

Council: Erskine Church complaint 'not upheld'

SEE PAGE 3



Green bowlers go green at the Old Town

SEE PAGE 16



Eskdale & Liddesdale Advertiser

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Langholm Alliance one step closer to owning old school

Strengths and weaknesses of the transfer are set out in Council officer's report

Annandale and Eskdale Area Committee received a report yesterday asking it to consider a request from the Langholm Alliance (LA) to transfer ownership of Langholm old primary school to them. An asset transfer request of this kind is made under Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. The procedure and timescale for an application of this kind is set out in Government regulations.

The report by a Council officer sets out the strengths and weaknesses of transferring ownership with strengths including that the proposal shows a clear vision, LA has a leadership team, good governance and accountability arrangements, that the proposal will redevelop a derelict site and that the main element of the proposal is to create affordable and commercial housing which will enhance community development. Weaknesses include a mention that more evidence of public consultations would have been beneficial, that there is not a detailed delivery plan for the project or a financial forecast set out. The report states that there is no clear plan of what the organisation seeks to achieve or, arrangements for monitoring delivery or giving feedback to the community and stakeholders.

Benefits

The report identifies a number of benefits of transferring this asset to the Langholm Alliance. First on the list is that the Council would no longer be responsible for a deteriorating asset, there would be regeneration of a derelict



The rear of the old Langholm Primary school

site, a vibrant hub would be created, and it would support community integration. It also says that the transfer would promote health and wellbeing, tackle isolation and loneliness and that there would be greater community resilience. The only disbenefit identified in the report is that there would be no capital receipt to the Council as the asset would be transferred for the nominal sum of £1. The Langholm Alliance

has indicated that there would be a social value to the transfer of the ownership and a positive return on investment.

The Committee is given three options. One of these is to agree to the transfer of ownership without additional conditions, one to grant it with additional conditions and the third is not to recommend to the Economy and Infrastructure Committee that the transfer be approved.

INSIDE



Stuart is faced with WWI mystery

E&L Columnist and owner of Desire It Interiors on Langholm Market Place, Stuart Bruce-Gormley, had a visit from a stranger who left him with an intriguing mystery to solve.

He explains more and asks for some assistance on Page 9

Family Announcements

Deaths

PORTEOUS, Isabella D.

Peacefully on the 18th of March at DGRI surrounded by her loving family, Isabella aged 81 years.

Devoted wife of Brian, much loved mum of Andrew and Gary, cherished mother-in-law, adored granny, loving sister-in-law, auntie and a good friend to many.

Funeral Service to be held at Borders Crematorium Melrose on Thursday 2nd April at 12:30pm. Friends are respectfully invited to attend. Family flowers only, donations if so desired will be for Chest, Heart & Stroke Scotland. All enquiries to Nicholson's Funeral Directors

Church Notices

ESKDALE & LIDDESDALE PARISH
linked with
CANONBIE United Parish Church

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Sunday 29th March

Services led by Rev
Morag Crossan

NEWCASTLETON
9.30am

LANGHOLM
11am

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Eskdale & Liddesdale Advertiser

Contact us at the E&L: Office 013873 80012
Editor Alan Weatherstone Features Editor Gilly Fraser
All correspondence to: newsdesk@eladvertiser.co.uk

Spectacular show from Langholm Musical Society

Langholm's Musical Society is presenting its spectacular for five performances this week. There are still tickets available from The Buccleuch Centre. As well as evening shows there is a Saturday matinee performance. Judith Johnson is the director of the show and she has lots of experience both as a performer and a director. Judith is always keen to develop her skills and regularly attends the National Operatic and Dramatic Association summer schools.

The musical director is Graeme Brownlee who hails from Edinburgh originally. Graeme was Director of Music at George Heriot's school in Edinburgh for over twenty years. He has been interested in musicals from a very early age and has been actively involved in musical theatre both on and off stage. And then there are the performers, many of whom are well known to local audiences.

The programme includes music from Andrew Lloyd Webber productions, Les Miserables, Guys and Dolls to South Pacific and many more. The singers include young people and there are songs from Matilda the Musical. It should be a production full of energy and enthusiasm and make us all smile.



Langholm Musical Society's "A Musical Spectacular" is at The Buccleuch Centre until Saturday evening



Drove Road wall worries

A Langholm resident is asking when the wall on Drove Road will be fixed as it's causing a hazard. The wall has been fixed before, but stonework is crumbling again and pieces falling off the wall.

According to Councillor Denis Male Dumfries and Galloway Council is trying to find out who owns the wall and who is responsible for it. Council Officers are hoping to get answers to those questions before too long. Another resident believes it will become a safety issue and that the Council should fix it and invoice the owner when they are identified.

The crumbling wall on Drove Road



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Producers Market

There was a real buzz in the air at the last Langholm Producers Market in March, as 341 people came through the doors to enjoy a brilliant morning at The Buccleuch Centre.

With the sun shining outside and a busy, welcoming atmosphere inside, it was a great reminder of just how much the market means to the local community. Shoppers turned out in force to support a fantastic range of local stallholders, with plenty of friendly faces, conversations, and quality produce on offer throughout the morning. The organisers would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who came along and helped make the day such a success.

Donna and Michelle were on the door (with Donna very much lead-

ing the charge!) running the ever-popular prize draw. Thanks to the generosity of those who took part, £82.37 was raised for Langholm Legion Football Club – a great result for a very worthy local cause.

Michael Hogg one of the organisers said:

"It was fantastic to see so many people through the doors and such a great atmosphere in the hall. The support from the community really means a lot to our stallholders – the market is all about supporting local, and days like this show just how strong that support is.

We're already looking forward to welcoming everyone back to the next one on 4th April.

The market continues to be a great way to bring the community together and support local businesses.

Leading Edinburgh Law firm to attend Charities Day in Langholm

Charities in Langholm and Eskdale are being asked to save the date of 27th May for a day that focuses on all things charity. Turcan Connell, Scotland's leading Charity Law Firm, supported by The Stevenson Trust will be coming along and focussing on issues which benefit trustees of both community organisations and grant giving charities operating in Langholm and the surrounding area.

This event will provide trustees with practical insights to strengthen their leadership and governance, improve their volunteer recruitment and fundraising efforts, and by sharing their experiences with other attendees make their own organisation more effective.

Throughout the day, expert speakers and regulatory representatives from bodies such as OSCR and SCVO will join the presentations and cover a wide variety of relevant topics including what it means to be a trustee,



Langholm's Buccleuch Centre is a fine example of a local business with charitable status

fundraising and charity law.

Following on, there will be an evening session with a panel exploring different perspectives on local grant giving and how to achieve meaningful community impact including a questions and answers session with the audience on issues close to their heart. Experts will be on hand during the day to answer any questions that you may have and the day will conclude with drinks and an opportunity to connect with fellow attendees from the third sector.

A full timetable with the

schedule of sessions will be shared soon, but the Stevenson Trust is keen to ensure that the event addresses the issues and questions that our local community would like addressed so please tell us about the issues you would like to see covered.

If you would like further information or let the organisers know what you would like to see covered then call 013873 81066 and speak to either Ann Warwick or Tracy Chapman or email ann@ashleybank.co.uk or tracy@ashleybank.co.uk

Papering over the cracks of the Erskine Church!

No satisfactory answers for campaigner, Denise

Denise Irving Lang has shared with the E&L the response she received from Dumfries and Galloway Council regarding the formal stage 1 complaint she made to them about what she believes was a failure to properly consider statutory nuisance provisions in relation to the deteriorating condition of Erskine Church.

Specifically Denise's complaint asked the Council to reconsider whether the condition of Erskine Church may fall within the definition of a statutory nuisance under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, particularly in relation to falling debris; Confirm what assessments or inspections have previously been carried out when reaching the conclusion that statutory nuisance provisions do not apply; Provide the reasoning and legislative basis for the Council's current position. She also asked that the complaint be reviewed objectively and independently, having regard to the Council's duties under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the general principles of administrative fairness.

My preference is that this matter can be resolved locally through the Council's



complaints process.

Following consideration and responses from a number of Council departments including legal services and environmental health her complaint has not been upheld.

The letter she received stated that "The conclusion remains that the condition of Erskine Church does not meet the statutory criteria required for Environmental Health to take action under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The correct regulatory framework is the Building (Scotland) Act 2003, and actions have been taken by Building Standards accordingly, we have discussed this matter

with them and they have confirmed that the building is their responsibility for enforcement."

At the time of writing to the Council Denise stated that if the "issue cannot be satisfactorily addressed, I may consider referring the matter to the Ombudsman for independent review. For that reason, I would be grateful if the Council could ensure that the response to this complaint clearly sets out the basis of its decision-making so that the matter can be properly understood should it later need to be considered by the Ombudsman."

Denise is now considering her next steps.

Creation and Burnfoot showcase in Perth

Creation Mill and Burnfoot Wool attended the Scottish Wool Producers Showcase on Saturday in Perth. The event, a companion event to the Scottish Yarn Festival shines a spotlight on yarns with a distinctly Scottish origin and their makers.

Featuring a boutique marketplace celebrating Scotland's single farm yarns, shepherds, mills, and more. Creation Mill CIC was invited to attend this year to showcase their felted products made from Tarras Valley's South Country Cheviot wool as well as the reclaimed mill waste they rescue, such as selvages, yarns and fabric samples. Creation Mill now has the facilities to scour, card and felt small batches of wool so it was a great opportunity to network with small-scale Scottish yarn producers who often



struggle to meet the minimums of bigger wool processing facilities. Burnfoot Wool also attended the event

and Gillian Elliot said it was a good opportunity to get out there and get her business more widely known.

