

A brae-top viewpoint

Musings from a new contributor

SEE PAGE 7



Langholm Sevens preview

Including details of the draw

SEE PAGE 16



Eskdale & Liddesdale Advertiser

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Community Council reviews finances, priorities and safety

A continued spat with a member of public has necessitated the holding of meetings in private

On Tuesday, Langholm, Ewes and Westerkirk Community Council considered a wide range of local issues at its latest meeting, including public safety, financial arrangements, traffic enforcement and future funding opportunities.

Members were informed of recent police reports, including the theft of a vehicle registration plates from a car parked on David Street and two separate shoplifting incidents at the local supermarket in mid and late March. Councillors were encouraged to raise any further concerns from residents with the local police team.

Financial matters featured prominently, with the council confirming that its overall position remains stable. However, members agreed to continue efforts to modernise payment processes in response to rising cheque fees. The council is working toward moving fully to electronic BACS payments, which would reduce costs and administrative delays. While progress has been slower than hoped due to bank procedures, alternative banking options may be explored if issues persist.

Maintenance of the Langholm's War Memorial was also discussed following a request for the community to take a more active role in remembrance activities. Proposals included professional cleaning of the granite memorial and repainting its lettering. Members noted that a dedicated war memorial maintenance fund is available and should be used wherever possible, rather than general council funds. A separate suggestion to install a memorial bench,

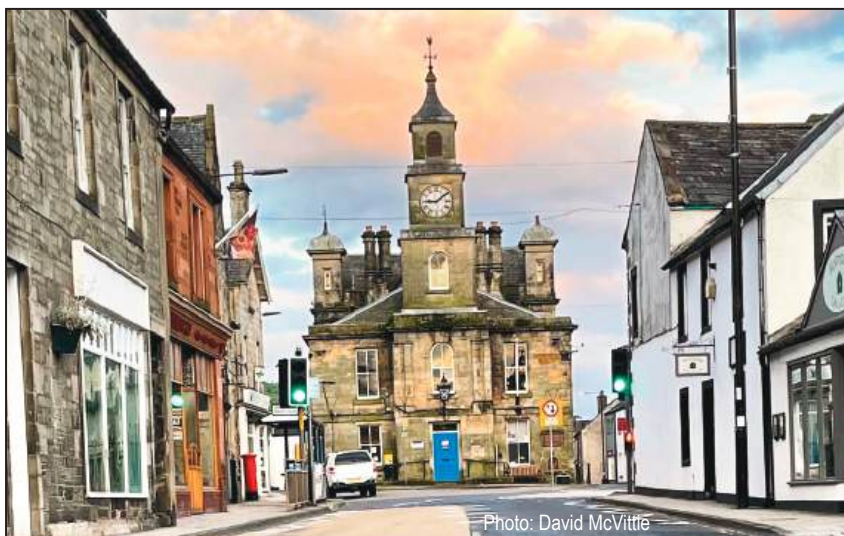


Photo: David McVittie

supported by donations already held locally, may be taken forward through a wind farm funding application.

The E&L headed to the Town Hall last Thursday with the intention of reporting on the monthly LEWCC meeting only to be greeted, at the door of the chamber, with a fracas between a member of the public and a community councillor.

The member of the public concerned had been officially asked not to attend the meetings due to previous outbursts and threatening behaviour. He chose to ignore this request.

The meeting was postponed and will be rearranged to take place in private.

It is believed that there will now be police involvement due to the

seriousness of the situation and the council members being frightened for their safety.

As a result of these disturbances, a substantial part of the meeting focused on safety and meeting conduct. Members reviewed existing rules allowing meetings to be held in private where there is a risk to health and safety and noted that further measures may be considered to address aggressive or abusive behaviour. Police guidance on dealing with criminal conduct was also acknowledged. Due to ongoing safety concerns, the next Community Council meeting, scheduled for 11 May, will be held in private unless suitable arrangements are implemented beforehand.

> Turn to Page 2

INSIDE



Political hopefuls set out their stalls at hustings meeting

Full story on the centre pages

Family Announcements

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Services led by
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Services led by
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Rev Morag Crossan
 Tel: 07861 736071
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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

Digital fortress?

Toppers no more on high-tech mailbox

The new High Street post box comes fitted with a solar panel on top which would suggest that we are unlikely to see more crocheted toppers placed there.

Several women have in the past been involved in producing creative decorations for the Langholm post box which have been a talking point, but it seems that this will be no more. The new box includes a built-in camera to scan bar codes and produce a proof of posting receipt.

The barcode scanning via the Royal Mail app opens a drop down drawer for parcels up to the size of a shoe box and there are separate slots for letters allowing both to be posted.

This all seems a bit unnecessary now that we have a post office on the High Street where an assistant can help the customer with labels if required. What do our readers think?

Tell us by emailing
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The new postbox with its built-in solar panels



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The Eskdale & Liddesdale Advertiser is part-funded and supported by the following charitable trusts, organisations and individuals from the community of Langholm.

- The Ainslie Charitable Trust
- The BGS Cayzer Charitable Trust
- Crossdykes Community Benefits Ltd, administered by Foundation Scotland
- Dumfriesshire East Community Benefit Group
- The John Hammond Charitable Trust
- The Stevenson Trust

Would a change to online meetings solve anything?

<From Page 1

The possibility of introducing online or hybrid meetings was discussed as a way to increase accessibility, particularly for residents in outlying areas. However, concerns were raised about managing disruption, ensuring safety and avoiding exclusion of those without internet access. No change was agreed at this stage.

Members also agreed to ask the council for improvements to the meeting venue, including the installation of a clearly

audible entrance bell and a handrail on the staircase to improve safety for visually impaired users.

Other items included a brief note that police are not currently enforcing temporary 20 mph speed limits, and this will not change until the trial period ends.

Changes to wind farm funding application deadlines were approved to give applicants more time, and the council confirmed that its Education and Training Bursary will be advertised again over the summer.

High Street hiatus!



At lunchtime on Tuesday, Langholm High Street ground to a halt, once again, as a broken-down lorry, in front of the E&L Offices was attended to by a breakdown truck. At one point, there were six lorries queued up as both lanes were blocked. Thankfully it didn't last too long!

Altitude Drivers versus the potholes

Hugh Ferguson captured photos of the Altitude Drivers Club members navigating the Tarras road at the weekend.

The Altitude Drivers Club is an exclusive automotive community created for people who see driving as a passion and a lifestyle. It brings together owners and enthusiasts of performance, luxury, and rare vehicles who appreciate great roads, thoughtful design, and exceptional company.

The club curates unforgettable driving experiences, from flowing rural routes to iconic scenic landscapes, always with an emphasis on quality over quantity. Beyond the road, members enjoy relaxed social gatherings, destination events, and a welcoming environment where stories, knowledge, and enthusiasm are shared.

