improvements to amenities and sports facilities or environmental enhancement.

The developer will also offer a shared ownership opportunity and groups could become the biggest community investors in renewable energy in the UK.

Work will be guaranteed for local contractors and suppliers who tender within 10 per cent of the best price for work on the windfarm.

### Potential

The windfarm, to be built on forestry and farmland to the east of Teviothead, will be 10km south of Hawick, an area classed by Scottish Borders Council as having the potential for windfarm development in its local development plan.

Jamie Leslie, project manager, said: "Teviot windfarm would deliver an industry-leading community investment fund equivalent to £10,000 a day every day for 40 years for groups to invest in the things which matter to them.

"We believe those living closest to our developments should benefit directly from them and our proposals could be a transformative source of funding for a number of schemes and initiatives.

Muirhall Energy's Muirhall windfarm in Lanarkshire

Other Muirhall Energy projects have delivered high-speed broadband, provided training initiatives for young people and helped community groups deal with the huge impact of COVID-19 restrictions.

"Over the coming months we want to engage with people to find out how they think the fund could best benefit their communities."

The project is at the earliest stages of the planning process and Muirhall Energy will now begin to engage with residents and community groups to gather feedback as well as develop its community offering.

### Consultation

It is expected there will be a community consultation event before the summer, although this may be done online because of COVID-19 restrictions.

An application for consent is expected to be submitted to Scottish ministers towards the end of this year.

Muirhall Energy will open an office in the old post office building in Hawick to create a convenient point of contact for people and businesses.

"Our company is proud of the positive relationships we build with the communities we work in and we look forward to getting feedback on our proposal as we seek to deliver an outstanding model of sustainable development for the two regions."

## IN BRIEF

### Bentpath house plan

.DAVID Cartner of Bentpath has applied for planning in principle to build a house and install a septic tank and soakaway next to Sherra Craig in the village.

### Replace windows

DUMFRIES and Galloway Housing Partnership has applied for planning consent to install 11 replacement windows at 13 Aldery Terrace, Canonbie.

### Roads and footpaths

WORK will begin on the footpaths and road surfaces in Houghton Park and Oliver Place in Newcastleton in the new financial year.

# Easter bunny hops to it

**LONG-SERVING Canonbie postie Jen Grieve hopped straight to it while on duty delivering the mail around the parish over Easter.**

Everyone looks forward to seeing Jen in her Easter bunny outfit and seeing the decorations on her van.

It was a beautiful spring weekend and Jen's enthusiasm rubbed off on her customers, lifting their spirits after what has been a very long and cold winter.

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# Farming on the Border

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## Policy needs to reflect diversity

**AGRICULTURAL support arrangements should be separated from a new UK approach to subsidy control, says Scotland's farming union.**

After the end of the transition period last December, the UK is free to design a new domestic subsidy control regime to reflect strategic interests and particular national circumstances.

Interim subsidy control arrangements under the Trade and Co-operation Agreement (TCA) came into force on January 1 and broadly mirror the EU's state aid rules.

The UK government is currently consulting on future arrangements.

NFU Scotland recognises the government wants a subsidy control system which promotes the benefits which can be derived from subsidies, while limiting the most harmful impacts.

In its response, the union supports facilitating interventions to deliver on the UK's strategic interests, maintaining a competitive and dynamic market economy, protecting the UK internal market and acting as a responsible trade partner.

It is concerned about financial support, to deliver agricultural and rural development policy goals, being subject to the proposed regime and believes they should remain separate.

Its primary concern relates to the potential impact on agricultural policy development and implementation in Scotland because this is a devolved issue.

Jonnie Hall, director of policy, said: "Agricultural and rural development policy is devolved for very good reason.

"It must reflect different needs and circumstances and our concern is that these subsidy control proposals could significantly constrain that.

"Financial support in agricultural and rural development policy remains critical if the policy objectives are to be met in the public interest, including producing food to the highest standards, while helping meet climate and biodiversity challenges.

"We fully accept that, in the context of the UK's internal market, devolved support arrangements must not distort competition or trade in the UK.

"The integrity of the internal market must not be undermined by excessive divergence in support payments.

"There are already safeguards in place internationally through the WTO agreement on agriculture and through the UK's agricultural support framework to prevent this happening."

## A modern mart for town's prosperity

**A SIGNIFICANT milestone has been reached for Newtown St Boswells auction mart.**

Its redevelopment has been given planning permission by Scottish Borders Council.

The mart remains at the centre of this development and, instead of going through the town, it is intended that all mart traffic will access it directly from the A68.

The approval is the first step on the ladder of this long-term development programme for H&H's holdings.

The company's objective is to improve and enhance the current facilities in the town and create a busy town centre, a modern livestock auction mart for the Borders and a rural hub for the surrounding communities.

This is not a new initiative. The town needs new housing stock, ideally in the more affordable category, and the mart land has been earmarked for development for almost 15 years.

During the consultation process the plans were met with considerable approval by residents.

They use underused mart land to create a new town centre, featuring retail and leisure as well as a much-needed residential development of mixed and affordable housing and apartments,

The mart is both vital and integral to the hub which will provide rural business meeting suites to capitalise on the location and provide a centrepiece for business in the Borders for the future.

Richard Rankin, chief executive of H&H Group

### Milestone

Richard Rankin, chief executive officer of H&H Group PLC, said: "This is a significant milestone and the first step on a long ladder to regenerate the town.

"I would like to thank the community, the farmers who use the market and everyone involved in the project for their continued support since its inception.

"This development has been on pause for nearly three years and this is a fantastic step forward in the right direction.

"It means we can have strong conversations and open discussions about what happens next in creating access to the site and start taking early steps towards developing affordable housing and a major retail outlet on sites."

Scott Donaldson, managing director, Harrison & Hetherington, added: "We are delighted at the decision. It is so important to farming in the Borders.

"This will ensure it meets the needs of modern-day cattle and sheep sales and livestock trading.

"Now needing modernisation, we intend it to become one of the most cutting-edge marts in Scotland."

The plans provide two new bays of covered pens (2,000 sq m), a new office for staff and interaction with customers, a new canteen, two new multi-species auction sale rings, new car parking and delivery and servicing accommodation if there was a demand from companies or organisations concerned.

H&H Group has confirmed that provision could be made for a bank, health centre or school and green space was likely to be available for the Newtown St Boswells Show.

## Around the marts

C&D Auction Marts Ltd held a live farm sale auction at The Stubb, for Messsrs Irving & Son, together with Marteye.

There was a small audience of customers at the farm and a massive audience of more than 4,000 online via the Marteye system, along with many phone and commission bids.

The well-maintained items were a credit to the Irving family and there was huge demand for all lots. All the tractors and large implements sold well past expectations, to a top of £37,600 for a 2012 Case CVX175 selling to the trade.

The 2017 Bunning Lowlander 85 muck spreader was in immaculate condition and sold to a customer online for £17,200. The Case MX110, with 10,500 hours on the clock, sold closely behind for £17,000 over the phone.

The mart had forward 701 store hoggs, cast ewes and rams at the weekly sale at Longtown on Tuesday, March 30. A seasonal sale of store hoggs attracted the usual buyers and all classes easily maintained late high rates.

Top £120 for a Suffolk hogg from Shaw Cottage, others to £110 Cumstone; Rouges to £89 Lochwood Mains; Texels to £117 East Foreshields, £111 Edston Estates & Cumstone; Beltexs to £99 Park Nook; Greyfaces to £119 Keskadale Hill, £111 Edston Estates; Cheviot Mules to £92 Cassington; Dorsets to £89 Rammerscales; Blackfaces to £109 Edston Estates, £99 Speddoch Farms, £96 Beoch Farms, £91 Drumblair; Cheviots to £107 Cumstone; Swaledales to £99 Edston Estates; Hampshires to £92 Cassington.

Feeding ewes (93) were still in strong demand. Top of £114 for Leicesters from Cassington; Greyfaces to £107 Waterhead of Dryffe; Cheviot Mules to £107 Cassington; Beltex to £95 Shaw Cottage. Hill ewes to £91 for Cheviots from Cumstone; Blackfaces to £69 Cassington; Swaledales to £52 Edston Estates. Cast rams to £123 for Texels from East Foreshield.