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School behaviour under scrutiny

The Scottish Government says in a newly published report that clear progress is being made across all 20 actions set out in a national plan aimed at improving relationships and behaviour in schools.

The second annual progress report on the joint action plan details the work undertaken in the last 12 months to address areas including guidance on consequences and on risk assessments for schools.

Updated Scottish Government guidance has also been published on attendance, along with new guidance on substance use, now covering vapes, and on a whole school approach to tackling racism. These were among the recommendations of the 2024-27 blueprint to improve relationships and behaviour in schools.

Work is also ongoing to provide future guidance in other areas, including the recording and monitoring of violent incidents. This Scottish Government



guidance is the latest commitment to be delivered through the joint Relationships and Behaviour in schools action plan with COSLA the voice of local government in Scotland.

Clear progress is being made across all 20 actions set out in a national plan aimed at improving relationships and behaviour in schools.

Travel links across region not 'equitable'

Councillor Denis Male has proposed a motion relating to the travel connectivity in the region, to Dumfries and Galloway Council which meets today, Thursday 26th March. Councillor Archie Dryburgh has seconded the motion.

The motion states ask that the 'Council notes that travel connectivity across the region is not equitable. Council further notes that there is no direct bus from Langholm to Dumfries as well as other settlements in the region, leaving residents isolated or having to take long journeys. This was highlighted by Youth Councillor Luke Graham at the Full Council (meeting) with the Youth Council.'

The motion goes on to ask that the 'Council agrees that a report should be brought to the next practicable Economy and Infrastructure Committee with options on how this can be addressed.'

We anticipate giving an update on this in next week's edition of the Eskdale & Liddesdale Advertiser.



Councillor Denis Male has proposed a motion to D&G Council

Volunteer Fair planned

Plans are underway to host a Langholm Volunteer Fair on Friday 5th June 2026 at The Buccleuch Centre during Volunteers' Week. The fair aims to bring together local groups, clubs and organisations to showcase the wide range of volunteering opportunities available locally. It is hoped the event will encourage more people to get involved while highlighting the valuable contribution made by volunteers. Organisations wishing to be involved are encouraged to make contact by emailing admin@langholm-alliance.co.uk. Further details about the event will be announced in due course.

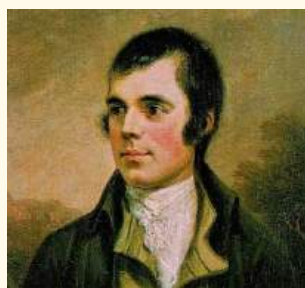
Community Council funding

Langholm, Ewes and Westerkirk Community Council announced that grant funding from the windfarms' pot has been awarded by the Community Council to the following organisations: Castle Craigs Club, Langholm Youth Rugby, Langholm Producers Market, Langholm Young Riders Club, Langholm Academy, Langholm Social Club Carpet Bowling and Langholm Playcare.

End of season for Ladies Burns

President Nancy McLure welcomed a good attendance of members to the final meeting of the season. The afternoon began with coffee, cake and a chat followed by the AGM.

The minutes of the previous AGM were read by Secretary Sheila Little and were adopted. Treasurer Anne Hislop circulated copies of the balance sheet showing a closing balance of £452.24 donations this year, including one to Westerkirk library and the P7 school Burns poetry competition. Nancy paid tribute to past president Ella Porteous who sadly had died the day before. Ella had been a keen golfer and in earlier years captain of the hockey team and had travelled the world extensively. She will be greatly missed. Our condolences are with Brian and family. Nancy thanked all members of the committee and Grace Brown who audits our account. Lots of excellent suggestions came from members for future meetings for the next session.



Aileen Armstrong gave a vote of thanks on behalf of members thanking Nancy for steering the club over the year in her usual welcoming and relaxed manner. Nancy made a plea for new members stressing the social element of the club. All our meetings give time for coffee and chat. Nancy stated how important it is for folk to get out and meet friends and make new friends and join the very relaxed and welcoming atmosphere of our club. Members had brought photographs of themselves showing fashions of earlier years and lots of fun and laughter followed. Huge perms, winkle picker shoes and crimplene prevailed. The raffle was drawn and the meeting closed.



This month, Canonbie SWI hosted their Open Evening. There were nearly sixty SWI members from Creca, Rigg, Waterbeck, Ewes, Westerkirk, Longtown, Nicholforest and Newcastleton.

The entertainment was by Spectrum from Annan, led by Barbara Lewis playing traditional Scottish music which provided a toe tapping evening. All of the musicians had amazing talent. They came from as far away as Dalbeattie, Annan and locally, from Langholm. The entertainment was followed by a fabulous buffet, the entertainment was musical instruments in anagrams. The competition was a homemade instrument. A great evening was had by all.

Competition winners were - Visitors: 1st Trish Charlesworth, 2nd Roman Bowman, both from Nicholforest. Canonbie members: 1st Kirsteen Davies, 2nd Catherine Lithgow.



Spectrum, from Annan led by Barbara Lewis

District Digest Kirkpatrick clean up

Kirkpatrick Fleming Community Council chairman Stephen Muir would like to say a huge well done and thank you to the 43 wonderful people, who took part in the Community Litter Pick at Kirkpatrick Fleming on Sunday morning.

The amazing team of volunteers collected the most rubbish we have ever gathered on a community litter pick — approximately 65 bags of rubbish, plus a sink, a 40-inch TV, a microwave, and 17 bottles of urine. We also collected a lot of damaged cones, signs and off-cuts of ducting and mess left by Scottish Water contractors during their recent works in our community, which is very disappointing. Afterwards, everyone enjoyed some lovely soup made by Helen, a cuppa, some cake, and a catch-up together, and the kids had a well-earned play in our play park. A big thank you to the volunteers in the kitchen and to everyone who attended.



Voting guide

The Electoral Commission is sending a voting guide to every household in Scotland, with delivery commencing this week, to raise awareness of the forthcoming election and provide information to voters. The voting guide is also available online and in the following accessible formats: audio, Braille, BSL videos, large print and Easy Read. The guide can also be downloaded in Arabic, Polish, Gaelic and Ukrainian.

Easter at Xcel

The Xcel youth project is running Easter activities for young people including a brunch club on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, a craft club on Wednesdays and an outdoors day on Thursday 9th April. There's an afternoon trip to Fusion Trampoline park in Carlisle on Thursday 2nd April. Take a look at the Xcel Project's Facebook page for more information about these activities.

OutPost Arts receives major funding from Creative Scotland

The work will come together through the creation of an Art & Wellbeing Trail

We're delighted to share that OutPost Arts has been awarded £282,199 from Creative Scotland's Culture Collective fund to deliver Creating Space NW Dumfries, a new community-led arts and wellbeing project working across Lochside, Lincuden, Summerhill and Sandside.

The 18 months project will embed artists in neighbourhood organisations and community spaces, working alongside residents to co-design creative activity that reflects the identity, strengths and ambitions of each area. The work will come together through the creation of an Art & Wellbeing Trail across North West Dumfries - a connected network of creative spaces, installations and activities designed to support wellbeing, pride and connection.

Langholm resident and OutPost Arts Director, Lucy Bell said: "This funding allows us to build long-term partnerships in North West Dumfries, embedding artists

within neighbourhoods and working alongside trusted local organisations to create meaningful opportunities for people to take part in creative activity and see their stories reflected in the places they live."

LIFT D&G

The project is being delivered in partnership with LIFT D&G - an established anchor organisation, embedded within the Lochside community. LIFT D&G will act as Community Delivery Lead to support the development and delivery of the project.

Director Angela Gilmour said: "This funding is a huge opportunity for the communities of Lochside, Lincuden, Summerhill and Sandside. Creating Space NW Dumfries will allow residents and artists to work side by side to create something lasting for the area, building pride, opening up new opportunities and showing what these neighbourhoods can achieve together."



OutPost Arts is proud to be part of the Culture Collective network supporting creative community development cross Scotland.

OutPost Arts Director, Langholm's Lucy Bell says the funding will help the organisation to embed artists in neighbourhoods and work alongside trusted organisations

Easter coffee at the kirk

Langholm parish church is holding an Easter coffee afternoon on Wednesday 1st April at 2pm. Everyone is invited to enjoy a social afternoon with music and a cream tea in the church. There's also to be a baking stall and raffle.

Assisted Dying Bill

57 MSPs voted in the Scottish Parliament last week in support of Liam McArthur MSP's assisted dying Bill. This was not enough for the Bill to proceed to an Act.

The Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill proposed to make the choice of assisted dying legal for terminally ill, mentally competent adults, alongside excellent end-of-life care. 57 MSPs voted for the Bill to pass with 69 voting against and one abstaining. This is a very emotive issue and there was a long debate prior to the vote in the parliament with MSPs having what is known as a 'free' vote on the proposal.

Population changes will shape Scotland's future

The national records of Scotland published data at the end of last year about the population of the country based on statistics from 2024. That year Scotland's population reached a record high of 5.55 million in 2024 which was an increase, mainly due to migration into Scotland. There were more deaths than births so the population would have gone down without inward migration.

The population is getting older with the 'baby boom' generation born between the 1940s and the 1960s reaching older ages. People are also living longer than they used to in previous generations and having fewer children. One in five people (20.5%) are now aged 65 and over, up from 16.2% two decades ago. Women make up a larger share of these older age groups because they tend to live longer than men. Dementia and Alzheimer's disease remain significant causes of death, particularly among women - around two-thirds of such deaths were female.



By 2047 the youngest of the 'baby boom' generation will reach their 80s
Photo by Ericson Fernandes via Pexels

Meanwhile, the proportion of children has declined: only 16.2% of the population is aged 0 to 15, down from 18.4% in 2004. These shifts underline significant demographic changes that will shape Scotland's future.