Altitude Drivers Club celebrates craftsmanship, individuality, and the simple pleasure of being behind the wheel. It is not about speed alone, but about connection - to cars, to roads, and to people who believe that the journey should be just as rewarding as the destination.



High accidental death rate in Scotland

Scotland has the highest rate of accidental deaths in the UK, reveals a new report from safety charity the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA). Accidents killed 51 per 100,000 people in Scotland in 2023/24, compared to a UK-wide average of 34. This makes Scotland the most dangerous UK nation for accidental deaths, ahead of Wales (44 deaths per 100,000 people), Northern Ireland (39) and England (32), and means people in Scotland are 62% more likely to die in an accident than people in England.

There were also stark differences within Scotland itself, with those in the more deprived 50% of the population almost 28% more likely than those in the less deprived 50%. Hospital admissions also rose by a rate of 3% over one year in Great Britain, including a 17% rate of increase in admissions caused by animals and 6% by poisonings. Accidents



have a tragic impact, not just on individuals, families and communities, but society as a whole. Immediate treatment costs to the NHS run to £6 billion annually, not including follow-up rehabilitation and other costs, and accidents account for a minimum of 5.2 million bed days, reducing capacity and driving up waiting lists across the health service. In 2024, RoSPA urged the Government to implement a National Accident Prevention Strategy to tackle accidents as a serious public health crisis.

Longwood guided bird walk

A guided bird walk through Longwood was held on Saturday, led by John Halliday who is an ecologist and is very knowledgeable in ornithology. Having grown up in the Muckle Toon John knows the territory well. There was a good turnout for the morning walk with twenty-seven bird species being seen or heard along the way. These included a willow warbler, a mistle thrush, a pied flycatcher and a tree creeper. There are no more planned bird walks at the moment but if there is demand they could be organized by staff at the Langholm Initiative. A useful app to have on your phone to help with bird recognition is Merlin, which can be easily downloaded. Contact admin@langholminitiative.org.uk if you would be interested in taking part.

Bridge Results

1, Ann Smart & Barbara Addison, 2, George & Brenda Bullamore, 3, Bob Francombe & Anne Hislop, 4 = Lorraine Morton & Aileen Graham and Derek Scott & Judy Pitchford, 6 = Anne Ferguson & Fiona Kay and Nancy McLure & Louise Grierson.

Artistic notions? Come to the Hub



The Eskdalemuir Hub is holding a paint and plonk party on 1st May at 7pm. This is a relaxed, social evening for all abilities - whether you're a seasoned artist or can barely draw a stick figure, you're in the right place.

You'll be guided very gently as you work together to create a one-of-a-kind masterpiece by passing the paper around and adding your own unique touch along the way. No pressure, minimal rules, maximum fun. What will you end up with? A modern marvel? A hilarious mishmash? A happy accident?

Go along for a night of questionable talent, surprising genius, and plenty of paper-passing chaos. The evening costs £5 and a free drink is included.

Jobs start with Meet the Buyer



If you run a business in Dumfries and Galloway and want to hear what work may be coming up, Meet the Buyer is a good place to start.

Businesses are invited to a meeting on 21st May from 9.30am to 12.30pm at The Bridge at Dumfries.

This free event is for businesses that want to better understand public sector opportunities and how to put themselves in a stronger position when contracts go live.

Meet the Buyer will bring together buyers, exhibitors and businesses for a

practical morning of information, advice and conversation. Attendees will be able to hear more about upcoming opportunities, meet the people involved and get straightforward advice on how the process works.

Why attend? Hear what opportunities may be coming up. Meet buyers and partner organisations. Ask questions in a practical, informal setting. Get straightforward advice on how to improve your chances when contracts go live.

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Doddie fundraising raises £2m this year

More than £2 million has been raised through this year's Doddie Aid and Doddie's Triple Crown cycle, marking the organisation's highest combined fundraising total since 2023's campaign, which was the first following Doddie's death.

Doddie Aid brought 13,000 people together across January, who collectively logged over one million miles through walking, running, cycling, dancing – however they desired.

That momentum carried into March, as Rob Wainwright led Doddie's Triple Crown - a four-day 750-mile ride, involving 450 cyclists, from Scotland to Ireland. This year, Doddie's wife Kathy took part in the whole ride for the first time, as part of an all-female relay team. She said it meant a great deal to see people continuing to show up - taking part, supporting and finding ways to contribute.

Keep pedalling

Kathy said: "I'll be honest - ahead of the challenge I was dreading it. You worry you're not ready, that you might hold people back, but at some point, you just have to get on the bike and go. There were moments where you don't know how you're going to get up a climb, but you just keep pedalling. And then you meet people along the way who are living with MND, and that brings home exactly why you're doing it."

"The fundraising this year has been staggering



– up more than 50% on our best ride. To see over £2 million raised across Doddie Aid and the ride is extraordinary. Every penny of that is going straight to the front line of MND research, which is exactly where it needs to be. There were people who thought this might fade after Doddie, but the opposite has happened. A massive thank you to all the support team, sponsors, the IRFU, and everybody who made it happen.

We will keep going for all of them. There's no finish line for this until we find a cure."

Harvest Mice make national Exhibition



The team at Tarras Valley are delighted that harvest mice have made it onto a powerful new exhibition by artist Jane Frere which is in its final week of showing at the Barn Arts Centre in Banchory, Aberdeenshire.

The Ark: We Stand Beside, has been a three-week exhibition and festival that asks: Which species will you stand beside as the climate crisis deepens?

Jane's piece displaying more than 168 animals chosen by celebrities, writers and poets (and Tarras Valley!) features alongside a purpose-built ark and other pieces by several artists and creatives. We nominated the harvest mouse after our discovery of the species on the reserve last year and we were over the moon when it made it into the final piece,

which is an intricate tree of life entwined with lots of different species that people have nominated. Chris Packham chose a bog sun-jumper spider as his species, Jane chose the Scottish Wildcat and Brian Cox chose a wolf to name but a few!

The concept of the Ark took shape during the early stages of the pandemic. Jane started by focusing on some species already extinct or threatened in Scotland, such as, the wildcat and the crane. She began to wonder if so, much had been lost already, an estimated 73% collapse in global species numbers since 1970 what might be left to save in a symbolic ark in 50 years' time. She has made the tiny, obscure and mostly ignored species particularly large in scale with emphasis that every species is vital in the intricate web of



life ensuring a healthy ecosystem.

Which species would you choose? Take a look at <https://www.istandbeside.life/>

You can read more about the exhibition at Exhibition Aberdeenshire, The Ark - We Stand Beside by Jane

Tourism togetherness at Gilnockie Leaflet Day

A recent Leaflet Day held at Gilnockie Tower has been hailed as a great success, bringing together tourism businesses from across the region to connect, collaborate, and promote what the area has to offer.