The mart had forward a seasonal entry of breeding sheep of all classes on the same day. Selling to an eager ringside of buyers, all classes were well bid for.

In-lamb hoggs sold to £144, geld hoggs to £124, ewes with lambs at foot to £98.

More ewes with lambs at foot are needed weekly to satisfy buyers' demand.

Ewes and single lamb: Texel £98, £79, £76, £73 High Acres, £95, £83, £74 Felton Demesne. Mule £65 Felton Demesne. Ewes and twin lambs: Texel £73 Felton Demesne. In-lamb hoggs: Mule £144, £132 Leapsrigg. Geld hoggs: Texel £124, £122, £120 Rinnion Hills.

The mart had forward 6,035 sheep comprising 4,193 prime hoggs and 1,842 cast ewes and rams at the weekly sale on Thursday, April 1.

A much-improved show for both quality and quantity meant all classes met a strong demand and more numbers are needed weekly. The sale topped at £1,426 for a Shorthorn shown by D & Y Wilson, Plumpe, Gretna, with Angus cows to £1,081 from Waterhead of Dryfe, Lockerbie. Top per kilo of 198p for an Angus from Plumpe and 188p from Shaw of Dryfe.

A larger show of 4,193 prime hoggs forward, again a very mixed show of quality on offer, with a large proportion of the sale being Blackface and Cheviot hoggs. Trade simply on fire from start to finish, being the dearest trade of the season and achieving an unbelievable overall sale average of 302.7p and an SQQ average of 307.4p

Achieving top price per kilo for the second consecutive week was M/s J Guthrie, Cuiltburn, Crieff for a pen of fantastic Beltex hoggs realising 455ppk. These best export hoggs were again in short supply and an outstanding trade right through. Several pens reached way over 400ppk.

Beltex hoggs topped the price per head at £194 consigned by TA Jefferson, Aspatria Hall, Aspatria.

Heavy hoggs proved dearer again on the week and many commercial pens realised £150-£160. The best Texel and Beltex hoggs realised £180-£190.

Small hoggs were again a mighty trade, topping at 405ppk for a pen of Beltex hoggs, consigned by M/s RN Scott, West Micklethwaite, Wigton. Other continentals to 346ppk for a pen of 18 Texel hoggs consigned by M/s J Gilvear, Graystale Farm, Stirling. Cheviot hoggs topped at 335ppk for a pen of 15, consigned by M/s R Cameron, Borlum farm. Blackface hoggs topped at 312ppk, consigned by M/s H Rorison, Clonrae Thornhill.

A super run of 401 expertly finished, predominantly Blackface hoggs, consigned by M/s JH & KA Thornhill, Haresteads Farm, Cheshire, made the trip to Longtown and were very well rewarded. achieving an average of £111 and 303ppk.

All roads lead to Longtown on a Thursday where premium prices are received for well-finished prime hoggs.

Principal prices (per head): Beltex £194 Aspatria Hall, £189 Cleughbrae, £187 Aspatria Hall, £186 Dormansteads & Cuiltburn, £185 Cuiltburn, £184, £183 Aspatria Hall, £182 Cuiltburn, £180 Aspatria Hall. Texel £190 Riggshield, £178 Annanhill, £174 Rowan Garth & Rendle Terrace, £169 Whitehill, £166, £165 Annanhill. Suffolk £160 The Land, £153 Thorney Knowe, £152 Hyde Park, £145 High Machriemore, £141 Swaites & Hyde Park, £140 Blackleaze & Wydon Eals. Cheviot £158 Hyde Park, £152 Becton Hall, £150 Aspatria Hall, £149 Sundhope, £145 Crosscleugh, £143, £140 Catslackburn. Herdwick £148 Rowhead, £144 Aspatria Hall. Mule £147 High Parson Bridge, £144.50 Ralia Lodge, £144, £141.50 Kirkhouse, £138 Wydon Eals, £137.50 Ralia Lodge, £137 Wydon Eals, £136 Kirkhouse Charollais £145 Thackwood. Blackface £143 Wanwood Hill, £140 Yett, £131 Blackleaze, £130.50 Garvilland, £130 Earlshaugh, Thorney Knowe & Riskenhope. Cheviot Mule £135 East Mey, £134 Brisco Meadows.

A much smaller show of 1,842 ewes was forward, again a mixed bag of goods and all classes of ewes were dearer on the week and in massive demand. Numbers are very keenly sought after. Trade will be very spicy as numbers start to tighten.

Heavy ewes topped at £198 for Texel ewes, consigned by Messrs Beard, Dormansteads, Carlisle.

Mule ewes topped at £127 from Nether Stenries. A lot of mules traded between £115 and £125.

Hill ewes sold to extreme rates and to a top of £120 for Cheviot ewes shown by A & A Hogg, Milnholm, Langholm; Blackfaces to £116 from HF Hamilton & Co, Glenmanna, Dumfries.

Rams were off the clock and in short supply, selling to a top of £196 for Texels from Shankbridge End Farms, Hethersgill.

All classes of ewes are in huge demand here and keenly sought after. Many more ewes can be sold to vendors' advantage.

Averages. Hoggs: light to 323p (297.2p); standard to 405p (306.1p); medium to 455p (310.3p); heavy to 406p (289.8p). Ewes: light to £120 (£85.48); heavy to £198 (£125.10). Rams: £196 (£118.08).

# Derelict land blight hope

## Government fund will help communities to transform spaces

**A NEW £50m Scottish government fund will help transform thousands of hectares of vacant and derelict land in Scotland and signal commitment to tackling the legacy blighting communities.**

Scotland has almost 11,000 hectares of vacant and derelict urban land, including in Langholm, most notably the Ford Mill site on the waterside which is for sale.

Twenty-eight per cent of Scotland's population live within 500m of a derelict site. This land can be reused to help achieve Scotland's targets for climate change, well-being and the economy.

The new fund follows recommendations made by the vacant and derelict land taskforce to transform the approach to tackling the legacy of derelict land and ensure it is no longer acceptable to allow land to fall into long-term disrepair.

In particular, the recommendation to establish a major national green infrastructure investment programme to bring the legacy of stuck sites back into use in ways which will contribute to a fair and green recovery, support job creation and skills development and help rebuild community resilience.

There has been a growing movement in organisations to change their approach to tackling derelict land to provide much-needed greenspace, growing space, community facilities, housing or businesses.

Andrew Thin, who chairs the Scottish Land Commission and the taskforce, said: "Bringing derelict urban places back into use benefits communities, including tackling climate change, improving health and well-being, creating more resilient communities and rebuilding our economy.

### Pivotal

"The recommendations have been pivotal in bringing a focus to the potential vacant and derelict land can bring to communities.

"It is great to see the range of activity which is underway since the recommendations were published and how partners are incorporating them in their own policies."

Scottish Enterprise is driving change through its work with the business community.

The Ford Mill site on the waterside in Langholm has lain derelict for many years, despite having planning consent for housing

It is considering how best to ensure funding assessment criteria focus on more than the financial benefits and acknowledge wider non-economic and natural benefits.

Development Trusts Association Scotland (DTAS) is helping communities to reimagine their spaces by leading the regeneration of derelict sites.

### Pivotal

Karlene Doherty, vacant and derelict land project manager, said: "DTAS has worked with the commission for eight months to deliver the project.

"It was established in response to feedback from DTAS members who want to tackle the blight of vacant and derelict land in their communities but felt underconfident in taking forward these projects forward because of the complex issues the sites often come with."

## Youth hustings

DUMFRIES and Galloway Youth Council plans to host an election hustings event featuring candidates, party representatives and others in the run-up to the Scottish parliamentary election on May 6.

The hustings will give young people the opportunity to put questions directly to decision-makers and find out more about what they think about issues affecting young people in the region. Details to follow.

## House extension

MARTIN Pearson has applied for planning consent to extend 8A North Liddle Street Newcastleton.

## Burnfoot proposal

MESSRS W D & R Elliot have applied to build an agricultural building and lay an access track at Burnfoot of Ewes, Ewes.