Ageing

Scotland's population is projected to keep growing, with migration the main reason for this growth but the population

is also projected to keep ageing into 2047 as the youngest of the 'baby boom' generation reach their 80s. According to the records office change will not be uniform across the country. While 23 of Scotland's local authorities are projected to see an increase in population over the next two decades, nine would see a decrease if recent trends continue. Dumfries and Galloway is one of these areas.

Contact John Lamont MP

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The cost of this publication have been met out of parliamentary resources.

South of Scotland Enterprise seeks new board members

South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE) has announced that Scottish Ministers are seeking to appoint three new members to its Board. The region's economic and community development agency is looking for applicants who can demonstrate current experience in either: renewables, energy and net zero, finance, communities and community wealth building.

The main duties of SOSE Board members are to provide leadership, governance, direction, support and guidance. In addition, Board members are expected to ensure that SOSE delivers its functions effectively and efficiently and in accordance with the aims, policies and priorities of Scottish Ministers.

Applicants should also demonstrate evidence of an understanding of:



South of Scotland Enterprise

- Current and future challenges and opportunities facing SOSE
- Communication and influencing
- Working co-operatively
- Working collaboratively and flexibly with colleagues
- Innovation and creative problem solving.

Successful applicants will be fully supported, given access to training, and will work alongside the existing Board members to help SOSE progress with delivering its ongoing mission to make the day to day lives of local people better. SOSE values the benefits of having different experiences, with people from all backgrounds encouraged to apply. The closing date for applications is Monday 4 May 2026, with successful candidates expected to start on SOSE's Board in August 2026, and people from all backgrounds are encouraged to apply.

Anyone seeking more information or wishing to apply can visit: www.southofscotlandenterprise.com/board-recruitment

If you have any questions, contact Susan Cannon, SOSE's Corporate Governance Lead, on 01750 535917 or email susan.cannon@sose.scot.

Waste plastic can be turned into Parkinson's drug

A drug to treat Parkinson's disease can be made from waste plastic bottles using a pioneering method, a study at the University of Edinburgh shows. The approach harnesses the power of bacteria to transform plastic into L-DOPA, a frontline medication for the neurological disorder. It's the first time a natural, biological process has been engineered to turn plastic waste into a drug for a neurological disease, researchers say.

Scientists at the University of Edinburgh engineered E. coli bacteria to turn a type of plastic, used widely in food and drink packaging, into L-DOPA. The process involves first breaking down waste plastics – some 50 million tonnes of which are produced annually – into chemical building blocks of terephthalic acid.

Using the new technique to produce L-DOPA is more sustainable than traditional methods of making pharmaceuticals, which rely on the use of finite fossil fuels, the team says. There is an urgent need for new methods to recycle PET, a strong,



lightweight plastic derived from non-renewable materials such as oil and gas, the team says. Existing recycling processes are not completely efficient and still contribute to plastic pollution worldwide.

The advance offers a sustainable way of repurposing valuable carbon in plastic waste that would otherwise be lost to landfill, incineration or environmental pollution, the team says. It could pave the way for growth of a bio-upcycling industry for producing not only pharmaceuticals but a wide range of products including flavourings, fragrances, cosmetics, and industrial chemicals, they add.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Free webinars for senior pupils

Young people across Scotland studying for Senior Phase qualifications will have access to free online Easter Study Support. The webinars provided by e-Sgoil are delivered by secondary teachers covering multiple subjects over National 4, National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher levels. Registration for the extensive programme of webinars is now open, with sessions scheduled to run throughout the week beginning 6 April.

The Easter programme, now in its fifth year, has been developed as part of the Scottish Government-funded National e-Learning offer and continues to grow in both reach and impact. Last year 4,287 registered for a total of 18,100 webinar places, representing an increase of 689 learners on the previous year.

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Rural Support Plan

NFU Scotland has given qualified backing to the Scottish Government's Rural Support Plan which it describes as an important step forward in shaping the future of the country's agricultural policy.

The Plan sets out the framework for support from 2026 to 2030 and provides increased clarity on both policy direction and future funding.

NFU Scotland says it confirms and locks in significant direct support commitments it has secured over recent years, alongside a move to multi-year funding, providing greater certainty for farmers and crofters.

NFU Scotland President Andrew Cannon called it a significant milestone.

"Crucially, it confirms and locks in the direct support commitments we have worked hard to secure in recent years," he said.

"That provides a level of stability and certainty that is vital for farm businesses as they plan, invest and adapt for the future.



"It is also encouraging to see the clear emphasis on direct support, recognising its importance to the viability of many farming and crofting businesses."

However, the union pointed out that the policy's ambitions could only be achieved if farm businesses remain profitable.

There are also real concerns around a 'flat-lining' budget. A static £677 million settlement over five years represents a cut in real terms, particularly as input costs such as feed, fuel and fertiliser continue to rise. That runs counter to our long-standing call for increased investment in agricultural support.

"Farmers and crofters are ready to deliver for climate and nature, but support must reflect the true cost of doing so and avoid unnecessary complexity."

Top fencing contractors to compete at Scotsheep

Spectators at this year's NSA Scotsheep event will be able to see the country's top professional fencing contractors in action with the return of the popular fencing competition.

The one-day event always draws visitors from all parts of the UK and beyond, showcasing as it does the best of the sheep industry with a full programme of trade stands, breed displays, seminars, working demonstrations, competitions, and educational activities.

This year it's being held at Wedderlie Farm in Berwickshire on Wednesday June 10th but with a change to the traditional format of the fencing competition.

As always it will showcase the skill, precision and professionalism of Scotland's fencing contractors, as two-person teams construct a high-quality stock fence under timed conditions.

They will have three hours to erect 60-70 metres of high



The popular fencing competition will return as part of this year's Scotsheep event

Photo courtesy FSA

tensile stock fencing, but this year sees the introduction of a metal strainer and section of metal posts within the fence build, adding a new technical element to test their adaptability.

All materials will be provided on the day, but competitors supply

their own hand-held tools, with petrol post drivers and staple guns permitted for the metal section.

The competition will run 10.00am - 1.00pm, with prize-giving taking place on the main event stage later in the day.

NSA Chair Alec Telfer says it's

a real privilege to be involved in bringing the event to the Borders.

"With Wedderlie as our host, we have the perfect platform to create a memorable and meaningful event that reflects the energy and excellence of sheep farming in Scotland."

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Massive Massey sales area for Carrs Billington

Tractor giants Massey Ferguson have announced changes to their dealer network in Scotland, with Carr's Billington extending its trading area by around 10% to include the Borders and Lothian areas.

Carr's Billington Machinery Director Tom Jobling says it's a great move for both companies.

"We're delighted to increase our coverage with MF products in south-east Scotland," he said.

"We've been a Massey Ferguson dealer for over 30 years and already operate with the brand across eight depots in northern England and Scotland. Our existing team is well placed to support the new customers as we

take on the bigger area, with further staff additions planned as the changes take effect.

"The business, under our feed and rural supplies division, already has four sites across the new area, so we're already known and can support farmers and growers as required.

Morpeth

"The machinery sales and support will be handled from the Morpeth depot initially, and a formal announcement on a permanent location in the new area will follow soon."

Tim Walters, brand manager for Massey Ferguson UK and Ireland, also welcomed the move.

"Carr's Billington is



Carrs Billington will now sell Massey Ferguson in Borders and Lothian

Photo courtesy Carrs Billington

steeped in MF heritage and is purely focussed on selling the brand, so we're delighted to increase its area and improve MF's visibility in a key location."

MF's South East Scotland area was previously run

through Scot Agri, which remains an MF dealer across Angus, Aberdeenshire and parts of Moray. Its Kelso depot will remain active on AGCO's system until June 30th to facilitate a smooth transition for customers.

Mostly Ghostly and the spirits of Gilnockie Tower

A good old-fashioned ghost hunt within the walls of the Armstrong stronghold

Gilnockie Tower once again welcomed the Mostly Ghostly team and a group of brave guests for 'A Good Old-Fashioned Ghost Hunt' on Saturday 14th March. It proved a memorable evening that was as intriguing as it was atmospheric. Setting the scene for the evening, Ian Martin, of Gilnockie Tower, guided guests through the historic tower house. As the group explored each level, he shared stories from the Tower's rich and often dramatic past, alongside his own personal experiences within the ancient building.

rooms, several participants once again reported connecting with the children encountered during the previous investigation. In the bedchambers, some described the gentle sensation of a small hand being held, accompanied by a strong feeling of calm and reassurance.

Investigation

However, as the investigation moved higher into the Tower, the atmosphere appeared to darken. In the Garret, three guests independently reported a heavy pressure across their chests, as though their breath was being restricted. In response, the group conducted a series of yes-and-no questions using dowsing rods.

By the end of the night, Gilnockie Tower and Mostly Ghostly had once again delivered an experience rich in mystery, emotion and unforgettable personal encounters. Whether shaped by history, atmosphere, or something beyond, the Tower continues to captivate all who pass through its ancient walls.

The visit marked Mostly Ghostly's second investigation at Gilnockie Tower. As the investigation began, activity was reported throughout the Tower. In the Great Hall – once a space for gathering, feasting and celebration – several guests described an unusual and unsettling atmosphere. Some reported feeling light-headed, while others sensed a strong presence. One participant spoke of a distinct cold shiver running up their spine, a sensation that lingered well beyond the initial experience.

Interestingly, the mood in the Great Hall shifted later in the evening.

As guests gathered to share food and conversation, the earlier unease



appeared to lift. Many felt the spirits had accepted the group's presence – particularly as the room returned to its original purpose as a place of warmth, hospitality and shared company.