Organised as part of the Teviotdale Steel Bonnets Equipment Week, the event welcomed a wide range of participants, with businesses travelling from as far afield as Carlisle right through to the Scottish Borders from Melrose. The day provided a valuable opportunity for local accommodation providers, visitor attractions, and experience hosts to meet face-to-face, exchange information, and build stronger working relationships.

The relaxed and informal setting at Gilnockie Tower proved ideal for networking, with attendees sharing leaflets, discussing ideas, and forming new partnerships aimed at strengthening tourism across the region. The event highlighted the importance of collaboration in encouraging more visitors to ex-



plore the rich history, heritage, and hospitality found throughout Eskdale, Liddesdale, Teviotdale, and beyond.

Organisers were delighted with the turnout and the positive feedback received on the day, with many participants praising the opportunity to connect with other local businesses and raise awareness of what they offer.

Following the success of the event, plans are already in place

for a second Leaflet Day, which will take place mid-season on Saturday 18th July 2026, with the same format and details as before.

The team behind the event hope to build on this momentum and continue strengthening links across the tourism sector, ensuring the region remains a welcoming and well-promoted destination for visitors throughout the year.

Eden Festival seeks to tempt volunteers



The Eden Festival is an annual event held at Raehills Estate to the south of Moffat and this year the four-day festival starts 11th June and runs till 14th. It's an independent family friendly festival celebrating music, arts and culture. This will be the 15th edition of Eden festival, and it showcases both internationally acclaimed artists as well as local up and coming ones and includes folk, soul electronica, jazz, world music and everything in between. There are ten stages and lots of cabaret and comedy as well as kids entertainment and workshops.

One of the headliners this year

is Julian Marley and the Uprising. Julian is a powerful live performer who has a GRAMMY for best reggae album. Other bands featured include Valtos, Vieux Farka Toure, Nickodemus and Nappy G as well as the fantastic Colonel Mustard and the Dijon 5. Dougie Maclean will be there as well joined by Eva Lazarus, Benny Page, Kirsteen Harvey and Malin Lewis. There are camping and glamping tickets available and people can also buy day tickets to the festival which allow you to camp from 11am on your selected day to 11am the following morning.

Last year on the day I decided

to go it was very wet and muddy but here's hoping this year will see sunshine and smiles. Whatever the weather, it's a fun weekend and traditionally there's a fancy dress competition on the Saturday of the festival so take your costume with you.

If you'd prefer to volunteer, you can apply on the Eden Festival website. To volunteer at the festival a deposit equal to the ticket price is required. This is to ensure volunteers complete all their shifts and it will be refunded by bank transfer within 4 weeks of the festival so long as no shifts are missed or uncompleted. Tickets for the festival are still available.

Clarifying Pension Age Disability Payment

The money saving man has been telling folk about attendance allowance, so we thought we'd investigate but in Scotland Pension Age Disability Payment is replacing attendance allowance. You cannot get Pension Age Disability Payment and Attendance Allowance at the same time.

Pension Age Disability Payment is paid at 2 different rates, lower and higher. The amount you get depends on your care needs. The lower rate is £76.70 a week. It's for people who need help or supervision during the day or night. The higher rate is £114.60 a week. It's for people who need help or supervision during the day and night. If you're terminally ill you'll automatically get the higher rate.

Pension Age Disability Payment is not means-tested. Your income and savings are not taken into account and will not affect any award



you might get. You do not need to have someone caring for you either in order to qualify for Pension Age Disability Payment. If someone does care you for, they could get carer support payment. So, if you are entitled to the higher rate of Pension Age Disability Payment you could increase your income by £5959 a year. Take a look at

<https://www.mygov.scot/pension-age-disability-payment> for more details.

Be careful how you feed the birds

Photo by Ben Andrew

We all want to help birds and make our gardens or outdoor spaces a place where all wildlife can thrive. But some species, such as greenfinches, are experiencing serious declines because of disease. The RSPB has issued new advice about feeding birds in our gardens.

The good news they are saying is that we can help reduce the spread of disease by making two simple changes to the way we feed our birds. Research has shown a worrying decline in some of our much-loved garden birds due to a disease called trichomonosis. This is a highly contagious disease and can spread where birds gather in

large numbers such as at bird feeders.

Greenfinches, for example, have dropped by over 65% in the last three decades – and you may have seen this decline yourself. Back when the Big Garden Birdwatch started in 1979 Greenfinches were at number seven in the top ten birds seen. This year they were down to number 18.

Seasonally

We can help stop the spread of disease among garden birds by making two simple shifts to how we feed birds. Put simply: feed seasonally. During summer and autumn, there's a higher risk of disease spreading. But it's also when there are more

natural foods available to birds, such as seeds and insects so pause filling feeders but you can continue to offer small amounts of mealworms, fat balls or suet. From 1 November to 30 April, you can feed your birds a full range of bird foods, including seeds and peanuts.

Feed safely - busy bird feeders can become hotspots for disease. To help keep birds healthy, it's vital to keep things clean – which is why we've strengthened our existing hygiene guidance. We recommend you clean your bird feeders and water baths at least once a week. Good hygiene is essential.

For the full advice on feeding birds see the RSPB website.

Healing Arts Scotland Conference

A Healing Arts Scotland conference is being held on 16th June in Dumfries at Easterbrook Hall and people are invited to join this 'Dumfries and Galloway Healing Arts Day' to celebrate the role arts, culture and heritage play in supporting physical, mental and social health.

As part of the Jameel Arts and Health Lab's global outreach campaign in collaboration with the World Health Organization, Healing Arts Scotland is a bi-annual celebration of the role of the arts to improve health and wellbeing. Launched in partnership with Scottish Ballet in 2024 the initiative is designed to embed the arts into public health and community well-being across Scotland.

Outpost Arts is involved in bringing this conference to the region and people are invited to join in what is being billed as a day of 'inspiring, connection and creativity' exploring how the arts can support health and wellbeing here.

Tickets are free and will be made available via a booking link on Thursday 30th May. Keep an eye on the Outpost Arts social media for further information.

Watch out for scams as Winter Fuel Payment recovery starts



HMRC is warning of scams related to Winter Fuel Payments which were paid in winter 2025 and which will be recovered from pensioners with income above £35,000. Check if your payment will be reclaimed at GOV.UK. You don't need to contact HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC). Scammers may try to trick customers into handing money over. Pensioners are being warned to be on high alert for scams as the recovery of Winter Fuel Payments begins this month.

Almost two million people are expected to repay their winter 2025 payment due to their annual income being more than £35,000 – for most,

an automatic process. HMRC saw more than 25,000 Winter Fuel Payment scam referrals over the last 12 months and is warning that scammers may now use the recovery process as a hook to use texts, emails and phone calls to target this group.

PAYE

For most, the payment will be recovered through a change to their PAYE tax code from this month (April 2026) with no need to contact HMRC. For those in Self Assessment who file online, the payment should be pre-populated in their 2025 to 2026 tax return, due by 31 January 2027. Customers should check and add it man-

ually if it is not shown. Paper filers will need to add it on their tax return, due by 31 October 2026.