**SCOTTISH ELECTIONS 2021**

# South Scotland regional list candidates

**SNP:** Emma Harper, Joan McAlpine, Paul Wheelhouse, Màiri McAllan, Richard Walker, Heather Anderson, Siobhian Brown, Stacy Bradley, Paul McLennan, Ali Salamati, Stephen Thompson, Laura Brennan-Whitefield.

**Conservative:** Oliver Mundell, Rachael Hamilton, Craig Hoy, Brian Whittle, Sharon Dowey, Shona Haslam, Finlay Carson, Scott Hamilton, Alex Allison, Eric Holford, Alexandra Herdman, John Denerley.

**Alba:** Cynthia Guthrie, Corri Wilson, Suzanne Blackley, Laurie Flynn.

**Green**: Laura Moodie, Barbra Anne Harvie, Dominic Ashmole, Katherine Malone, Charles Alexander Strang, Ciara Campbell, Peter Richard Barlow, James Konrad Puchowski, Tristan Gray.

**Labour:** Colin Smyth, Carol Mochan, Martin Whitfield, Claudia Beamish, Kevin McGregor, Katherine Sangster, Ian Davidson, Archie Dryburgh, Esther Clark.

**Liberal Democrats:** Catriona Bhatia, Jenny Claire Marr, Richard Brodie, AC May, Euan Davidson, Amanda Kubie, Kirsten Herbst-Gray.

**All for Unity**: George Galloway, Jamie Blackett, Bruce Halliday, Jim Grindlay, Kirsteen Michell, Elspeth Grindlay, Malcolm Macdonald.

**Abolish the Scottish Parliament Party**: John James Ferguson, Simon James Bellord.

**Freedom Alliance –Integrity Society Economy:** Mandy Blackman, Amanda McConechy, Gillian Rachel Jamieson, Joy Elizabeth Rivett-Gill.

**Independence for Scotland Party:** Ewan George Charles Steed.

**Independent Green Voice:** Maxwell Dunbar

**Reform UK:** Michelle Lorraine Ballantyne, David Alexander Kirkwood, James Alexander Edward Corbett, William Conlin Luke.

**Scotia Future:** Chic Brodie.

**Scottish Family Party:** Charles David McEwan, Dorothy Yost, Sophie Hendry, Theresa Gavin, Elizabeth Ann Fabisiak.

**Scottish Libertarian Party:** Stef Johnstone.

**UKIP:** Richard Elvin, Julia Searle, Patricia Mountain, Patricia Bryant, Nick Hollis, David Blaymires.

**Vanguard Party:** Michael James Banks.

# Polling stations in Annandale East and Eskdale

- Springfield: Stormont Hall, Gretna Green;
- Gretna: Richard Greenhow Centre, Gretna;
- Rigg: Mansfield Hall, Rigg;
- Kirkpatrick Fleming: Victoria Hall, Kirkpatrick Fleming;
- Eaglesfield: Eaglesfield Village Hall;
- Ecclefechan & Burnswark: Ecclefechan Community Centre
- Middlebie: Middlebie Community Centre;
- Half Morton: Half Morton Parish Hall;
- Evertown: Canonbie Public Hall;
- Canonbie: Canonbie Public Hall;
- Gilnockie: Gilnockie Public Hall;
- Langholm: The Buccleuch Centre;
- Ewes: Ewes Parish Hall;
- Westerkirk: Ex Servicemen's Public Hall, Bentpath;
- Eskdalemuir: Ex Servicemen's Public Hall, Eskdalemuir.

# Focus on health and social care integration

**TODAY'S Scottish parliamentary election coverage focuses on the integration of health and social care in Scotland.**

We have asked our candidates in Dumfriesshire and in Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire whether they think it is working well.

Does it need to be reformed? How would their government pay for enhancing the services which the pandemic has shown up as being under-funded, under-valued and under-resourced?

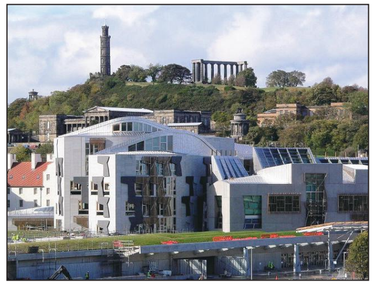
Or did they think it had been well-funded, valued and well-resourced?

## Questions

Over the next four weeks, the E&L Advertiser will ask the questions which are important to the voters of Scotland but if any of our readers have any ideas for questions they would like to raise, they can email rachel.norris@eladvertiser.co.uk

The paper also publishes a list of the regional candidates for South Scotland.

Some of the sitting list MSPs, hoping to regain their seats include Joan McAlpine, Colin Smyth, Emma Harper, Paul Wheelhouse, Bryan Whittle, Claudia Beamish,



The focus of attention for the next few weeks, the Scottish Parliament Photo: Lee Kindness

Jesse Rae, Independant

**Health and social care is working seamlessly but those who are have said they prefer them taegether.**

I'm not convinced. I think they both suffer frae the same problem: poor management.

I draw that conclusions frae personal experience. In hospital 12 months ago I experienced at first hand why we are so blessed with the Borders General Hospital.

Fantastic surgeons, doctors and nursing staff, porters and support team but I found the hours they were asked tae work unacceptable.

Twelve hours, not including the travel some had tae make tae get tae work which could add a couple of hours.

I know they appreciate their days off but I could see the fatigue creeping in by hours nine to 10.

This does not include the cheery, young, bright students who had tae come at all hours o' day and night administering care and monitoring blood pressure, drugs, changing drips or just bringing water.

Doing this work experience is without pay or travel expenses. That can't be right.

One lassie travelled frae Duns every day. That is management responsibility tae change that practice.

That doesn't take money, just better management for the morale of the workforce.

My experience of social care with my 95-year-old mother, who still lives in her own hame, is the same.

Dilligent, bright, caring lassies come in, help her wash, dress and feed her and come back and see her safe in bed at night.

They are allocated only 15 tae 20 minutes tae accomplish these tasks and don't really have the time for what they really want tae dae and that is tae sit down wi my mum, hold her hand and give her some quality time.

That is a management issue. Simple changes don't always have tae cost money if the job is done right.

An overhaul in management in both health and social care wouldn't hurt and most definitely lift morale, especially with the extra strain which I saw as I left the hospital the day the virus restrictions started and experienced the effect that had on my mum's social care.

Independant

**PERSONALLY, I don't think the concept of integration needs to be reformed but concur with the observations of Audit Scotland that, while some improvements have been made to the delivery of health and social care services, integration authorities, councils and NHS boards need to show a stronger commitment to collaborative working to achieve the real, long-term benefits of an integrated system.**

The pandemic has highlighted that public and third-party partners in particular are underfunded and under-resourced. There is less evidence that services are under-valued.

Public appreciation of the professionalism and commitment of care workers in all sectors and the services they provide has improved during the pandemic.

A positive outcome of the pandemic is that telemedicine has made follow-up outpatient appointments a lot easier.

The pandemic has also educated folk not to use emergency services for minor ailments. Sadly, it has also created an unwillingness to seek support.

Access to mental health and other social care seems to vary considerably in South Scotland and has, occasionally, been put to one side by smaller, under-resourced surgeries which, until recently, were also responsible for all COVID-19 vaccinations.

List candidate Ciara Campbell says: "We have one mental health nurse at our surgery for only one day a week.

"All they can do is tell you to access a website; posting details of websites took a week."

The third sector has also suffered through this past year and, sadly, it is the poorest and most vulnerable who are being let down and neglected; those who are disproportionately affected by ill health and poor mental well-being.

The Scottish Greens will invest in a properly-funded and publicly-owned NHS Scotland with mental health at the heart of services.

We will also increase funding for CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services).

A Green National Care Service will be human rights based and ensure local accountability and decision-making as well as ensure good pay levels for social care workers (£15 an hour) and training.

Our manifesto commitment to mental health is to ringfence 10 per cent of the frontline NHS budget and give everyone access to mental health support services at their GP surgery, in addition to expanding access to treatments like CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy).

Dr B A Harvie, Scottish Green Party

**I WANT to firstly thank all carers for the tremendous job they do, especially over the past year. It has been extremely difficult.**

Thanks must also go to care home providers who have shown compassion and care for residents.