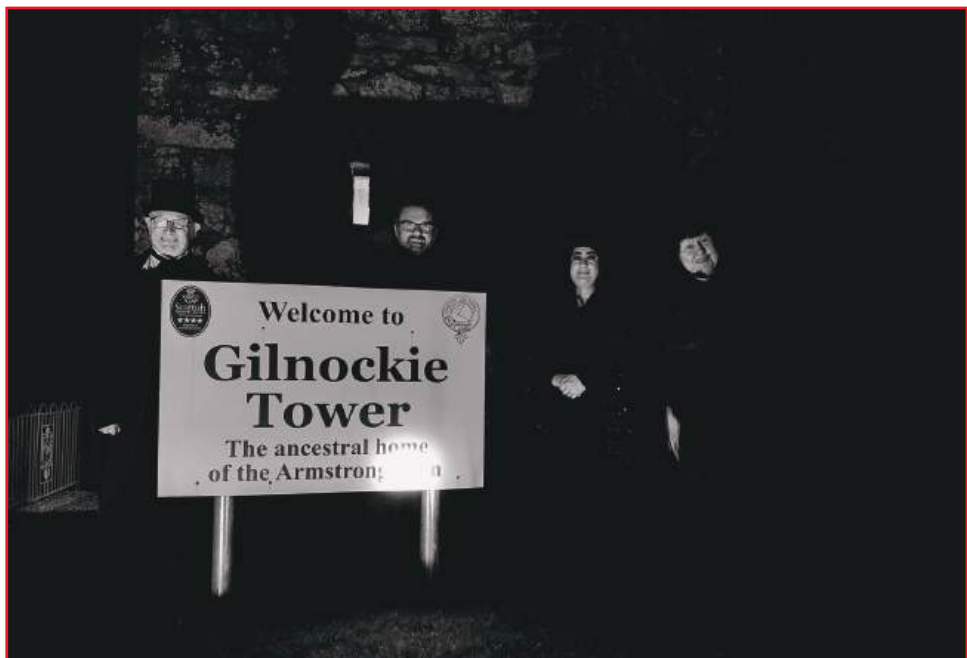
Using dowsing rods, guests attempted to communicate with the spirits believed to inhabit the Tower. As the group moved through the various



The Tower at dusk as an eerie aura



All that ectoplasm make you peckish!



The creepy characters of Mostly Ghostly

A military mystery from the India of World War I

Stuart Bruce Gormley has been tasked with finding the family of a fallen soldier

I must admit that whilst I know a little of our service men and women sacrifice in the first and second world wars, the memorabilia and collectors market that surrounds it, is something that I have never had a particular interest in. That said, in my line of work, you are always going to come across something of that genre when you are clearing a property, or valuing for probate.

Sometimes, for example last week, items present themselves in the most unusual way. I was going about my shop business when an elderly gentleman dressed head to toe in motorbike gear came into the shop asking for directions. To cut a long story short, he had ridden all the way from the Darlington area and wanted to know how to find Eskdail Street, to return something very special to the family. After much discussion and the fact that he failed to find anybody, he returned to me and pulled out of his bike jacket, a carefully wrapped handkerchief. Inside was a shiny bronze Death Penny.

His father had found it around forty years ago in an antique shop and having been a serviceman himself, bought the plaque and kept it safe all these years. Following his death his son, the biker, was on a mission to try and repatriate as much of his collection as possible. He had traced the dead soldier's parents from the census to 43 Eskdail Street, a Margaret and Alexander Mellis.

Relatives

He asked me if I would try and find any relatives and obviously not being brought up here I said that would be a difficult task. However I told him I would try my best and if no family survived then the next best thing would be ensuring that it went into the local archives and hopefully if the visitor centre ever comes to fruition then it can be seen for perpetuity.

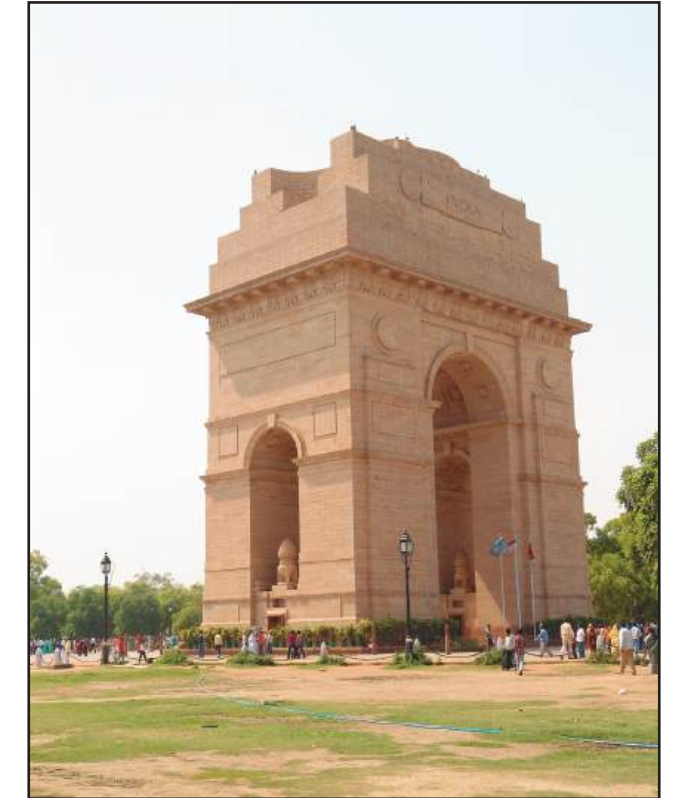
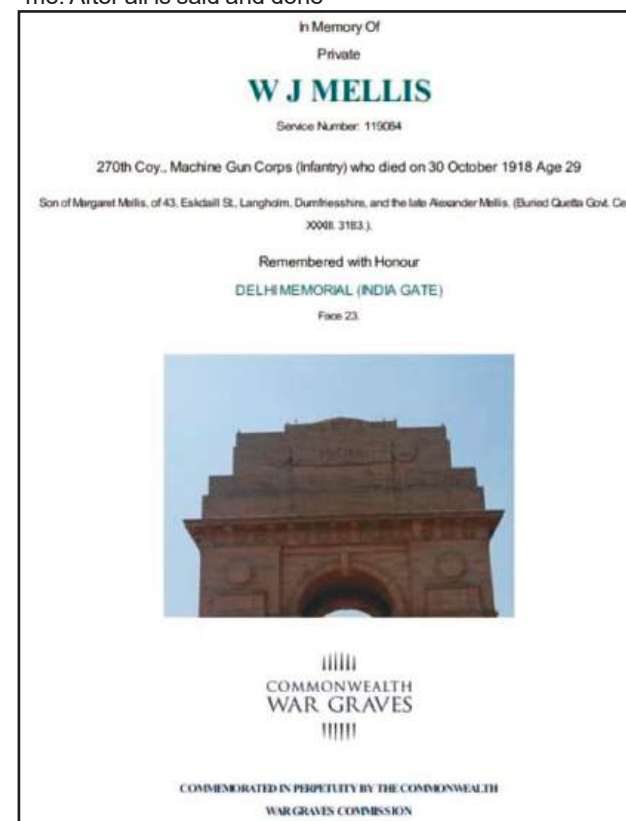
I dare say some less scrupulous characters than myself may have said nothing and put it to market, but the



William Jack Mellis' Death Penny

fact these items regularly trade for around one hundred pounds, doesn't sit well with me. After all is said and done

that small bronze plaque is a young man's life, never fulfilled.



The India Gate War Memorial

WILLIAM JACK MELLIS was the younger son of Alexander and Mary and joined the artillery in March 1915, transferring to the Royal Scots and finally the Machine Gun Corps. Prior to enlisting he was a teacher at Albert Road School, Springburn, Glasgow and had served a period of apprenticeship at Langholm Academy. He was also a fine tenor. He died of pneumonia 30.10.18 aged 28. Notably less than a fortnight before armistice.

The World War One Memorial Plaque was made from Bronze and hence it was popularly known as the "Dead Man's Penny" among front-line troops, also becoming widely known as, the "Death Penny", "Death Plaque" or "Widow's Penny". It was in October 1916 that the British Government setup a com-

mittee for the idea of a commemorative plaque that could be given to the next of kin for those men and women whose deaths were due to the First World War of 1914-18.

The first a family would know of the death of family member was the arrival of a telegram from the War Office. This would be followed by the World War One Death Plaque and any medals the serviceman would have earned serving his country.

The original plaque was a 12 centimetre disk cast in bronze gunmetal, which included an image of Britannia and a lion, two dolphins that represented Great Britain's sea power and the emblem of Imperial Germany's eagle being torn to pieces by another lion. Britannia is holding an oak spray with leaves and acorns. Beneath this was a rectangular tablet where the deceased name was cast into the plaque. No rank was given as it was intended to show equality in their sacrifice. On the outer edge of the disk it bears the inscription, 'He died for freedom and honour'. The memorial

plaque was posted to the next of kin protected by a firm cardboard purpose made folder, which was then placed in a white HMSO envelope.

Production of the plaques and scrolls, which was supposed to be financed by German reparation money, began in 1919 with approximately 1,150,000 issued. They commemorated those who fell between 4th August, 1914 and 10th January, 1920 for home, Western Europe and the Dominions whilst the final date for the other theatres of war or for those died of attributable causes was 30th April 1920.

The next of kin of the 306 British and Commonwealth military personnel who were executed following a Court Martial did not receive a memorial plaque.

IN HONOUR OF ALL THE FALLEN WHO GAVE EVERYTHING FOR OUR TOMORROW.

If you know anything about the Mellis family, please let the E&L know and we will pass the information on.