This applies across the UK – including in Scotland, where the payment is known as the Pension Age Winter Heating Payment and in Northern Ireland, where payments were made by the Department for Work and Pensions on behalf of the Northern Ireland Executive. In all cases, recovery is handled by HMRC.

Myrtle Lloyd, HMRC's Chief Customer Officer, said: "Criminals are great pretenders and often use fake letters, emails, calls and texts to impersonate HMRC and trick people into giving them money. I'd encourage anyone who's unsure to use our online tool at GOV.UK to check whether and how their payment will be recovered – there's no need to call us. HMRC will never contact people by text or email to ask them to repay their Winter Fuel Payment, or to request bank details.

People can use HMRC's online checking tool at GOV.UK to see whether their payment will be reclaimed and how.

Contact John Lamont MP

Member of Parliament for Berwickshire, Roxburgh and Selkirk

john.lamont.mp@parliament.uk

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Mossgiel deal

Small in size but huge in ambition, the Ayrshire-based Mossgiel Organic dairy has secured a major distribution deal in London.

It's the latest bit of good news for Mossgiel which refused to go down without a fight after losing a contract to supply organic milk to schools, care homes, nurseries and leisure centres in East Ayrshire.

Last week Mossgiel announced that the dairy has just started working with three organic farms in the north of Scotland.

Now it's been confirmed that it has partnered with doorstep delivery service Modern Milkman to supply non-homogenised whole milk to households and cafes in London.

The company's well-placed to take advantages of fast-growing trends for "more natural" milk.

Raw milk is largely restricted in the UK due to food safety concerns, but Mossgiel's 'low and slow' pasteurisation process offers an acceptable alternative.



The deal gives Mossgiel access to a much larger market.

The farm now produces more than 1.5 million litres of organic milk each year and supplies more than 250 cafés.

Founder Bryce Cunningham says the partnership will allow the business to grow while still sticking to its principles.

"Modern Milkman gives us access to a completely different scale of market," he said.

"Today, what's sold as 'whole milk' often isn't what people think it is. It's standardised, processed at scale, and stripped back before being rebuilt.

"That changes the flavour and the character of the product. Our low and slow brewing process does the opposite. It keeps the integrity of the milk intact."

Sheep-worrying figures down but still too high

New figures on incidents of livestock worrying in Scotland are carrying a mixed message according to experts.

The numbers have gone down since last year's figure but are still regarded as too high.

Police Scotland's National Rural team say 211 incidents were recorded for the year ending March 30, 2026, which is down from 216 the previous year.

Scottish Land & Estates works in partnership with Police Scotland, NFUS and other rural organisations to combat crime in the countryside.

SLE Police and Public Affairs Adviser Nic MacLeod, says over the years good progress has been made in tackling the issue of livestock worrying but more needs to be done.

"We remain concerned that the number of incidents remains high, notably in the



Progress has been made in tackling the issue of livestock worrying but more needs to be done. Photo Farmers Weekly

crucial Spring season, when new-born lambs and calves are in the field and the sheep and cows are also very vulnerable,"

Nic said.

"The impact of a dog chasing, or even just approaching or barking at a pregnant ewe can cause miscarriage and the death of the sheep. This is a crime which has a huge impact on farmers and any incident of livestock worrying is one too many."

£40,000 fine

The Dogs (Protection of Livestock) (Amendment) (Scotland) Act 2021 introduced stringent penalties for any individual convicted of such offences, including a fine of up to £40,000 and a prison sentence of up to 12 months. In all likelihood the dog would be destroyed.

Dogs must be kept on a lead near livestock and dog-owners are advised not to enter fields where there are lambs or calves.

Successful First Milk executive to retire

The Cumbrian-based farmer-owned dairy co-operative First Milk has announced that its Chief Executive Shelagh Hancock is to retire next year after spending a decade at the helm.

During that time, she has overseen a period of significant growth and transformation for First Milk, including a £20m investment in the Aspatria creamery, which both upgraded the facility and gave it increased capacity.

First Milk bosses say that during Shelagh Hancock's time in office, the company has strengthened its financial position, invested in processing capability, deepened customer relationships and positioned the business for long-term, sustainable growth.

This has also included the acquisition of BV Dairy, alongside the development of a market-leading regenerative agriculture programme.

First Milk was also verified as a Certified B Corporation, meaning that it meets high standards of social and environmental performance, transparency, and accountability.

The company was awarded a King's Award for Sustainable Development, reflecting its commitment to delivering value for members while operating responsibly.

Ms Hancock says it has been a privilege to work with members, colleagues and partners to build a business with strong foundations for the



First Milk's CEO Shelagh Hancock

future.

"I am proud of the progress we have made together - from investing in our facilities and capabilities, to leading the way in regenerative agriculture and sustainability."

First Milk Chairman Hugo Mahoney says her contribution to the business has been outstanding.

"Under her leadership, the business has evolved into a more resilient co-operative, with a clear strategic direction and a focus on delivering long-term value for our members."

QMS marketing success

The body which promotes Scotland's red meat sector is claiming a victory in its latest marketing campaign, designed to give a boost to independent butchers.

Quality Meat Scotland say their campaign to encourage customers to give their custom to independent butchers when buying Scotch Beef, Lamb and Pork has exceeded expectations.

The marketing blitz hit both mainstream and online media in a bid to achieve high awareness levels, including broadcast radio, Facebook and Instagram, digital advertisements and newspaper adverts.

Across the whole campaign that ran for just under four weeks, advertising encouraging footfall to local Scotch Butchers Club members was seen or heard 13.6 million times, driving over 6,000 visits to the Find a Butcher page on makeitscotch.com.

QMS Director of Marketing, Emma Heath, says the campaign



shows what's possible when strong consumer insight is combined with the right cost-effective media mix and clear, confident messaging.

"Independent butchers already offer exceptional quality and expertise and are known for showcasing fresh red meat that is quality assured, locally sourced and farmed with care," she said.

"So our job for this campaign was to challenge perceived barriers and remind shoppers why

their local butcher remains such a valuable part of the retail landscape for everything from a mid-week dinner to a show-stopping Sunday roast or meat for a special occasion.

"The results demonstrate real momentum and tangible value for our Scotch Butchers Club members as we seek to drive footfall into stores and is another good example of the marketing that QMS do."



On 16th April Canonbie SWI headed to Creation Mill.

Alana Grey told us all about Creation Mill CIC, how it was established in 2021 as a not-for-profit company, with all income from workshops, services and the scrap store goes back into supporting the local community.

The services provided are beneficial to everyone from mental health and well-being, skills and development to social inclusion.

The scrap store is a treasure house of all sorts. It was good to have a good look at everything that was for sale with very reasonable prices.

At the moment there are lots of development for uses of fleeces. The industrial felting machine doing so much more than an individual could produce.