Despite great efforts on the ground, the SNP has now had 14 years to support social care but prioritised its independence agenda instead of putting important and much-needed reform of health and social care first.

I support the integration of health and social care but have concerns about its implementation, with potential loss of accountability and underfunding.

It is clear that the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed weaknesses in the existing care system and reform is long overdue but we must be cautious in how we achieve that change and ensure the people, who receive care, are at the heart of any change.

Carers need better, more consistent support to carry out their caring role well and I welcome local efforts to implement workforce planning by encouraging more people to work in the sector.

I welcome the recommendations in the Feeley Review (on adult social care). There is substantial room for improvement and I don't believe a tired SNP government is capable of delivering it.

Rachel Hamilton, Conservative

I believe the creation of a national care service could help in achieving higher-quality care and improve the employment conditions of care workers.

I acknowledge there is a need to improve training and career development opportunities for carers. I also agree with the need to remove the needlessly bureaucratic process of accessing social care.

The SNP has slashed council budgets over the years and this has had a negative impact on the money available to fund integrated care.

I believe a local approach remains crucial in designing a new service and local government should receive the support it needs.

We have pledged to enshrine fair funding for councils into law, ensuring they receive a set fraction of the government budget each year.

The SNP should not gamble with our lives and livelihoods. Threatening independence is a very dangerous game to play with our much-loved NHS and social care.

Scottish Conservatives

**CARE staff are underpaid and undervalued. Labour will immediately increase their wage, firstly to £12 an hour, then to £15.**

We regret that the SNP, Tories and Liberals together voted against.

We believe the NHS and its staff have performed brilliantly under the strain of COVID-19 but now that we are exiting the crisis phase, thanks to the UK's provision of vaccines, we need to rebuild.

That is why Labour has an NHS Recovery Plan as part of our overall Recovery Strategy.

We recognise that the system was under strain before COVID-19, with more than 6,800 cancelled operations in 2019 and the SNP has never, ever, met the 12-week, waiting time target.

In 2020 there were more than 43,000 breast cancer screening appointments cancelled, 180,000 cervical screening tests delayed and a missing 7,000 cancer diagnoses.

We will tackle this by establishing Rapid Diagnostic Centres, as exist in Wales, and recruit cancer support workers.

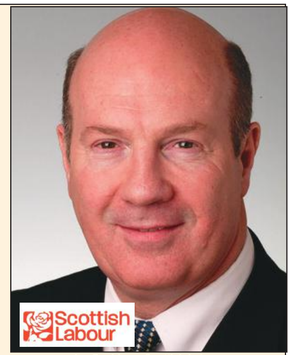
On mental health: again, the SNP has consistently failed to meet the waiting time targets.

Labour will set up a new referral and triage system to bring Scotland's waiting times down to the levels of the rest of the UK.

Only 8.5 per cent of the Scottish NHS budget is spent on mental health. We will increase this so it reaches the 11 per cent of the health budget spent in England and Wales.

Labour welcomes the four per cent pay offer for NHS staff, by the extra money for Scotland from the Barnet formula, but believes there needs to be a sustainable and long-term pay deal for all the workforce.

Since 2011 Labour has supported the creation of a National Care Service.



Ian Davidson, Scottish Labour

Under-resourcing, through cuts to council budgets, has been a constant problem.

We believe social care should be freely and locally available in the entire country by making this a national priority.

As the current crisis reduces, we need to focus all our attention on recovery: recovery in education, in employment, in our communities and in health.

A Scottish government can either plot for constitutional change or plan for recovery. It hasn't the capacity to do both.

Labour will not sacrifice recovery to pursue constitutional fantasies.

THE move to integrate health and social care was always going to be incredibly tough.

To bring together different cultures and structures with their own resources and histories was only ever going to be a mammoth task.

Unfortunately, we have witnessed the consequences of this in delays in the integrated workforce plan and financial pressures having an impact on the delivery of a step change in services which we wanted to see amid governance disputes.

The elephant in the room is money. To increase NHS funding while cutting local authority budgets year on year is dangerous and counter-intuitive, especially when councils are being expected to deliver more for less.

When everyone is on the same side, seeking to provide care with a human rights approach at its heart, this disparity has to be addressed.

Scottish Liberal Democrats pioneered the policy of free personal and nursing care for the elderly in Scotland.

Now, we have to work towards a way of delivering social care which is fair and sustainable as needs become ever greater.

There has been discussion recently about the creation of a National Care Service.

Jenny Marr, Scottish Liberal Democrats

For me, the proposals from the Scottish government do not speak to my values which are about giving people control over their care and accountability over the organisations which deliver it.

More power in the hands of government ministers to the detriment of local knowledge is not the type of politics I subscribe to.

Further restructuring and a reduction of health boards will only be to the detriment of the Borders and South Scotland in general.

If we want a transformative delivery of health and social care, we have to be able to afford it, which means having an economy which works, making sure public finances are managed in a way which allows us to achieve our ambitions.

Local authorities need to be properly funded. We need to replace the unfair council tax system, invest in better childcare and remove barriers to people making progress in their own lives.

Only by having a needle-sharp focus on economic recovery can we make sure we deliver the funding health and social care needs to thrive.

**I AM enormously grateful to all in our health and social care workforce for their professionalism throughout a pandemic, which caused some harrowing experiences.**

While true that much has worked well, every preventable loss of life has been distressing.

The First Minister has announced plans for an independent public inquiry into the handling of the pandemic to identify lessons on how best to improve practice.

The resourcing of services, safety of residents in care homes and transition between health and residential and non-residential care will likely be key areas of focus in identifying best practice.

On funding, we know the parliamentary report on the Future of Social Care and Support in Scotland recommends "any decision relating to how health and social care is funded should be a national conversation involving both stakeholders and the public".

Two systems have not always worked well together and this is why we legislated in 2014 to allow for integration of services.

In pioneering this in Scotland, progress was initially slow.

It proved difficult to merge cultures between large statutory organisations.

NHS Borders and Scottish Borders Council formed a Health and Social Care Partnership with combined spending of more than £200m, with a new integrated joint board.

There has been much progress in the past 18 months, including on co-ordinating budgets, and the new culture is evolving, aided by our area having the simplicity of a health board and council with the same geographic boundaries.

That said, there remain areas such as in commissioning services for those in care, which likely require further investment in staff resources.

Paul Wheelhouse, SNP

Governance is only one aspect. If re-elected, the SNP will establish a new National Care Service among our first actions, alongside significantly increased investment in social care over the next five years.

We propose a national wage for carers to ensure wages for our social care workforce better reflect the importance of the work they do.

We will scrap all non-residential social care charges to ensure people can better continue to live independently where that is their choice.

# Are they under-valued?

**WITH three daughters employed in the NHS and my wife having worked in home care, including in Langholm and Canonbie, for many years I got no shortage of feedback.**

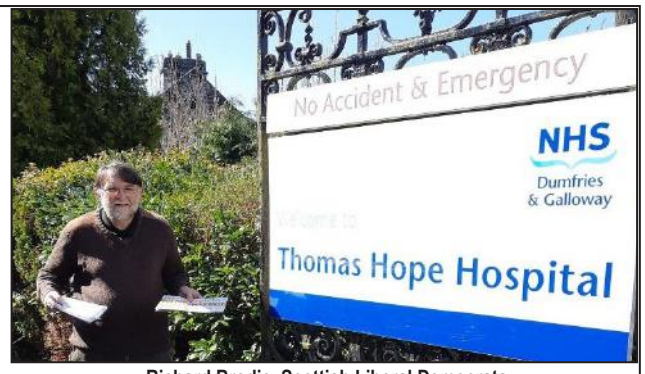
The idea of integrating health and social care services is a great idea which is progressing well, although work is still to be done on matching up IT systems and sharing information about patients.

The issue, which is most concerning, is that NHS Dumfries & Galloway continues to undervalue the role of community hospitals such as Langholm's Thomas Hope and Annan Hospital.

These centres play a vital part in releasing beds in Dumfries and Galloway Infirmary and providing a place where patients can recover and rehabilitate near their homes.