Either pop in to the office or email us on newsdesk@eladvertiser.co.uk

By Gilly Fraser

Warm Liddesdale Holm Show welcome promised Questionnaire

New manager plans Easter extravaganza Organisers seek your input

The new Manager of the Liddesdale Hotel is promising to repay the warm welcome she's had from the village by turning Easter into an extravaganza of events.

Anne-Marie Ralston took over as the new Mine Host at the popular hotel just a few weeks ago. She says her roots are deep in the hospitality industry.

"I've been working in the sector since I was about 17, starting off in bars in Glasgow city centre, then I went to Loch Lomond where I worked up to becoming Bar Manager at the Drovers Inn."

When Covid hit, it created massive problems for many in the industry and at one point last year Anne-Marie says she even considered changing career tack and leaving hospitality altogether. However, that only lasted for a couple of months.

"I love the environment too much and I love people too much, so I was basically itching to get back to it."

She then set her sights on finding a hotel in a rural area, and a few chance conversations led her to the Liddesdale.

"I decided to come and see the hotel and the village to see what it was like and right from



Anne-Marie Ralston in the Liddesdale

the start everyone has been so lovely. The whole community has been so welcoming and willing to help.

"People really want to see this place thrive. It used to be a real hub in the village, and they want it to be that again, so I'm really hoping I can bring that back for them."

At the moment the services provided, and opening hours are still limited, but if everything goes to plan, meals will be available again from the middle of April.

"I don't want to promise too much and then not be able to deliver, but I recognise that food is a massive priority so that's very high on the list.

"I also know there's some really great businesses in the village and I want to work with them because I think it's really important for us to support one another to build a good community with thriving businesses for all of us."

Anne-Marie has already reached out to a number of local groups and causes to help with fundraising events and is particularly keen to support the Primary School.

In the meantime, it's all systems go for Easter when the village can look forward to a fun weekend with several events planned including a Quiz Night and a Karaoke Night.



The Holm Show is one of the top highlights in Copshaw's calendar, always held on the last Saturday in August and guaranteed to bring in local people, visitors and returning exiles.

Now the organisers are keen to hear what people think of the event and whether they have any suggestions for improvements or for new attractions.

They have compiled a

questionnaire asking people to rate several different elements of the show, ranging from its entertainments to the cleanliness of the showground, to the quality of the food and drink stalls.

Answers and suggestions received will be taken into account when drawing up plans for future shows.

The questionnaire can be found on the Holm Show's Facebook page.

Village makeover suggested before the Tour de France

July 2027 may seem a long way off, but plans are already being drawn up to give Copshaw a facelift before it plays host to a major sporting event which will draw worldwide attention to the village.

That's because the iconic Tour de France cycle race is not only kicking off in the UK, but for the first time in its long history, will see the male cyclists pass through Scotland, England and Wales.

The event's famous Grande Depart will take place in Edinburgh on Friday July 2nd before heading through the Borders and onto Carlisle.

Now Newcastleton and District Community Council is asking for any constructive ideas on how the village could best be decorated and improved so that it's looking its very best for all the world to see.

It's known that communities and villages visited by the Tour in previous years have benefitted greatly from the raised profile.

The Community Council also wants to hear from anyone who would be willing to help in anyway, whether that be putting up bunting, doing a spot of weeding or cleaning signs.

The Council is hoping to secure a meeting with Scottish Borders Council to discuss the event and what it could mean for Newcastleton.



The '27 Tour de France will pass through Newcastleton

Mollie's new business off to a very tasty start

There's a new name on Newcastleton's main street and it's now officially open for business.

For many years it was known to one and all as the Copshaw Kitchen but has now been given a new look and a new name as Mollie's Bistro and Café.

Work has been going on behind the scenes to usher in the next chapter in the life of the café, updating the décor, while keeping the warmth and cosiness it's always been known for.

The business is now in the capable hands of Mollie Turnbull, with the help of family members including her Dad Shaun who has been looking after things in the kitchen.

The bistro and café has been offering a takeaway service for the past few weeks, but now customers also have the option of a sit-down meal on the premises.

Mollie says she decided not to open with a big fanfare as she wanted to make sure everything went well on the



Mollie Turnbull at the counter

first day and to ensure that standards were kept high.

Hospitality

Speaking as one of the first customers, I can vouch for the fact that in hospitality, it's the small things that count. The thoughtful little extras that make

people feel their custom is valued even if their order is a small one.

So when I requested a fruit scone to go with my cappuccino and the waitress asked if I would like it warmed, I knew I was in a place that knows how to look after its customers.

LOCAL NOTICEBOARD

CREATION MILL WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK
W/C 30th March 2026

| | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|------|-------------------------|
| Mon | Quilters Group | 10-1 | Creation Mill, DG13 oES |
| | Mending Monday | 1-3 | |
| Tues | Easter holiday club - Langholm | 10-2 | Creation Mill, DG13 oES |
| | Langholm Evening In Stitches | 6-8 | |
| Wed | Welcome Wednesday | 10-3 | Creation Mill, DG13 oES |
| Thurs | Easter holiday club - Eskdalemuir | 10-2 | The Hub, DG13 oQJ |
| Fri | Yvie's Marie Curie Fundraiser | 10 | Creation Mill, DG13 oES |
| | Langholm weekly In Stitches | 1-4 | |
| Sat | Triangle scarf workshop | 10-2 | Creation Mill, DG13 oES |

Scrap Store is open Monday - Friday 10-3
Booking required, please visit
CREATIONMILL.ORG/EVENTS

The Studio
AGM
will be held on
Tuesday 31st March
at 7pm
in
The Buccleuch Centre
All Welcome

The Eskdale Foundation
A Charity registered in Scotland No. SC024602

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

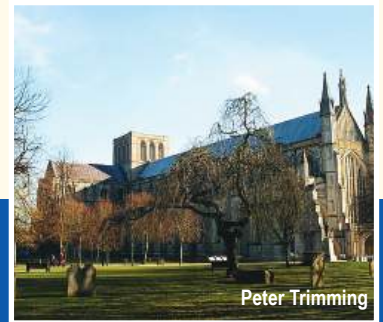
Tuesday, 14th April 2026
in the ESKDALE HOTEL at 7pm
MEMBERS ONLY
Secretary, The Eskdale Foundation

The Langholm Initiative
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Wednesday 15th April
6:30 - 8:30pm
The Buccleuch Centre
All welcome!

The E&L General Knowledge Quiz

No. 2612 answers next week

- Which birds are synonymous with the Tower of London?
- Which English town has an Oracle shopping centre?
- According to the rhyme, where was Doctor Foster going when he fell in a puddle?
- For 1600 years, depending on who was winning, which city defended the north of England or the south of Scotland?
- Other than Coniston Water, which other main Lake District lake begins with the letter C?
- Capability Brown's landscaping skills shaped many of Britain's great gardens. What was his real first name?
- What was Princes Margaret's second name?
- Who founded the first English printing press?
- Which Midlands city is also a famous race-day?
- Which canal stretches from Bristol to Reading?
- What are the four counties of England that begin with the letter C?
- In which cathedral is Jane Austen buried?
- In which movie did Meryl Streep stand on Lyme Regis's pier and stare out to sea?
- In which English county are the towns of Macclesfield and Congleton?
- Which is the easternmost of the Lake District's lakes?
- Which racecourse is located on the north-east coast of England near Middlesbrough?
- What is the first official Bank Holiday of the year in England?
- Who had a 1965 hit with the song "England Swings"?
- In a downstream direction, which London bridge over the River Thames follows Chelsea Bridge?
- Next to which Welsh resort is Great Ormes Head?



WHAT'S ON IN MARCH

| | | |
|--------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| 25th to 28th | A Musical Spectacular Langholm Musical Society | The Buccleuch Centre 7.30pm |
| Fri 27th | Hard of Hearing Club Brew and Blether | Langholm Day Centre 10.30am - 12 noon |
| Fri 27th | Eskdale Gardening Club Hanging Basket Demo | Canonbie Church 7pm (Date change) |
| Sat 28th | Canonbie United Parish Church Soup Kitchen and table top | Canonbie Public Hall 11.30am - 1pm |
| | Langholm RFC vs Broughton RFC | Milntown KO 3pm |
| Sat 28th | Langholm Social Club Fundraising bake sale | Langholm Pop-up Shop from 9am |
| Sun 29th | Open Mic | Eskdalemuir Community Hub 2pm |
| Tue 31st | The Studio (Maxwell Pl) Annual General Meeting | The Buccleuch Centre 7pm |
| | Thistle Pickle Ball Club | Academy Games Hall 6pm - 7.30pm |

Crossword & Quiz Solutions from last week

- Quiz 2611**
- Sloe
 - Sir John Betjeman
 - M25
 - Charlotte Brew
 - Chief Constable
 - 1988
 - M1
 - Flint Castle
 - Carp
 - British Library
 - Loch Leven
 - Metro Centre, Gateshead
 - Uffington's White Horse
 - East Midlands
 - Grand Hotel
 - Glasgow Art Gallery
 - Highland
 - King Lear
 - Dunvegan Castle
 - Princess Royal

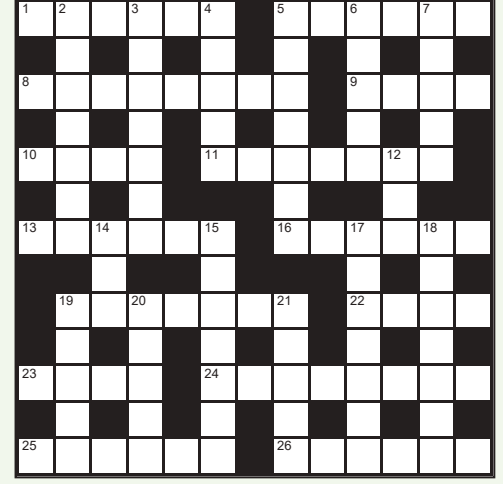
Crossword 2611

Across: 7 Caste, 9 Ape-like, 10 Topmost, 11 Ulcer, 12 Troika, 14 Peppy, 17 Stand, 19 Scarce, 22 Rearm, 24 Thrusts, 25 Useless, 26 Salvo.