There is so much more going on. Such an inspirational space.

We were also given a tour of Forgotten Fleece Tales. It was fabulous seeing such amazing work.

A thoroughly enjoyable evening.

The competition was a pin cushion.

1st Liz Walters
2nd Sue Attwood

Plan to eliminate invasive species

Himalayan Balsam present on banks of Esk

An ambitious plan to prevent, detect, eliminate and control new and existing invasive non-native species (INNS) was published in March by NatureScot, with climate change predicted to increase invasive species in Scotland even more in the future.

Invasive non-native species are a major cause of nature loss in Scotland, including substantial reductions of some seabird populations and rare woodland lichens. Globally, INNS have contributed to 60% of recorded extinctions on islands. In Scotland, INNS are increasing on land and in fresh-water and seas, affecting important ecosystems like islands, temperate rainforests and peatlands, and iconic species such as puffins, water voles and red squirrels.

They also affect Scotland's economy. INNS are estimated to cost the country at least £500 million a year. Many of these costs are shouldered by agriculture and forestry, as well as by the construction, tourism

and transport industries. INNS can also act as vectors and hosts for the spread of diseases, increasing the risks to human, animal and plant health.

Climate change creates ideal conditions for INNS to spread – and they can amplify the effects of climate change. For example, climate change effects add to the pressures on breeding seabird populations already struggling with invasive brown rats eating their eggs, while INNS plants like Himalayan balsam make riverbanks more vulnerable to erosion from flooding.

To tackle these serious impacts, the new INNS action plan, which is a key element of the Scottish Biodiversity Delivery Plan, sets targets to reduce the rates of new and established INNS by at least 50% compared to 2000 levels, as well as to eradicate or control INNS in priority sites such as islands.

One of the most notable species locally is Himalayan Balsam, mentioned above,



which has taken root on so many of our riverbanks but it crowds out the light reaching other plants. It looks lovely with its pink flowers and is great at attracting pollinators but nevertheless is an invasive non-native species.

Planned Roadworks

Drainage: 20-23 Apr 2026 - Gully emptying - Langholm Area; 27-30 Apr 2026 - Various locations Gully emptying - Target Customer Reports. Surface Dressing Preparatory Works: 20-24 & 27 Apr-1 May 2026 - B722, U230a, B7068, B720, B709, B723 - patching and drainage. Retaining Wall Repairs/Temporary Traffic Lights: Ongoing - B7068 Blochburnfoot, Langholm, monitoring retaining wall under permanent 30mph speed limit with priority working traffic management

Library on Border Life

Westerkirk Parish Library at Bentpath recently started a Metal Detecting Club and Fiona Armstrong from Border Life came to investigate. The film about it will be shown as part of the programme on Friday 24th April.



A brae-top viewpoint

We welcome a new E&L contributor, Iona Quip

After decades of loyal service perched atop of Jimmy's Brae, a well-known wooden bench has been retired. From dawn till dusk, a steady parade of tractors would rattle past, often hittin' potholes with such enthusiasm that some are convinced the bench did develop a slight tremor. Add to that the daily convoy of horse boxes and determined drivers, up and doon many times a day, navigatin' craters that could reasonably be classified as small lochs, the vibrations from this alone could've shifted it halfway doon the Brae.

Each year, the bench would brace itself as wave after wave of horses thundered past with the Cornet himself ridin' by in full splendour. The bench has borne witness to things no bit of wood should have to endure. At four in the mornin' wi' the flute band calling Muckle Toon's folk to the common ridings, for generations the bench has been awakened at hours most respectable furniture would refuse to acknowledge.

And it wasn't just horses. The bench also endured



unprecedented dog traffic. From tiny yappin' terriers to enthusiastic labradors and mysterious muddy creatures of unknown origin, the bench has hosted, sniffed, and occasionally been clambered over by more dogs than anyone could reasonably count, some claiming the bench as its ain wi' a swift lift o' the leg.

Add to this the Toon's 'refreshing' weather, wind and

rain from every conceivable direction, it's little wonder the bench began to show its age. Still, it remained a favourite resting place for those who'd conquered the Brae, offering relief, a view, and occasionally a slightly damp surprise.

The newly installed bench to commemorate the life of Alex and Mary Carruthers, of Scott's Knowe, now takes its place, fresh, sturdy, and blissfully

unaware of what lies ahead. As for the old bench, rumours suggest it's finally at rest, somewhere dry, quiet, and entirely free of hooves, paws, and early mornin' bagpipes... though it may still be keepin' a quiet eye on the monument.

If you know anything of the mystery that lies behind the naming of Jimmy's Brae, get in touch by emailing newsdesk@eladvertiser.co.uk

Writers Wanted!

To make the E & L a truly community and local paper we're looking for people willing to write on a wide range of subjects such as nostalgia ▪ sport ▪ farming forestry ▪ cookery or whatever else is your area of expertise!

Please get in touch if you are interested in contributing by emailing us on:

penny@eladvertiser.co.uk
or by phoning the Editor on 013873 80012

Eskdale & Liddesdale
Advertiser

Cards on the table time for local political hopefuls

Robin Farquharson reports on successful hustings meeting hosted by Community Council



Residents across Eskdale who packed into the Buccleuch Centre last Monday evening heard – largely with equanimity – the pledges of six candidates vying for Holyrood’s Dumfriesshire seat.

The meeting was chaired by Stuart Clement JP – the Chair of the Langholm, Ewes and Westerkirk Community Council – Paul Adkin, of the Scottish Common Party, opened the proceedings.

After each of the candidates had spoken, there followed a Q and A session from the floor as follows:

Questions from the floor on wind farm turbines and the prevalence of sitka plantations elicited similar responses from Paul Adkin and Linda Dorward: that local consensus should be sought before development and planting commenced. Craig Hoy said subsidies should be reviewed, and that he had signed the petition about proposed planting on Langholm’s Warblaw hill.

David Kirkwood said he deplored the way speculators got involved. And that quangos are a pestilence on Scotland. On the latter point, Stephen Thompson demurred, saying quangos can be useful when transparent – and that they should be rated, with ministers of state alerted to their performance.

Iain McDonald said there needed to be a changing of the guard, to tackle issues such as energy and transport. “Look at what’s happening to Scotland’s ferry fleet – it’s obvious a new government is required,” he said.

Linda Dorward criticised the SNP for its lack of community energy plans, and that job creation in west Wales thanks to a nuclear station in Anglesey pointed the way forward for Scotland. Paul Adkin highlighted Scotland’s lack of fuel refineries. “Overall,” he said, “there has to be more investment in business, to reduce Scotland’s large deficit.

“Let’s look for solutions, employing genuine experts in all fields, harnessing the work of community organisations such as Langholm Alliance and Langholm Initiative for example. Scotland has to earn its chance for full independence,” he added.