There is nothing more disheartening for people to have few visitors because family and friends must travel 40 miles to Dumfries to see them.

As your MSP, I would insist that the Scottish government and health boards recognise the importance of these small hospitals to local health and well-being.




Richard Brodie, Scottish Liberal Democrats

The pandemic has put pressure on the health and social care service, highlighting fault lines which have existed for many years.

It has shown the neglected importance of workers in care homes and who support those needing support at home.

The way patients with COVID-19 were discharged into care homes to spread the disease was criminal.

Lockdown rules and lack of social interaction also underscored the urgency to provide better mental health services which our leader Willie Rennie and Liberal Democrats have been calling for over many years.

Even pre-pandemic, our research found people waiting up to two years for treatment.

If we really want to remunerate low-paid care workers fairly and ensure wider access to mental health counselling, we will need to find the cash, it being an obvious lie now that Brexit would bring £350m a week extra NHs income.

Liberal Democrats have already won an extra £100m for mental health in this year's Scottish budget but if we really value our NHS, those, who can afford to, should pay a bit more in tax and National Insurance to support our "Heroes".

Liberal Democrats

**SCOTLAND has the highest number of GPs for every person in the UK and, under the SNP, our A&E departments are the best performing of the home nations.**

Prescriptions are free, whereas in England this "tax on the sick" costs £9.15 an item.

Funding for health has risen to a record £16bn since the SNP came into government and, of course, we have a state-of-the-art new hospital in Dumfries.

In Scotland we have 19,500 more NHS staff and these workers have been offered a four per cent pay rise by the SNP government, compared with the insulting one per cent from Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

Scotland has a good story to tell on health and First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has steered us through the pandemic with a sure hand.

If re-elected First Minister, Ms Sturgeon will establish a National Care Service to ensure social care standards are consistent around the country, including a national fair wage for care workers and scrapping charges for non-residential care.

Under the SNP, we have made

Joan McAlpine, SNP

advances in the integration of health and social care which aspire to create equality of provision and resourcing as well as more seamless working.

More needs to be done to achieve the benefits of integration, which is why we will set up the National Care Service.

We already have free nursing and personal care for all who need it, regardless of age, in Scotland, something which does not happen in England.

The pandemic has resulted in tragic deaths, particularly in our care homes and among the most vulnerable.

That is why a National Care Service is needed.

Nicola Sturgeon is the only government leader anywhere in the UK to commit to holding a full, judge-led public inquiry into the pandemic so we learn lessons from the deaths of so many loved ones.

Firstly, however, we need to beat COVID-19 and begin our recovery.

I am very pleased we are making so much progress with vaccines and look forward to when we can look back on COVID-19 as a distant historical disaster, never to be repeated.

**OVER the past year we have seen just how important our NHS and social care system is.**

Those, who look after our loved ones here, deserve our heartfelt thanks and despite the stresses and strains, they have done us proud as a region.

Personally, I will never forget the kindness of the team at the Thomas Hope a few years ago when my great-aunt (my granny Chris) spent a short spell there towards the end of her life before moving to Bankfoot Care Home in Moffat.

We hear a lot of talk in the Scottish parliament about how we can change the system we have but the reality is that it is about supporting those on the ground to deliver community care which looks at the needs of the individual.

That is what I saw for myself at the Thomas Hope and I know many families have witnessed the same.

So, while I agree with the idea behind the Health and Social Care Partnership, I don't think that simply moving money and people between organisations, while important, is the key to addressing the local challenges we face.

Oliver Mundell (r), Conservative

Having represented the area for the past five years, to me the key issue in the Langholm and Eskdale area is still the fact we struggle to attract care workers to help support people in their own homes.

Solving this problem is not only about money but also in making sure we value the work careers do and recognise their professionalism.

We also see that many people have to leave the area at the end of their lives because of the lack of a nursing or care home.

I know this is being worked on but I think most people would agree the situation is far from ideal.

Finally, I am also concerned that, as we move past COVID-19, we are going to face huge healthcare issues with further increased waiting time pressure for the likes of cancer treatment.

I am keen, moving forward, that we look to work more closely on a cross-border basis to see whether we can get more local treatment for those in Eskdale.

Scottish Conservatives

**THE NHS was Labour's greatest achievement and more than 70 years on, COVID-19 has reminded us that its founding principle of healthcare for all, free at the point of use, is as important today as it ever was.**

It was the need to protect our NHS which brought us together, determined to defeat COVID-19 and save lives.

In the face of the pandemic our health and care service heroes stepped up to the mark.

We stood on our doorsteps and applauded those key workers who faced the deadly virus but carried on, determined to continue caring for the sick and vulnerable. But it is not our praise they need; it is an increase in their wages.

NHS services have not been overwhelmed, thanks largely to people following the restrictions and staying at home to prevent the virus spreading.

But this has not come without a cost.

Patients already experienced long waits before COVID-19 and in the past year NHS waiting times have increased further.

There are missing cancer patients, a growing mental health crisis as the impact of lockdown hit hard and an exhausted, under-recognised health and social care workforce.

That's why we need MSPs in parliament, whose priority is a recovery plan for our NHS and social care, not bickering over the constitution.

Scottish Labour's dedicated NHS Recovery Plan includes a pledge that our social care workers will receive the pay they deserve with an immediate rise to £12 an hour and a commitment to raise this to £15 an hour.

The plan sets out steps to get cancer treatment back on track, invest in more mental health

Colin Smyth, Labour

support and create a national care service to ensure every part of our country has access to proper social care such as care homes, righting a wrong here in Eskdale.

The plan offers solutions to ensure we can restore our NHS and deliver fair pay for health and care workers.

That is what my priority as your MSP will be: solutions for the future, not the arguments of the past.

We need to focus on what unites us, not an obsession with what divides us.

Scottish Labour

# Day Centre applauded for its endless support

## Staff and volunteers deliver over 10,000 meals during lockdowns

**LANGHOLM Day Centre has delivered more than 10,000 meals to its members over the past 12 months**.

The good news is that the centre plans to reopen for lunches on May 17 as long as the COVID-19 situation continues to improve.

As we reflect on the year past, we thank those who have worked tirelessly throughout, providing care and services from NHS staff to key workers. The day centre is no exception.

### Praise

John Hammond, chairman, has praised the centre staff who have worked continuously through the challenges of furlough, sickness and necessary isolation to ensure their services have prevailed.

As with many businesses, the centre closed its doors to hosting in March 2020.

Without delay, operations were swiftly adapted and meals, newsletters, games and quizzes brought cheer to many in the town.

Sandra Graham, manager, is proud of the staff and their resilience. They have stepped up to ensure the valuable support continues.

She said: "We're delighted that, if the coronavirus situation continues in the right direction, we will open for lunches on May 17.

"Initially, we will be open to small numbers only and be closed to walk-ins. It is important that we prioritise the safety of our members at this time.

"Thanks also to everyone for their support during the year. We're very grateful for all their kind donations."

L-R, Sandra Graham, Mick Garrad and Jacqueline Hall kitted up and ready to deliver.

Langholm Day Centre stalwart,Catherine Lithgow, in the pod tent named Loo-Lou for doorstep chats

Janet Clark and Kat McNeill portion the meals ready for despatch

Suzie Grant and Kat McNeill boxing-up the lunches ready for delivery

The centre helped long-term member Elaine Anderson to celebrate her 90th birthday on March 2

## IN BRIEF

### Flood team is set up

A VOLUNTEER flood group has been set up in Newcastleton.

Membership comprises Hawick flood group, two community councillors, two members of Newcastleton and District Community Trust, two members of the resilience team, public sector agencies when appropriate and Scottish Borders Council's flood team.

Residents on the flood group are Tom Brown, John Scott, Barry Jackson, Diane Adamson, Lee Musson, Jenny Wilson, Rodney Groom, Jackie Taylor and Gillian Scott.

The community council and flood resilience group had come up with a detailed summary of actions and recommendations to add to the learnings for future flood preparation.

### Interim chief

DUMFRIES and Galloway Council has appointed Fiona Lees interim chief executive and returning officer.

Ms Lees' appointment will be for a short time until chief executive, Gavin Stevenson recovers from illness and is able to return to his post.