Down: 1 Acetate, 2 Rework, 3 Rapt, 4 Secure, 5 Disc, 6 Terra, 8 Support, 13 Aid, 14 Pas, 15 Parasol, 16 Pension, 18 Number, 20 Corpse, 21 Proud, 23 Awe, 24 Tbsp.

NEVER A CROSSWORD!

No. 2611 A mix of general knowledge and cryptic clues think. Answers next week



- | | |
|--|---|
| Across | Down |
| 1 Harp on about Jane Eyre, for example (6) | 2 Reproduction (7) |
| 5 Encourage (6) | 3 Injurious (7) |
| 8 Performed surgery (8) | 4 Short letters (5) |
| 9 Quartz grains (4) | 5 Loud enough to be heard (7) |
| 10 Punch (4) | 6 Uncooked meal suitable for Fridays, maybe (5) |
| 11 Transcendent (7) | 7 Anger about scope (5) |
| 13 Jericho was, until Joshua arrived (6) | 12 Holstein holler? (3) |
| 16 Bury (6) | 14 Shelter (3) |
| 19 Profits (7) | 15 Think it probable (4,3) |
| 22 Copies (4) | 17 Learner (7) |
| 23 Duration (4) | 18 Assembly (7) |
| 24 Magnificent (8) | 19 Get ready to eat (5) |
| 25 Vigour (6) | 20 General meaning (5) |
| 26 Clear a channel (6) | 21 Reliable (5) |

Lang Syne in Eskdale

...David J. Beattie on the effects of adverse weather

Looking back...

Nor was this owing to the great depth of snow, for it was by no means considerable. The whole of the evil was occasioned by the snow falling wet, or becoming so, and then freezing, which locked up the pastures from the sheep. However, no such thing as "flying" – as it was termed – was ever thought of in Eskdalemuir afterwards. Hay-parks were begun at home, the dung which formerly lay useless was employed to enrich the land and this gave a considerable quantity of lea hay for the sheep.

"Therefore" writes the historian, "in place of their hunger before they went to Annandale; half-starved while they were there; and half drowned in the burns on their way home when the thaw came, the flocks continue at home, thrive better and much money is saved to the farmer."

A vivid picture is given by Dr Brown of the terrible havoc of the great storm which swept the Border country in that fatal January of 1794, of which he was an eyewitness.

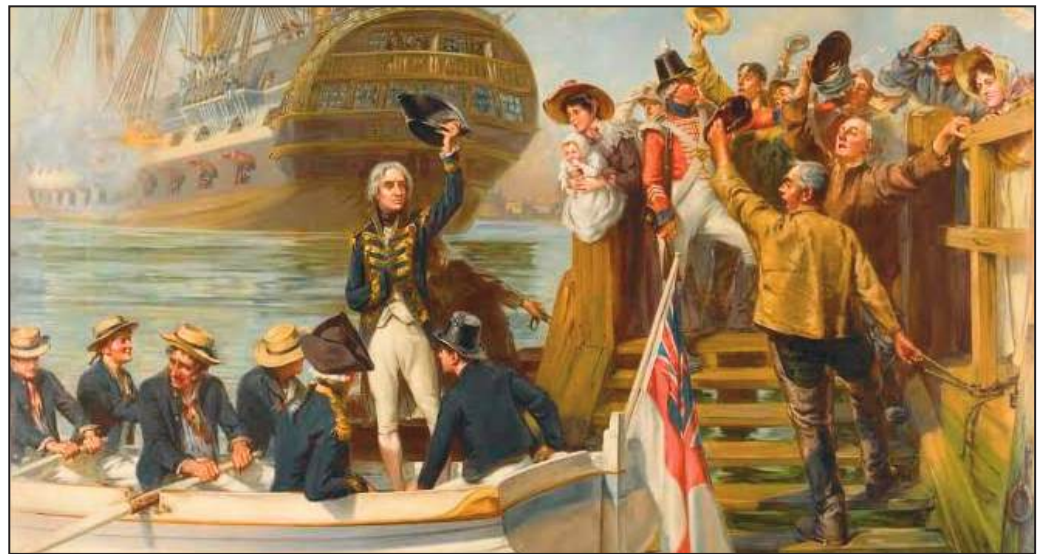
The snow began to fall on the hills of Eskdalemuir on the evening of Thursday, 23rd January, which was followed by continuous rain, drifting snow, and frost. Sheep were swept into sykes and the intensity of the frost confined them until they were drowned.

Although the snow lay but a week, whole flocks were overwhelmed and buried deeply in drifts. The total number of sheep destroyed in Eskdalemuir was 4006 and seven black cattle. The only farms in Eskdalemuir which escaped were Tanlawhill and Yetbyre. James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, who was out on the Ettrick hills with his flock during this dreadful storm recounts the calamitous event which is retold by the Langs in "Stories of the Border Marches."

1840 sheep

The narrative closes with these tragic sentences: "There is on Solway Sands a place called the Beds of Esk where, with terrible persistence, the tides cast up whatever may have been carried to sea by the rivers which in this neighbourhood empty themselves into the Firth. Ghastly was the burden here strewn when the floods went down. In those Beds lay the lifeless bodies of two men and one woman: 1840 sheep, nine black cattle, three horses, 180 hares and of rabbits and small animals a multitude innumerable. Death held high carnival in Eskdalemuir that January of 1794."

In the miscellaneous observations preserved in a manuscript left behind by the inimitable parish minister of Eskdalemuir, occur some notes under dare



To the vigilance of Lord Nelson, much of the credit of saving our country from invasion was due

1798-99, which give an insight into prevailing conditions, at a time when the rumblings of war on the Continent seemed to provide the chief topic in daily conversation, even in the secluded parishes of Eskdale.

Mention is made of the Militia as "a new thing among us which caused considerable riots elsewhere but none here". The calling-up age was between 19 and 23 and every parish in Scotland was ordered to furnish a list of men fit to serve at that age.

When all the lists were delivered completing the number fixed upon by Act of Parliament, these

were divided according to parish. "Eskdalemuir had to raise two men" writes Dr Brown "and when the ballot came, it fell upon John Warwick in Midraeburn and Thomas Hislop in Todshawhill, but neither of them went for the parish collected and found substitutes."

Invasion

A year or two later, in 1803, an account is given of the fears and alarm of a French invasion.

It was known that the aim and ambition of Bonaparte was the subjugation of the whole of Europe; hence the invasion of

Britain formed an important part of his plans, and in order to defeat this object, great preparations were made on this side of the English Channel.

These were such that no attack was ever made, although great fleets, fitted out to transport large numbers of soldiers, were kept in readiness at the northern ports of France. To the vigilance of Lord Nelson, much of the credit of saving our country from invasion was due. But the Admiral was only the hand of the barometer; the moving power of those perilous times was the unswerving spirit of Providence.

C & D Marts (Longtown) Primestock Report

Thursday, 19th March 2026

CONTACT NUMBERS:

| | |
|----------------|---------------|
| John Walton | 07880 527 066 |
| Daniel Lynn | 07584 200 489 |
| Nick Woodmass | 07442 246 063 |
| Sam Hogg | 07584 207323 |
| Norman Douglas | 07786 366 833 |
| Helen Rickard | 07741 313 029 |



C&D Auction Marts had forward an entry of 7,904 sheep comprising of 5,320 hogs and 2,584 cast ewes & rams at their weekly sale at Longtown Mart on Thursday 19th March 2026.

PRIME HOGGS

A smaller show of hogs met an exceptionally strong trade with more required to fulfill buyer demand.

Top price per head of £250 for Bluefaced Leicesters from Chesterhall Parks.

Top per kilo of 541.9ppk for Beltex hogs from Lurgan Farm.

Please contact your auctioneers for further enquiries and entries.

Overall average 402ppk (SQQ 412.12ppk)

Principal prices (Per head)

Bluefaced Leicester- £250 Chesterhall Parks, £206 Laverockbank
Texel £248 Commonsides, £245 Byreburnside, £240 Becks & Kirkton, £236 Wydon Eals, £235 Becks, £234 Upper Auquhadale, £231 Torgornack

Suffolk- £238 Torrax, £230 Torgornack, £228 Newtonhill, £227 Romavale, £225 Newtonhill, £222 Torgornack

North Country Cheviot £230 Tister, £224 Clatequoy, £222 Kirkton, £202 South Bogbain, £201 Tister, £199 Commonsides, £198 Syke Head, £194 Commonsides & Buchtrig
Blackface £226 Larg Farming, £212 Merkland, £208 Craigdarroch, £202 Upper Wellwood, £200 Kirkland, £195 Braglenmore, £197 Chesterhall Parks, £191 Greenside, £189 Clachan & Upper Wellwood
Beltex £224, £218 Kilnford Croft, £217 Newton Cottages & Balbridy, £213 Station

Yard, £210 Upper Auquhadale & Clatequoy, £208 Newton Cottages & Swaites
Mule £217 Wydon Eals, £210 Westernhopeburn, £208 Kirkhouse, £201 Syke Head & Finniness, £200 Prestrie & West Scales

Cheviot Mule £217 Torgornack, £197 Oswie

Hampshire- £215 Newseat of Tolquhon

Romney- £206 Syke Head

Hill Cheviot £206 Becks, £204 Kirkton, £202 Potholm, £201 Springwells, £200 Glendearg