PAUL ADKINS
SCOTTISH COMMON PARTY

Paul Adkins, of the Scottish Common Party, opened the proceedings.

“My colleagues and I are campaigning hard for the ideals of the common people,” he said.

Good access to NHS services – facilitated by better transport links – are essential, he added. “In my view, the political arena has lost sight of what is important to people and communities in Scotland.” Paul is a resident of Ecclefechan and stresses the need for a commonsense approach to problems facing the electorate.

Replying to two questions from the floor – firstly, on an excess in Holyrood of destructive point-scoring and secondly, on the benefits of deeper and more wide-ranging Scottish independence – Paul said point-scoring was a result of urgent competition felt among MSPs supplanting a commonsense approach for positive negotiation and that, secondly, residents and communities deserved much better sympathetic representation than currently available.

“Policy shouldn’t be driven “top-down”, he said, “with Langholm currently finding itself at the bottom”.



LINDA DORWARD
SCOTTISH LABOUR

Next up, Linda Dorward of Scottish Labour stressed she is not a career politician, but a former NHS nurse and prison officer. “I believe in fairness and honesty,” she said. “I have real-world experience, and I get things done.”

“Langholm has been ignored – it needs better jobs and homes. Too many people feel left behind; practical change is required,” she said.

In answer to the question about an excess of point-scoring she said there was a lack in Holyrood of sensible information sharing. “There’s too much arrogance in Holyrood: we certainly need change. MSPs must work together; we need some broom-sweeping.”

Answering a question from the floor about Scottish independence she commented, with reference to the SNP’s enjoyment of 19 years of power, that there was too much arrogance. She pointed out that Langholm residents had to contemplate an expensive stay-over at a Dumfries hotel in order to attend a hospital appointment if they had no access to private transport. She deplored reductions to Scotland police force: she quoted a fall in Dumfries and Galloway from 530 to 354 police officers.

“Langholm is cut off: another example is the lack of a dentist’s surgery – it’s appalling,” she said. “The SNP hasn’t managed budgets correctly.”



CRAIG HOY
SCOTTISH CONSERVATIVES

Thirdly, it was the turn of sitting MSP Craig Hoy, Scottish Conservative and Unionist, to address the audience.

He described his work as “doorstep politics”, explaining that alongside colleagues David and Oliver Mundell he is building a strong understanding of the constituency and responding to local priorities. He highlighted his campaigning for improved bus services in and around Langholm, stressing that many local roads are in very poor condition, affecting cars, vans and buses, and must be addressed. He said he works to protect NHS services and regularly raises concerns about crime and policing. He also emphasised the importance of ensuring communities and local organisations can access investment, adding that rural areas need a strong voice. “I believe I can provide that voice in Holyrood and give of my best,” he said. Commenting on Holyrood, he argued it had declined since its early years and criticised political point-scoring. He cited two examples: a Conservative motion to curb illegal fireworks sales, blocked by the SNP, and the proposed visitor accommodation levy, which he believes would harm businesses in the south of Scotland. Instead, he suggested a fixed fee. He argued that economic growth should be prioritised through lower taxes and job creation. On independence, he said the issue should be set aside, questioning what currency an independent Scotland would use. He added that the drive for greater independence was hindering Holyrood’s effectiveness, opposed banning Trident, and stressed the importance of national security and cooperation with the rest of the UK.

Formerly, in Scotland, he had voted for the SNP. “But now I believe it no longer has the best interests of Scotland at heart. Subsequently, my contact with Reform lead to a role to set up the party north of the border.”

The established parties in Scotland have failed to deliver opportunities and prosperity, he said. Reform UK Scotland will cut income tax, making work pay. NHS waiting lists will be reduced.

When asked about destructive point-scoring in Holyrood he answered: “I will work with anyone on any positive policy to deliver good results, no matter which party who he or she comes from.

“There is far too much tribalism. Reform UK Scotland wants to change all that.

“For instance, we have pledged to support a move for greater independence, even though it is not a cause, ideologically, we support. But first that move for greater independence has to be a fully-proven part of the public will.”



DAVID KIRKWOOD
REFORM UK SCOTLAND

The fourth prospective candidate in the hall was David Kirkwood, representing Reform UK Scotland.

“I live in Moffatt and come from an engineering background,” he said. His professional qualifications have provided entry into a range of commercial activities such as IT and energy. “And these activities have led me to work in several EU countries,” he added.

Formerly, in Scotland, he had voted for the SNP. “But now I believe it no longer has the best interests of Scotland at heart. Subsequently, my contact with Reform lead to a role to set up the party north of the border.”

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IAIN McDONALD
SCOTTISH LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

Iain McDonald, Scottish Liberal Democrats – who was born in Dumfries, and who has pursued a career within D&G – said he was encouraged to witness such a full attendance for the hustings in the Buccleuch Centre. “I think it’s true to say that many people today are fed-up.”

He said he was dismayed by divisions within society. “Personally, our family is very disappointed by Brexit,” he said. He amplified this point by citing the defection of Jamie Greene – now his Lib-Dem colleague – who had left the Conservatives.

One of his areas of concern, he said, was prospects for young people, their education and training – not least because of Brexit.

In a question from the floor about the soaring cost of living Iain McDonald – with a nod to his party’s manifesto – said his party pledged to provide help. There will be real action on household bills. “Dumfriesshire needs an MSP who truly understands the realities of living, working and running businesses across its towns, villages and countryside,” he said.

Years of centralisation and poor decision-making at Holyrood under the SNP have harmed our communities, he claimed.

He is sure that Dumfriesshire has a lot going for it. “But, now, too many people in our community feel things aren’t working,” he said.



STEPHEN THOMPSON
SCOTTISH NATIONAL PARTY

Finally, it was the turn of the sixth candidate – Stephen Thompson of the SNP – to make his pitch. He started by making the wry confession that he had been brought-up in Hawick; since then he created, in 2008, his own IT business – and has been a local Annandale and Eskdale councillor, dealing with issues such as transport and the NHS: “there’s more work to do,” he acknowledged. “National policies have to work so that they are effective locally – I confess we’ve sometimes missed the mark.”

He maintained that Scotland needs to control its own energy market, otherwise issues such as high fuel prices are a barrier to growth – “barriers usually imposed by Westminster,” he said.

In answer to a question from the floor about First Minister’s John Swinney’s pledge a decade ago to aid Langholm – to ameliorate its very substantial loss of local employment – he said he would research what had happened to the report that the Scottish government had formally recognised as a valid and important plan and that he would, if elected as MSP, make sure it was acted upon. “I will see to it that the report is honoured, and resourced”, he said, in answer to the question “When is the SNP going to keep its side of the bargain?”



By Gilly Fraser

Elliott Trust Fund re-opens

Liddesdale family's benevolent gesture

A Trust Fund first established in 1991 for the benefit of people in Liddesdale is once again open for applications.