Ms Lees will take charge of the full range of duties as interim chief executive, including as returning officer for the forthcoming Scottish parliamentary election. She began work on Monday.

Elected members, close colleagues and the wider staff of the council all wish Gavin well and hope for a full and speedy recovery."

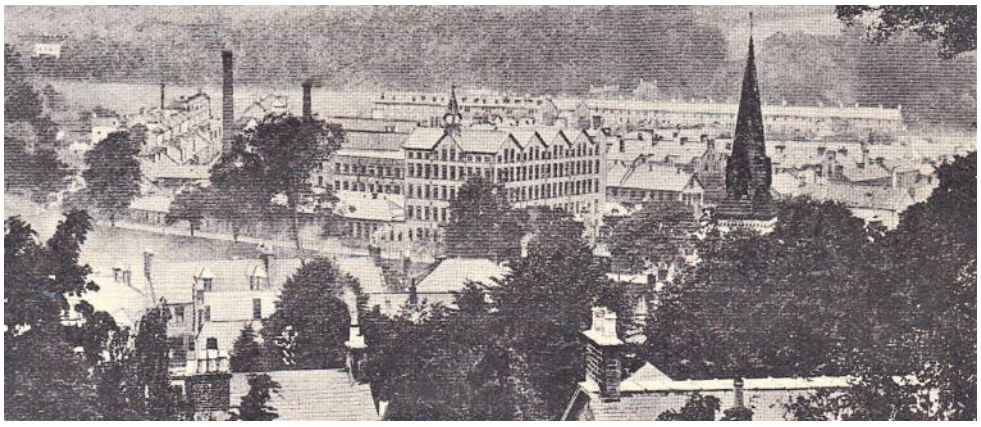
### Organ to be removed

LISTED building consent is being sought to remove the organ from Eskdalemuir church, along with the stained-glass leaded window.

The proposal is to replace the window with a plain glass window on the west elevation of the church.

Eskdalemuir church closed at Christmas in 2019.

The Church of Scotland has put it up for sale, with offers above £30,000 being asked.



# Memories and Milestones

*We continue our serialisation of Tommy Beattie's book*

## Empty Barrels

**(continued)**

**As I said a few pages ago the streets were tarred, empty barrels everywhere.**

One day my best pal of those days, who sadly died on the 26th day of March 1990. John Maxwell Young dared me to walk around the top of an empty tar barrel. It appeared to be empty but you can't see through tar. I took up the challenge and had a go. Unfortunately I slipped and fell in, feet first thank goodness. I discovered the barrel was not completely empty, the tar came above my ankles, some three inches or so. Quite a way up a little boy's legs.

On arriving home wearing what appeared to be a pair of black boots my mother, bless her, wondered what on earth I had done now. When she heard of the latest escapades it did not amuse her.

Should this happen to anyone today, petrol, diesel or Swarfega would remove the tar. My mother had none of these so she used 1lb of the best country butter. This was spread over my feet and legs and between my toes with great success. As the weather was very hot that day my feet and legs were tender, to say the least, and for many days after that.

### First one then another

We were seldom in the house. The whole gang played outside for hours. We would play all sorts of games and some invented. We were playing with a roll of fencing wire one day. Strathie Ewart and John Young were unrolling this strong wire with me to hold onto the loose end. The first thing I knew of anything amiss was a tremendous bang or my arm. The other two had let their end slip and I was stabbed deep into my left forearm. I was frightened because the blood was not red. It looked almost black I remember and wondered why.

That scar is still visible today. The Doctor was summoned once more. Another half-crown in his hand. My mother and father always paid cash to the Doctor. I have just thought we ought to have had discount being good and regular customers, at least I was.

### Wauchope

I was having a prolonged period of attention by the Doctor because it wasn't long before I was carried from the river Wauchope, at the bottom of our garden, by Adam Waldie and, who else, John Young.

John and I had found an old lorry wheel in the river. I was down stream because I was a bit older and I suppose a little stronger. John could not hold the wheel any longer in the strong current and so it came down on my left foot. I could not see my toes for blood, red this time and a lot of it.

The valve of the wheel had almost gone through my big toe although the nail grew again and it was like a small horn.

I was carried, as I said, and placed on the livingroom table. The District nurse came and so did Alex Johnstone, to hold me down. The nurse poured iodine into the hole where my nail had been. It wasn't sore, it was torture. No wonder Alex was called upon to hold me down. I was bandaged and a slipper tied to my foot.

### London

You will notice as my life story unfolds, John Young is always mentioned. I could tell my tale no other way because we were always together. We lived almost next door for years. All through adolescence and after the war, for a short time, until I got married and left Langholm for the big city of London.

Whilst writing this I am trying to fill in odd bits which might be of interest before starting the proper story. I intend moving onwards relating the happenings year by year if possible.For example I have remembered two more horses. First I will mention John Graham, Coal Merchant of Henry Street, near Moodla Point. He delivered coal all around the town and outwith the town boundary, if not too far.

Brother George lived in Caroline Street opposite the grass triangle, his son lives there now.

**(to be continued)**

Neil Stevenson presents the Scott Cup to Hawick captain John Hogg at LRFC Sevens in April 1991.

# Times Past

### *100 years: Bowling – Langholm New*

At the annual meeting of this club on Tuesday night, Mr H Robson in the chair, the treasurer's statement showed a balance of £5 13s 4d in hand. The following office bearers were elected: President, Mr H Robson; vice president, Mr W Smith; secretary, Mr W Mitchell; treasurer, Mr J Morrison; committee, Messrs J Barnfather, W Hyslop, T Hounman, W Henderson, R Bell and R Brodie. The annual subscription was fixed at 15s. The Chairman was appointed to attend the Carlisle tournament meeting and Messrs J Hyslop and W Henderson secured nominations for the tournament, with Mr T Hounman as reserve. Mr T Fletcher was appointed delegate to the Border Bowling Association meeting, and Messrs W Park and W B Mitchell obtained nominations. For the Langholm tournament Messrs A Armstrong and W Henderson were nominated, with Messrs T Beattie and D Grant reserves. It was resolved that a tournament be held in the evenings in July. It was also decided that the club provide the prize for the championship competition.

### *75 years: A Langholm Record – Swallows in Dumfriesshire*

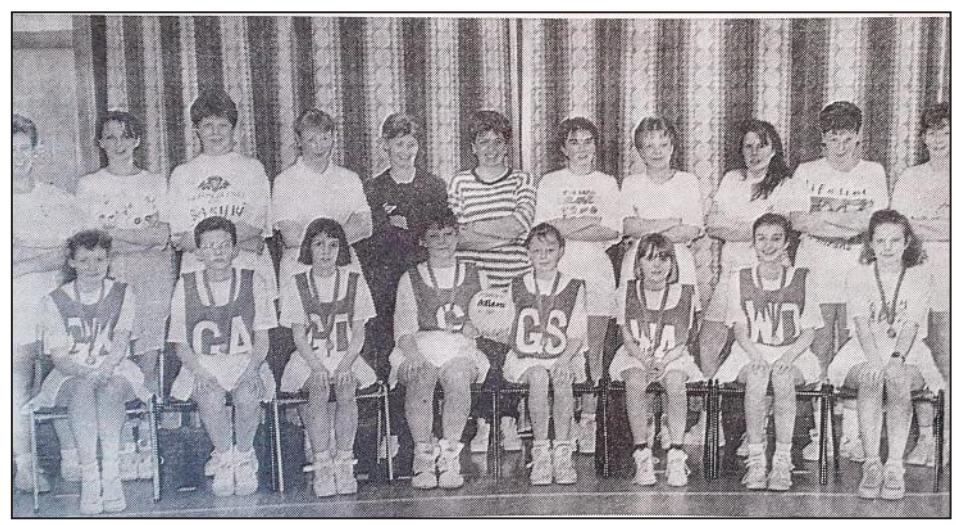
The paragraph in our last issue regarding the appearance of a swallow in Langholm on Saturday 1st April, has created no little controversy in the town and it is averred that this must be the earliest first appearance of such a bird for many years. The swallow almost succeeded in beating the daffodils, which, the poet assures us, "come before the swallow dares." According to records we find that the earliest first appearance of a swallow in Dumfriesshire was at Langholm on 3rd April 1913 and that the usual time for this bird's arrival in Nithsdale is from the 12th to the 22nd April. Although this year's arrival knocks three days off the 1913 figure, we are afraid that Langholm's record must be passed on to Thornhill as a swallow was seen in that district this year on March 28th.