Zwartbles- £200 South Bogbain

Dutch Spotted- £200, £191 Jerriestown

Herdwick £200, £188 Orthwaite Hall, £171 East House, £167 Orthwaite Hall

Lleyl- £199 Romavale

Dorset- £199 South Bogbain

Charollais- £197 Brawliemuir, £196 Torhousemuir

Swaledale £176, £164 East Greenridge, £156 Orthwaite Hall, £155 Westernhopeburn, £150 East Greenridge

Easy Care- £156 Ardove

Principal Prices (Per Kilo)

Beltex- 541.9p Lurgan, 498p Newton Cottages, 497p Lurgan, 495p, 486p, 482p Newton Cottages, 474.4p Balbridy, 473.8p Fallaw

Texel- 481.5p Hallum Forss, 478p Coilingel, 468p Upper Lybster, 455p, 452.6p Ballochgar, 451p Shandford

Hill Cheviot - 450p Unthank, 447p West Scales, 442.1p, 439p Castlegarth, 434p Newtonhill, 432.5p Glendearg

Suffolk- 448.7p, 447.5p Shandford, 443p Govals Farm, 442p Latheron Mains, 439.5p

Shandford, 439p Oswie
Herdwick - 443.5p Coilingel, 437p Orthwaite Hall, 432p Coilingel, 403p, 398p East House

Blackface - 435p Greenside & High Creoch, 434.1p Greenside, 434p High Creoch, 433.3p Upper Wellwood & Fingland, 426p High Creoch, 425p Greenside

Mule - 433p East Greenridge, 405.6p Kirkhouse, 412p Nuncleugh & Lowgate, 409p Galegreggan, 408.5p Kirkhouse, 403p Corsencon

North Country Cheviot - 429p West Scales, 413p East Mey & Syke Head, 411.1p Oswie, 408.8p Whitecroft Mains, 405.3p Clatequoy

Easy Care- 423.1p Haswellsykes

Dorset- 415p South Bogbain

Dutch Spotted- 406p, 370.4p Jerriestown

Charollais- 402p Brawliemuir, 400p, 392p, 378.3p Torhousemuir

Cheviot Mule - 402p Oswie, 401.9p Torgornack

Romney- 400p Riverside, 375p Syke Head

Swaledale - 384.4p Riverside, 383p, 379p, 378p Westernhopeburn, 372.2p Greenridge

Hampshire- 384p, 381.3p Newton of Tolquhon

Bluefaced Leicester- 347.8p Chesterhall Parks, 343.3p Laverockbank

Zwartbles- 339p South Bogbain

Lleyl- 306.2p Romavale

CAST EWES AND RAMS

A smaller entry of 2,584 cast forward with 14 active buyers operating on several different accounts. Many more cast sheep will be needed going forward into the next few

weeks, please contact our auctioneers for any enquiries.

Heavy ewes topped at £395 for Texel ewes consigned by Beckfoot Farms.

Light ewes topped at £180 for Blackface ewes from Balliemeanoch Farms.

Rams topping the sale at £275 for a Texel from C J Roots Kilnford Croft.

Heavy ewes

Texel £395 Beckfoot, £320 Wood Farm & Riverside, £285 Ashton, £280 Kilnford Croft

, £275 Wood Farm & Newtonhill, £270 Fallaw Farm, £260 Shandford & Bowsden Moor

Charollais - £350 Wood Farm, £222 Beckfoot, £218 Torgornack, £212 Beckfoot, £210 Bowsden Moor

Beltex £260 Bowsden Moor & Balbridy, £248, £230 Easter Ochtermuthill, £225 Bowsden Moor, £220 Riverside, £210 Easter Ochtermuthill

Suffolk £250, £225 Bowsden Moor, £225 Wood Farm, £220 Easter Ochtermuthill, £218 Beechgrove, £217, £212 Beckfoot, £210 Beechgrove, Shandford & Wood Farm

Cheviot Mule £205 Newtonhill, £198 Hunting Faulds, £182 Pond House, £178 Newseat of Tolquhon & Drumreach, £175 Glendearg, £174 Nether Cargen

North Country Cheviot £200 Beckfoot, £185 Swanson, £182 Howman Grange, £178 Beckfoot & Coilingel, £175 Coilingel, £170 Howman Grange

Bluefaced Leicester £195 Beckfoot

Dorset- £190 Justenlees, £168 Beckfoot

Mule £180 Longrow & Torgornack, £174 Hunting Faulds, £172 Upper Lybster & Galleywreay, £170 Hunting Faulds & Pond

House, £168 Beckfoot & Coolingall, £166 Hunting Faulds

Dutch Spotted £184 Hudspeth

Romney- £170 Castletown Estate, £155 Quarry House, £144 Galleywreay

Bleu De Main- £150 Bowershield

Hampshire- £155 Coilingel

Light ewes

Blackface £180, £170 Balliemeanoch, £168 Hudspeth, £158 Fingland, £156, £148 Quarry House, £140 Winterhope, £136 Finniness, £135 Drumreach, £132 Winterhope & Quarry House

Lleyl- £178 Bowsden Moor

Beulah- £172 Beckfoot

Jacob- £162 Victory Avenue

Hill Cheviot £158 Littlegill, £155 Glendearg, £146 Old Gas Huse, £144 Swanson, £138 Drumreach & Brawliemuir, £134 Main-side, Roseneath & Drumreach

Easy Care- £150 Coilingel, £146 Wexford Lodge, £145 Bowershield

Swaledale £138 Syke Head & Fordlands, £128 Foedlands & Hudspeth

Herdwick £126 Cumcrook, £114 Newtonhill

Shetland- £96 Howman Grange

Goats- £90 Pole Farm

Rams

Texel- £275 Kilnford Croft, £250 Beckfoot, £240 Lybster, £215 Wood Farm, £210 Howman Grange, £205 Coilingel

Charollais- £228 Beckfoot, £225 Potholm

Romney- £218 Beckfoot

Beltex £220, £210 Riverside, £205 Torrax

Suffolk X £208 Torrax, £180 Riverside & Torrax, £178 Longrow

Bluefaced Leicester- £195 Finniness,

£185 Merkland, £170 Howman Grange

Berrichon- £185 Nether Cargen

Hampshire- £180 Beckfoot

Suffolk- £178 Beckhall

Zwartbles- £178 Beckfoot

Blackface £166 Merkland, £162 Craigdarroch, £142 Clachan, £142 Riskinhope, £140 Fingland

Lleyl- £165 Brawliemuir

Hill Cheviot- £160 Coilingel & Potholm

Herdwick- £130 Coilingel

North Country Cheviot £110 Commonsides

Swaledale- £102 Bowershield

Averages:

Hoggs

Light to 541.9p (395.8p)

Standard to 533.0p (405.3p)

Medium to 498.0p (416.3p)

Heavy to 434.7p (398.5p)

Ewes

Light to £180.00 (£104.74)

Heavy to £395.00 (£172.04)

Rams to £275.00 (£169.15)





The E&L Gallery

MAN ON A MISSION: Graham Cutts of Langholm took this unusual view across the River Esk from Buccleuch Park.

CAMERA: Canon R5 with 24-105 lens

Coming events at Westerkirk Library

A profusion of public, free-of-charge events this Spring has been organised by Westerkirk Parish Library located in Bentpath. Detectorists meet on Saturday 28 March at 10.30am - to discuss, once again, Benty's bounty - whilst cyclist Mark Shelton relates numerous anecdotes from his book *Somebody cycling the following day*, at 3pm.

And to complete a rapid trio of events, the library opens on Monday 30 March at 7pm for its 'Among the Shelves' Book Club - in-line with its policy of meeting on the last Monday of the month. The focus switches to golf and motor racing on Sunday 19 April at 3pm: technologist Robin Down veers away from his chosen profession to confess his almost-reckless penchant for speed - which is tempered by a completely alternative taste: isolated golf courses.

His book *Golf in the wild: a journey through time and place* explores his paradoxical tastes; they have taken him from frenetic, howling motor racing circuits to deserted links across moors and high hills and back again. His talk celebrates every aspect of such quixotic endeavour and is not to be missed.

Please reserve your place by emailing westerkirkparishlibrary@gmail.com

On Sunday 17 May - again at 3pm - coastal rower Alan Thomson explains why his chosen recreation is growing in popularity in Scotland. With a particular focus on efforts to revive Annan Harbour the speaker examines the background to rowing's revival - not least because it is so accessible - and how it can develop this decade, and beyond. His fascination for St Ayles skiff is the catalyst. Wikipedia provides information that the

St. Ayles Skiff (pronounced Saint Isles) is a 4-oared rowing boat, designed by Iain Oughtred and inspired by the traditional Fair Isle skiff. The boat's hull and frames are built using clinker plywood.

The boat design was commissioned by The Scottish Fisheries Museum - in St Ayles, Anstruther - in 2009 as a vessel for use in The Scottish Coastal Rowing Project. It is suitable for construction by community groups and amateur boat builders.

More than 250 boats have been built worldwide, mostly by communities around the Scottish coast but increasingly by groups elsewhere; Alan will elaborate on such positive growth. Further into summer - on Sunday June 28th, at 3pm - the library presents David Byers, speaking about bees and hornets. Further details will be available in May-June.

Westerkirk Parish Library

presents a chat with **Robin Down**

Robin is author of *Golf in the Wild: A Journey through time and place*

A life time of technical writing, an unhealthy interest in speed and a passion for golf have finally coalesced. The author has found his real voice in the pages of this book; a journey into his past played out across golf courses in wild places to the distant sound of racing engines.