The Sir Arthur Elliott Memorial Trust was set up by Clan Chief Margaret Elliott to honour the memory of her late father.

It gives grants to advance education, provide facilities in the interests of social welfare and to improve quality of life in Newcastleton and the wider Liddesdale area.

According to the Trust stipulations, the intention is to provide annual grants to enable successful candidates to carry out individual ambitions or community projects.

Last year Newcastleton Primary School successfully applied for Trust funding to help buy bikes, scooters and helmets for use in the school's play area.

The Trust has also given a helping hand to young people from the village heading off to university and other Further Education courses.

Applications are invited by 30th July 2026 for grants in relation to courses or projects starting September 2026.



Sir Arthur Elliott

Holm pitches battle against dog poo

Copshaw residents are on the warpath against dog walkers in the village who fail to clean up after their pets.

It's an issue that seems to trouble many areas, but in recent months has grown noticeably worse in Newcastleton.

Villagers say the mess is often left on pavements or in grassy areas where people and children are walking.

It's also a hazard to anyone pushing prams as the mess can become embedded in the wheels.

Much of the village is covered by CCTV, and culprits are being warned that police will be informed if they're identified.

The subject came up for discussion at the most recent meeting of the local Community Council, where members were told that one person had been seen on CCTV watching their dog make a mess outside The Trap and then walked off and left it. The footage has been sent to local police for further action.



Photo by WolfArt

There's also a problem in the area round Polysport as it has been noted that people using the InPost Lockers often allow their dogs to run around the football field unchecked.

Fines can and will be issued to those who fail to pick up after their dogs in public places.

Place Plan consultation

How would you like to see Newcastleton develop in the future? What do you think the village needs most – and what could be done to improve it for all who live here?

A special survey is to be undertaken in Newcastleton to find out the answers to those questions and many more.

It's all part of a consultation being undertaken before an initial Place Plan draft is drawn up with ideas and ambitions for the next 10-20 years.

The right for communities to produce Local Place Plans came into being as part of Scottish Government reforms to the planning system and became part of the Planning Scotland Act of 2019.

They are intended to give communities more influence over developments in their area and it's important that the ideas and



Place Plans are intended to give communities more influence over developments in their area

plans come from within the communities themselves and are not imposed by external bodies.

The survey will run for three weeks from April 27 and will be available digitally as well as in paper form. An Open Day is to be held on Saturday May 9 at Buccleuch House to give

everyone the chance to contribute and discuss their own suggestions.

When the survey is complete its findings will be analysed and reported back to the Community Council meeting on May 25th before going on to the next stage.

Fabulous philanthropy

The "fabulous philanthropy" of generous donors has meant the campaign to preserve the wild goats on Langholm Moor can move on to an important new stage.

More than £15,000 has been promised to the fund organised by the Newcastleton-based Wild Goat Conservation Trust.

The money will be used to pay a professional body to do a verifiable count of the current wild goat population numbers – a task described as essential by WGCT Chairman David Braithwaite.

"It's a fundamentally important question because at the moment no-one knows just how many goats are left following recent culling," he said.

"Thanks to the incredible generosity and fabulous philanthropy of donors, we now have



the cash we need to have the goats counted.

"We will shortly be putting out an invitation to tenders for those organisations capable of doing the work and we can then build the future management of the wild goats on a basis of science."

David said he and the other Trust members had been completely overwhelmed by the success of the fundraising and thanked everyone who had con-

tributed.

More than twenty-two thousand people signed a petition to the Scottish Government calling for the wild goats to be given protected status, but MSPs rejected the bid, even though they recognised the very real strength of feeling, not just locally but amongst the many visitors who come to the area to see the animals in their natural habitat.

From Renaissance to Rococo

A look at the history of painted furniture with Stuart Bruce-Gormley

This last couple of days I have found a couple of really interesting pieces of furniture, that will be for sale in the shop in Market Place very soon. Some of my favourite pieces of furniture include painted pieces.

Painted furniture has captivated the imagination of designers and homeowners for centuries, serving as a harmonious blend of utility and artistic expression. From vibrant folk-art motifs from Eastern Europe, to the grandeur of aristocratic salons, painted furniture embodies the cultural and historical diversity of Europe. This art form not only reflects the aesthetic trends of different periods but also preserves the narratives of the people who created and cherished these pieces, often having very localised patterns or motifs.



The tradition of painted furniture can be traced back to medieval Europe, where practicality and creativity merged. Furniture was primarily made of wood, a material vulnerable to wear, weather, and pests. Painting the surfaces served as both protection and embellishment, transforming otherwise boring utilitarian items into decorative pieces that brightened the homes.

In dimly lit interiors, vibrant paints offered a splash of colour and brightness. Early designs were often simple, reflecting the natural world and religious influences. Geometric patterns, floral motifs, and depictions of saints or biblical scenes adorned everything from chests to cabinets. These pieces were not merely objects of beauty but also conveyed the values and beliefs of their time within each country.

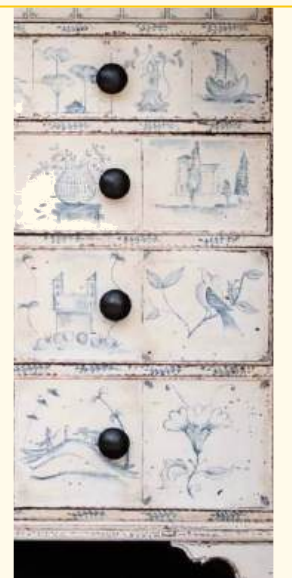
Take the Renaissance, spanning from the 14th to the 17th centuries, it ushered in a period of artistic rebirth. Painted furniture began to reflect the refined tastes of Europe's emerging elite. Wealthy patrons commissioned master artisans to decorate cabinets, chests, and tables with intricate scenes drawn from mythology, literature, and landscapes.



Trompe-l'œil, a technique that creates the illusion of three-dimensional depth, became especially popular. Furniture adorned with these lifelike paintings transformed interiors into immersive artistic spaces. Gilded accents were often added to highlight opulent details, particularly in Italy and France.

The Baroque period, which followed in the 17th century, took this opulence to new heights. Baroque furniture featured bold colours, dramatic contrasts, and lavish ornamentation. Painted surfaces became larger canvases for storytelling, showcasing grandiose designs that reflected the era's emphasis on power and extravagance.

As the 18th century progressed, the Baroque style gave way to the lighter, more playful Rococo aesthetic. Painted furniture from this period often featured pastel tones, asymmetrical curves, and whimsical themes. Delicate floral motifs, cherubic figures, and idyllic pastoral scenes became hallmarks of Rococo design.



Rococo pieces prioritised elegance and intimacy, fitting seamlessly into the salons and boudoirs of European aristocracy. The soft, hand-painted details on furniture mirrored the intricate embroidery of textiles and the delicate flourishes of decorative arts.