### *50 years: Padda Pool*

In connection with the effects of pollution on wildlife we see that the humble frog is fast disappearing in Cumberland. So far as we are concerned it appears to have already disappeared in so far as Langholm is concerned. It is indeed a long, long time since we saw a "padda" as our local vernacular has it for a frog. To Old Town boys of half a century or more ago the favourite haunt for "padda-redd", tadpoles and the finished article itself – the frog – was a small pool right on the top of Whita, known as the "Padda Pool". It is quite a while since we visited this location and consequently we are wondering if there are any signs of frog-life there at the moment. In the New Town the most prolific place for paddas was the old skating pond on the Becks Moss but this has now been filled in and so that meant "fini" for the pads. In Cumberland we see that a kind of operation "Frog Life" is being organised and this means that where frogs are breeding, small quantities of the redd will be removed and redistributed into ponds and ditches where no frogs now occur and it is hoped that new colonies will form such an operation is indicated here in Eskdale.

### *25 years: Guild hears of Carlisle animal refuge work*

Langholm Woman's Guild met for the first time in the current session. In the absence of the President, Vice President May Harkness opened the meeting with the usual devotions. Mr Frank Tebbut was then introduced from the Animal Refuge in Carlisle. Mr Tebbut explained how his faith in God helped him cope when dealing with animals which had suffered in human hands. The Animal Refuge employs 20 people who look after all kinds of animals which arrive at the Refuge for various reasons. Sometimes an owner becomes ill or is too old to cope and his pet is taken into care until a suitable home can be found. Though sometimes stressful, this is a very rewarding job and Elaine Anderson thanked Mr Tebbut for a most interesting talk. At the end of the meeting it was decided on a show of hands that the Guild summer outing should be to Ayr on a date to be arranged in June.



Langholm Youth Club senior and junior netball teams with manager Pearl Mitchell and coach Melanie Christie in April 1991

# The E&L Gallery

Meadow Pipit, on full alert, captured by Alistair Moulstone

Camera: Canon 7D mk 2 with 100-400mm lens

# On War Service at Devil's Porridge

**THE Devil's Porridge Museum in Eastriggs is running a programme of free online events in co-operation with the re-enactment group 'On War Service' this weekend.**

On War Service is a group of experienced history enthusiasts who run family-friendly events representing the soldiers, nurses, war workers and civilians of World War One.

The events have been designed to appeal to a range of ages and interests and will take place via Zoom this Saturday and Sunday.

People of all ages are invited to 'meet' a World War One Tommy and discover the role of air intelligence during the Great War.

There is an interactive event designed for children under 12. It introduces participants to the foods eaten by soldiers in the trenches.

A mini-series of events for teenagers and adults, Treating Tommy, introduces attendees to the medical staff of the war and explores the treatments administered to injured soldiers.

These events may particularly appeal to young people studying World War One or the history of medicine at school.

Some of the events have a strong medical theme so bear this in mind when booking tickets.

Each session lasts for about half an hour and questions are strongly encouraged.

The programme is: Saturday, April 10, 11am – Air Intelligence (everyone); 2pm – Eating like a Soldier (12 and under).

Sunday, April 11, 11am – Treating Tommy: Gas, Shells and the Body (12+); 2pm – Treating Tommy: Medical Evacuation (12+); 5pm – Your Artefacts (everyone).

This final session gives the public the chance to seek help with any personal research relating to World War One.

Attendees can take along their own stories, photos and artefacts to share.

It is the perfect opportunity for family historians and anyone with an interest in the Great War to find answers to any burning or nagging questions they've been harbouring.

Tickets for all events are available for free now, just search for The Devil's Porridge Museum on Eventbrite, or find the events on The Devil's Porridge Facebook page.

Tickets are available for each event until 12pm on the day before the session.

Participants will be given a link to their sessions after they have reserved their places.

Above & Left:

On War Service re-enactors will appear online this weekend in association with the Devil's Porridge Museum in Eastriggs

# Crossing the border

TRAVEL restrictions in the UK should be relaxed at the same time as those on the Scottish mainland, says an MP.

Currently, people living in the Scottish Borders can leave their local authority area only for essential purposes.

However, from April 26, travel within the Scottish mainland is to be allowed.

When announcing this change, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said that "we hope restrictions on journeys between Scotland and other parts of the UK and the wider common travel area can also be lifted, if not on April 26, then as soon as possible thereafter".

Coronavirus data in the UK continues to improve, with the vaccination rate and lockdown restrictions paying dividends.

Currently, Scotland has the highest rate of COVID-19 per 100,000 people in the UK: Scotland 51.4; Northern Ireland 49.4; England 43.9; and Wales 28.7.

Clackmannanshire has the highest rate per head in the UK.

John Lamont, who represents Liddesdale, spoke out about the importance of cross-border travel and allowing some tourism businesses to resume.

He said: "It has been a tough few months not being able to travel to neighbouring areas to visit family or for grandparents to see new grandchildren.

"With mainland Scotland travel restrictions being eased on April 26, we need travel to elsewhere in the UK to be eased too.

"This is especially important for Borders' communities where many families live just a few miles apart but are on separate sides of the border.

"Given that Scotland currently has the highest rate in the UK, fears about importing cases from higher areas are not justified.

"Seeing family and friends from across the border for the first time in months will be very welcome and will have a really positive effect on people's mental health."

# Deal with drainage

CONCERNS remain in Newcastleton over the lack of effort to resolve the blockages in the drains at the south end of the village.

Even outwith flood incidents and heavy downpours, they are all slow to drain away.

The community council has again asked Scottish Borders Council to deal with this issue.

A call-out was made during that evening's meeting as rising waters crossed the grass verges on the riverside.

# Walk the walk

## Another walk, this time in the Canonbie area, by Gavin Graham

- **Distance 1.75 Miles (2.8K.)**
- **Start – Gilnockie Public Hall – No toilets available.**
- **Total ascent 132ft.**
- **Allow 45 minutes to 1 hour**
- **A fairly easy walk along a quiet country road (B6318) and the old Langholm to Gilnockie railway line plus a forestry track.**
- **It can be muddy in places but usually easily avoided by taking a few steps up the railway embankment.**

The track along by Gilnockie Station

The famous Gilnockie Hall

Claygate

**PARK at Gilnockie Hall and just walk the few yards to the T-junction and take the road past the old school and schoolhouse for about a quarter of a mile and you come to the old Gilnockie Station.**

There is a metal signpost there marked North Wood and this takes you along the old railway line.

There used to be a siding behind the station and the old platform is now mostly hidden by the hedge but there is still clearly a platform which would have been for the siding.

What I particularly like about this walk is the birdlife in the fields on your right along the old line.

This morning I had a skylark singing all the time I was walking and for a short period the unmistakable sound of a lapwing was heard. This area seems to be a hotspot for them.

The fields to the right are quite marshy in places and I was fortunate, halfway through my walk, to spot a curlew as well.

### North Wood

You walk for about three-quarters of a mile along the railway and, once in North Wood, you turn right to take a forestry track back to the B6318 road.

On either side of the forestry track there is the possibility of seeing deer. On numerous occasions in the past I have seen several of them.

The forestry track eventually brings you to the quiet B6318 which actually is the longest B road in the UK.