Sunday 19th April 2026
3- 4.30pm

email westerkirkparishlibrary@gmail.com to **RESERVE YOUR SEAT**

Refreshments will be provided. All Welcome.
While this is a FREE event, donations to Westerkirk Parish Library are much appreciated. Scottish Charity: SC030838



Westerkirk Parish Library

presents a chat with **Alan Thomson**

Have you heard about the St Ayles Skiff?
Coastal rowing is one of the fastest growing and accessible sports around Scotland. Come along to the library & find out more about the history and future of this local activity happening at Annan Harbour.



Sunday 17th May 2026
3- 4.30pm

email westerkirkparishlibrary@gmail.com to **RESERVE YOUR SEAT**

Refreshments will be provided. All Welcome.
While this is a FREE event, donations to Westerkirk Parish Library are much appreciated. Scottish Charity: SC030838

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Cross Country success at school championships

Last week saw the biggest single participatory sporting event for primary schools held annually. It was the Annandale and Eskdale Primary Schools Cross Country Championships held at Langholm Rugby Club with small and medium schools competing in the morning and large schools competing in the afternoon.

Annandale and Eskdale Active school and community sport would like to thank to all the schools, teachers and supporting parents who brought the children along to the event. A special thank you should go to Langholm Rugby Club for the use of their grounds and facilities, it really is an excellent setting for our cross-country event.

Finally, a big thank you to Langholm Academy for allowing sports leaders out of the school to help, and to all the young sports leaders who were a fantastic help all day. Langholm pupils did well in the upper age groups.

P6 Girls individuals: 1st Indie Goodwin, Newington, 2nd Evie Phillips, Langholm, 3rd Ellie Couperthwaite, Langholm

P6 Large school first team: Langholm primary/Newington primary, second team Newington primary

P6 Large school boys individuals 1st Aston Turner, Newington, 2nd Serge Currie-Neuville, Langholm, 3rd Alex Cuthbert Langholm

Large school P6 boys team: 1st team Langholm, 2nd Newington, 3rd Newington 2nd team.

Large school P7 girls team: 1st Lochmaben, 2nd Hecklegirth, 3rd Langholm



Cross Country



More golds for athlete Aoiffion



Athletics

Aoiffion (r) with her relay-winning teammates

Aoiffion McVittie-Brangan of Langholm was in action at the weekend in the final of the junior Scottish indoor athletics league which included the indoor league relays. Aoiffion runs for Edinburgh Athletics Club.

After 3 league matches in November, December and January, the top 6 teams from each age group qualified for the finals. The Girls under 16 age group in which Aoiffion runs included - Edinburgh Athletics Club (AC), Ayr Seaforth AC, Falkirk Victoria AC, Dunfermline Track and Field, Giffnock North AC and Victoria Park City of Glasgow AC. Aoiffion

ran in the 200 metres from Lane 1, traditionally the slowest lane to run in due to a much sharper corner. She still managed to win her race and get the gold medal, missing out on a Scottish record by 0.06 seconds with a time of 1min 46.27secs. Aoiffion ran the final leg for her team which won it by a big lead gaining her another gold medal.

The final event of the season also included heats and finals of the 4 x 200m relay. Edinburgh won the gold medal, missing out on a Scottish record by 0.06 seconds with a time of 1min 46.27secs. Aoiffion ran the final leg for her team which won it by a big lead gaining her another gold medal. Edinburgh won the U16 Girls League Final with Ayr Seaforth

in 2nd place and Falkirk in 3rd place. Aoiffion has now had 7 national level indoor medals since the start of February including 3 Gold, 3 Silver and 1 Bronze and she is still a young 1st year U16 athlete. The outdoor season kicks off next week with a SprintFastest Invitational event at Grangemouth in which Aoiffion will compete.

Aoiffion recently received a 'Bursary for Sport' from the Together Forever Trust which aims to inspire and support others to achieve and reach their full potential through the love of sport and performance.

The trust was set up in memory of a young couple who died in the Manchester arena bombing.



Regional badminton

Badminton



A Langholm lad did well at the regional badminton tournament held in Dumfries.

All the pupils were invited along following local area competitions and the game play, sportsmanship and smiles were on point. Calum Grant who at-

tends Langholm primary school was playing.

Results: Primary 6 Girls Eva - Noblehill, Xanthe - St Michael's, Nancy - Sheuchan Primary 6 Boys Calum - Langholm, Tom - Troqueer, Angus - St Michael's

Benty presentations and Tag Hogg Cup



Bowling

Luke Tolson says thanks to all the Benty Members for coming along each cold Monday night and playing some really good games of bowling and well done to all the prize winners. Featuring our shiny new "League Champion" and "Singles Champion" shields

League Champion Shield: Ryan; League Runner up: Wag; Singles Champion Shield Stuart M; Megget cup Ryan & Roy; Big cup John, Stuart M and Val;

Wee cups Aaron & Jim; Whitshields Vouchers: Ryan, Wag and Roy; Challenge Trophy: Aaron & Roy; Points Medal Luke Tolson. See you all in October.



The Tag Hogg Singles Cup was played on Sunday at Langholm social club with 54 entries. Thanks to all who came and played it means a lot for the folk who travel and support our club.

The winner was Ryan Wood; Runner-up was Layton Foster. (pictured left).

Beaten semi-finalists were Stuart Mabon and Ian Hall. Beaten quarter finalists were Paul Warwick, Sparky, Ally Hall, Aaron Wood. The carpet bowling club provided sponsorship towards the tournament. Thanks also to ladies who sold football cards and catering.



Green bowlers go green at the old town

Bowling

The Langholm Old Town Bowling Club has for several years been grappling with a roof that needed extensive repair. President Robert Phillips formed a small group within the club to look at the roofing issue and to pursue options.

After looking at various options and with a full report and recommendations from Business Energy Scotland, the club decided on reroofing the building incorporating solar panels and an energy storage system. This would then support an affordable form of internal heating. The report also highlighted the need to not only create a greener energy supply but to future proof the building to conserve the energy created.

This solution would also allow the building to be used all year round as a community hub being able to hold small events or a meeting space for all to benefit from. The project was



Old Town, new outlook as bowling club embraces solar power

then divided into two phases. Phase one being roofing incorporating solar panels and energy storage and internal heating. Phase two would be future proofing the building with insulation replacing doors and renewing plumbing and toilet facilities and redecoration and renewing floor coverings. Phase one has now been

completed in full and on time by Dumfries company Fusion Renewables. This project would not have been possible without funding support from our friends from the local wind farms, namely Crossdykes, Ewehill 16, Solwaybank community benefit funds, Ewehill 6 Ewes and Westerkirk community council and

C.A.R.E.S. the Scottish government scheme from local energy Scotland.

Phase two will now proceed with haste, when all local contractors with an aim of having the club's internal refurbishment all complete before the greens opening date of 18th of April. Old and new members will be most welcome to join us in what will be a new look clubhouse.



Battery storage for the extra power generated by the solar panels makes sound economic sense

Broughton on Saturday, Sevens in four weeks

Rugby

Langholm RFC were due to play Broughton RFC in Edinburgh on Saturday. However, due to a combination of work commitments and ongoing injuries, Langholm, for the first time in many seasons, was unable to raise a full team and the match was unfortunately postponed.

Broughton are due at Milntown on Saturday for the rearranged East League fixture postponed in November, and both sides are looking forward to getting the match played as the season comes near to its conclusion. Langholm also have another rearranged fixture at Milntown on 11th April against North Berwick, who have twice pulled out of this fixture, so fingers are crossed it will be third time lucky.

Preparations are well underway for this year's Langholm Sevens which is being held on 25th April. With all the main Border teams confirmed and with the Edinburgh trio of Heriots, Watsonians and Accies on board it should be an excellent tournament. Once again it will be played as 4 pools of 3 teams giving all the participating clubs two matches each before the semi-finals. There will be hot food on sale courtesy of Border Hog Roast, Spectrum disco will provide the entertainment at the famous sevens karaoke in the evening and of course the bar will be open. First tie is 2pm and fingers crossed that the weather is kind on the day. More details on the sevens to follow nearer the date.



Queenie St Clair bags £100k race

Horseracing

By Gordon Brown

Freddie Keighley enjoyed his first Kelso success when Queenie St Clair landed the £100,000 BetWright Herring Queen Series Final Mares' Novices' Handicap Hurdle.

The mare, sent off at 20/1, held off First Candidate by a length to supply fledgling trainer Nick Schofield with one of his biggest wins.

"She has plenty of experience over hurdles and that counted for a lot," Keighley said. "It was a pretty competitive race, but she's jumped away grand and really stuck on well from the last - she wears a hood but she's not so keen in her races these days."

Irish raider World Of Fortunes was an

impressive winner of the opening Listed mares' hurdle under Jordan Gainford.

The James Kenny-trained 11/4 chance slammed Sunset Marquesa by five and a half lengths.

"James hasn't been training that long, and this mare has been a star," Gainford said. "She's got plenty of Listed winning form and she stays well too."

In-form Adam Nicol struck with Speiriul, who completed a hat-trick under Ryan Mania in the Go North Cab On Target Series Final.

"She's barely put a foot wrong since coming to us and I'm delighted for her owners, Molly & Paul Willis, as they put so much into the game," Nicol said. "Hopefully she won't go up too much and we might find something for her at Perth next month."

Ewan Whillans was all smiles after Blakey Boy took the 3m 2f chase in the



hands of Peter Kavanagh.

"He was up in class and wee bit out of the handicap, but we think he's still improving," Whillans said.

Lucinda Russell and Michael Scudamore stuck with Eagles Reprieve,

but the most impressive winner of the afternoon was Sandy Thomson-trained King Kubala in the bumper. Well-backed into 5/2 favourite, the local raider scored eased down by 13-lengths for Danny McMenamin.

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