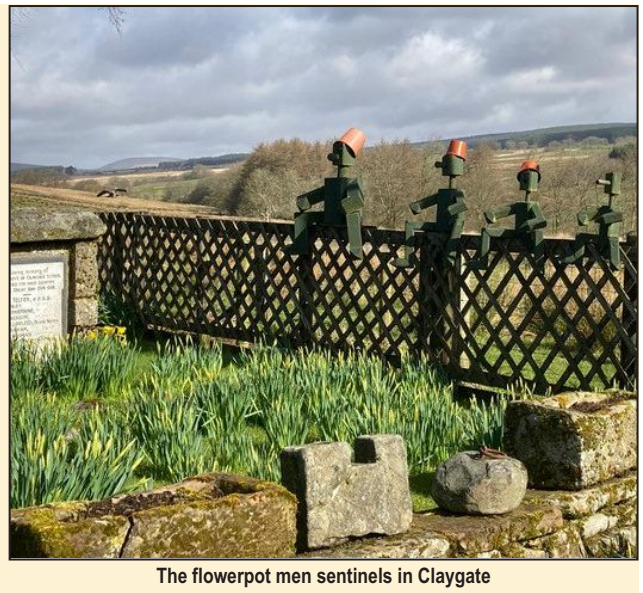
It starts at Langholm and ends at Heddon on the Wall near Newcastle.

Turn right at the road and in half a mile you come to the lovely village of Claygate.

At the T-junction in the middle of the village you would normally keep on going towards Gilnockie Hall but it's worth going a few yards down to the left because there are some interesting old millstones and artefacts on the grass verges.

Also, look for the little garden with a notice up about the old boys of Gilnockie school which is guarded by four flowerpot men sitting on the fence.

Soon you will be back at the hall, having completed this walk and, if you are still feeling energetic, head downhill towards the start of the Fairy Loup walk and that circuit will add another 1.75 miles to your walk or you could come back another day and do that walk.



The flowerpot men sentinels in Claygate

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## Community Editor

### The Eskdale & Liddesdale Advertiser (E&L)

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**The Role**

- This is a player manager job for a fully qualified journalistic all-rounder
- You will 'own' the weekly edition of the E&L, its website and social channels and take full responsibility (including legal) for all aspects of its publication
- You will engage with the community, build contacts and encourage local volunteers to contribute copy
- You will lead and develop our small, enthusiastic team to generate compelling content
- You will have full responsibility for the bottom line of the paper, becoming involved in all commercial aspects of the business – advertising sales, online subscriptions

**The Skills**

- a senior NQJ journalism qualification
- proven history of creating engaging content
- website and social media skills
- access to a car to attend community events, activities and meetings
- be commercially aware with the ability to network amongst the community
- good IT and interpersonal skills

**The Person**

- a self motivated individual with strong organisational skills who enjoys interacting with the community and creating engaging and compelling copy
- the package will be dependent on the skills and experience of the candidate
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Eskdale & Liddesdale Advertiser

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### (B709 LANGHOLM-ETTRICK) (TEMPORARY TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER) ORDER 2021

The Council has made an Order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to temporarily close the B709 between Samye Ling Tibetan Centre and the Scottish Borders boundary from 09:00 on 12/04/21 to 17:00 on 02/05/21. The closure is necessary to facilitate carriageway resurfacing works. Alternative route available via B723, C97a, B7076, A701, A708 and vice versa. Pedestrian access will be maintained.

### PLANNING

The applications, associated plans and documents can be viewed on-line by following the ePlanning link on the Council's website at www.dumgal.gov.uk/planning. Written comments may be made by email to Planning@dumgal.gov.uk or via the Council's website, as noted above, by 22/04/2021 (Type A).

**Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended**
**Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013, Reg 20(1) (A)**
Ref No/Type Address/Proposal

**21/0532/PIP (A)** **Sherra Craig, Bentpath, Langholm** - Erection of dwellinghouse and installation of septic tank and soakaway

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# Mare wins her first handicap chase

Tortuga Bay is led around the paddock before her first win in a handicap chase at Newcastle

## Horseracing

**TORTUGA Bay ran a fine race under champion jockey Brian Hughes to win her first handicap chase.**

The mare, seven, has a liking for the track at Newcastle and proved herself a worthy winner over two miles and half a furlong for her owner, Mrs Hugh Fraser.

The 5/2 shot, who is trained by James Ewart at Langholm, beat the 7/4 favourite Acdc, trained by Chris Grant and ridden by Sean Quinlan, by two lengths.

She was not fluent over the first fence but made headway and pursued the leader after five fences from home.

She took the lead before the penultimate fence and kept on well on the run-in, always doing enough to stay in front.

Ewart said: "The ground had dried up nicely for her; in fact, they had watered the ground which was ideal.

"It was a champion jockey's ride. She jumped off behind the favourite, conserving energy, cutting corners and going the shortest route.

"They gained confidence the further they went, getting into a lovely jumping rhythm.

"She pricked her ears as she saw a stride over each one up the home straight and popped the last in front, seeing it out nicely and just doing enough.

"She loves this track; it suits her way of going."

Hughes added: "She did it nicely and it was a perfect race for her.

"I perhaps would have preferred not to hit the front until the last but couldn't disappoint her jumping well."

Tortuga Bay joined Ewart's yard at the Craig in June 2019. She then had a break last summer after wind surgery.

She won a handicap hurdle under Hughes at Newcastle last December.

Ewart and Hughes also had a second with Ascot De Bruyere who was entered in a handicap chase over two miles, seven and a half furlongs.

The horse, owned by The Steel Bonnets, was sent off at 2/1 and jumped well to maintain the lead.

He made a mistake at the 14th of the 19 fences, was joined at the third last and headed at the penultimate fence.

He was held but kept on, coming in four and a half lengths adrift.

At Carlisle last Saturday he ran Bingo D'Olivate in the two-mile, one-furlong conditional jockeys' handicap hurdle.

The horse was ridden by Nathan Moscrop and came in fifth of the 14 runners at 16/1.

# Gormley starts new flat season

Jamie Gormley and Zabeel Star when they won at Newcastle last November

## Horseracing

**FLAT-RACING jockey Jamie Gormley of Langholm has had three rides recently for his boss Iain Jardine, who is based at Carrutherstown.**

At Newcastle two weeks ago he rode Zabeel Star in a one-mile handicap and came in eighth of the 12 runners, 11 lengths adrift.

He stayed in midfield, pushed along over two furlongs out and kept on inside the final furlong but was never dangerous.

Gormley said, regarding the running and riding, that his instructions were to jump well and try to get the gelding to travel.

He had asked for an effort approaching the final two furlongs and had briefly been short of room.

The gelding had failed to make any headway before staying on through beaten horses.

Approaching the line, he was closing fast onto the heels of Irreverent and considered switching left but was concerned about the presence of Presidential who was to his left.

At Newcastle last Friday he rode Reely Bonnie in a seven-furlong handicap and came in 11th of the 12 runners.

At Musselburgh last Friday Tomily was last in a field of 17 in a five-furlong handicap.

The horse was raced on the near side but was never better than mid-division.

He was ridden halfway but made no impression and dropped to the rear when short of room and hampered one furlong out.

Gormley said the gelding was denied a clear run inside the final furlong.

# Jonathan is sports personality of the year

## Sport Nostalgia

**From the E&L on Thursday, April 6, 2006**

**KARATE champion Jonathan Huddleston stepped up to the winner's podium at Annandale and Eskdale's sports awards last Friday to receive the sports personality of the year prize.**

Contenders from Eskdale dominated the awards, run by Annandale and Eskdale sports and leisure trust, with Gordon Young receiving the coach of the year award and Ken Halliday being presented with the award for services to local sport.

Nineteen-year-old Jonathan, who is a member of the Shotokan karate club in Langholm, is a student at Newton Rigg College at Penrith where he is studying sports coaching. He achieved 1st Dan (black belt) in 2003 and in 2005 advanced to 2nd Dan.

Over the past 12 months Jonathan has won the senior individual title at the KUGB championships at Dunfermline and the Langholm club secured the team event. He also reached the quarter-finals of the U21 British championships at Birmingham. He now trains with the Scottish karate team.

Gordon received his coaching award for his involvement with Langholm Legion football club.

He helped set up the club in 1994 as a player, before becoming player coach and going on to be their manager for a number of years.

He has coached the Legion into chasing a promotion place this season, with every chance of winning the Border Amateur League Division B. He has also been involved with the Legion juniors' side since it was set up in 2002.

Gordon will be 41 in a couple of weeks but still turns out for the Legion team if they are stuck for players.

Jonathan Huddleston and Gordon Young with their trophies in 2006

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