By the late 18th century, Neoclassicism emerged, drawing inspiration from the clean lines and symmetry of ancient Greek and Roman art. Painted furniture adopted a more restrained and formal aesthetic. Designs featured muted tones, such as soft whites, greys, and pale blues, adorned with classical motifs like laurel wreaths, garlands, and columns.

The Northern hemisphere especially, Scandinavia became a hub for this style, giving rise to Gustavian painted furniture, which remains highly sought after with a price tag to match, for its understated elegance and timeless appeal. The Gustavian palette, characterized by muted colors, complemented the natural light of northern European interiors, creating serene and harmonious living spaces. A great deal of original farmhouse Swedish furniture can be found at high end decorative antique fairs, most of it having been dry scraped back to its original livery.

While aristocratic furniture leaned toward refinement and sophistication, rural communities developed their own distinct painted furniture traditions. In regions such as the Alps, Scandinavia, and Eastern Europe, peasant artisans crafted colourful, functional pieces that reflected local customs and values. Bright floral patterns, hearts, and animals often decorated

chests, wardrobes, and benches. These motifs carried symbolic meanings—flowers represented growth and vitality, while hearts symbolised love and devotion. Folk-painted furniture was often created to mark significant life events, such as weddings or births, making each piece deeply personal and culturally significant.

These vibrant, hand-painted pieces were passed down through generations, preserving regional identities and craftsmanship. Today, they offer a glimpse into the lives of everyday people who found joy and meaning in artistic expression. The Arts and Crafts movement, which emerged in the late 19th century, emphasised the value of hand-painted furniture as a reaction against the industrialisation of design. Artists like William Morris championed the return to and meticulous detail.



In the 21st century, painted furniture continues to captivate collectors, designers, and homeowners alike. Whether it's a rustic Alpine bench, a Gustavian chest, or a whimsical mid-century cabinet, painted furniture offers a unique way to bring art into everyday life. For collectors, painted furniture serves as a tangible connection to the past. Each piece tells a story—not just of its maker, but of the era and culture in which it was created. The brushstrokes, patterns, and colours reflect the artistic trends and societal values of their time, transforming these objects into historical artifacts.



For homeowners, painted furniture adds depth and character to modern interiors. A single antique painted piece can serve as a focal point in a contemporary room, bridging the gap between tradition and innovation. With the growing emphasis on sustainable and personalised design,

interior trends.

Nothing stands out more and asserts your personality and character like art. So, don't just hang it on your walls, go out and find something that has a tactical purpose which also disguises itself as a masterpiece!



incorporating antique painted furniture aligns perfectly with today's

Lang Syne in Eskdale

...David J. Beattie on a unique antimony mine

Looking back...

The upland parish of Wester Kirk, hidden away among the Eskdale hills, had the unique distinction of possessing an antimony mine, said to be the only one in Great Britain.

It was discovered in 1760 by Sir James Johnstone of Westerhall on his estate of Glendinning but was not in regular operation until 1793, from which time to 1798 it produced 100 tons of antimony valued at £84 per ton.

When in full operation about 40 people were employed raising and smelting the ore, which was manufactured into sulphurated antimony.

A settlement was erected by the side of the Meggat Water which provided convenient lodging for the miners and their families. Our observant scribe, the parish minister, who doubtless entered into the spirit of this sudden invasion of miners and their followers into the quiet neighbourhood, gives a careful description of the work at the smelting house near the mines.

"When the ore is beaten small and washed" he writes "it is put into an earthen pot, the bottom of which is perforated with a number of holes. This pot is let into the mouth of another which serves as a receiver. They are then put into the burners, and several sets of this apparatus are commonly worked at once. The fluid antimony passes through the holes

into the undermost pot, while the infusible matters remain in the uppermost. What is found in the undermost pot when the process is finished is called sulphurated antimony.

Tradition says that long ago antimony received its name by the curious circumstance of a certain monk in a German mining district who, having thrown some of the mineral to the hogs, observed that after it had purged them rather violently, they immediately fattened. Thinking that some of his fellow monks would be the better of a little dose, the old monk prepared a concoction for the purpose. The experiment, however, did not succeed for they all died.

Anti-monk

Hence the mineral ingredients of the crude medicine were called "anti-monk" and subsequently antimony. I give the story (interesting and feasible enough) for what it is worth. It should be noted however that some dictionaries find more prosaic derivations of the word.

Towards the close of last century, Sir Frederic Johnstone of Westerhall, after an inspection of the old mine workings, got the idea that the miners of those early days might have passed over the most valuable lodes and he had the mine re-opened. It was worked for some time but the persistent lack of efficient transport



Entrance to Antimony mine on Grey Hill, Glendinning, Eskdale

Photo courtesy of Langholm Archive

facilities to convey the ore to the smelting works and the distance to Langholm, the nearest railway station, hampered the progress of production resulting in financial loss so the mine was again closed.

The Laird of Castle O'er

The Laird of Castle O'er tells of a visit to the old mine two or three years after the removal of the manager's hut when he was quite

astonished to see in the bog in front of the site, a motley collection of pots, bottles and tins which had once contained many of the delicacies supplied by well-known purveyors of that day.

"There must have been scores upon scores of them, of all shapes and forms" he writes, and with his trained antiquarian brain set in motion he visualizes the garbled heap of containers gradually disappearing into the marsh, party by their own weight and party by a great mass of bog plants falling down upon them.

And he smiles to himself as he pictures some enthusiastic archaeologists in a dim future hopefully surveying the historic spot. "I have frequently thought since" he continues "what a grand 'find' the pots and bottles will prove to the searcher for 'kitchen middens' say 2000 years hence!"

For the information of the uninitiated it should be stated that a 'kitchen midden' is the term sometimes applied to that location of the site of an ancient habitation (such as a Roman camp) which has been used for the disposal of domestic or other household refuse. Its discovery after lying for centuries in a dormant state, not infrequently places the key of the position in the hands of the antiquary who is thus able, by finding of various objects, to fix an approximate date of the habitation

C & D Marts (Longtown) Primestock Report Thursday, 16th April 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 5,151 sheep comprising of 14 lambs, 3,064 hoggs and 2,067 cast ewes & rams at their weekly sale at Longtown Mart on Thursday 16th April

PRIME LAMBS

A small select show of mainly heavy Zwartble lambs which sold to spirited bidding.

More in spec lambs wanted on a weekly basis.

Top price per head of £230 for a pair of Suffolk lambs and a pair of Charollais lambs from Beckfoot Farms who also sold the top per kilo at 442.3p/kg for a pair of Suffolk lambs also from Beckfoot.

Overall average 396.17ppk

Principal Prices (Per Head)

Suffolk - £230 & £210 Beckfoot
Charollais - £23 Beckfoot
Zwartble - £190 Holmlea

Principal Prices (Per Kilo)

Suffolk - 442.3p & 396.2p Beckfoot
Charollais - 418.2p Beckfoot
Zwartble - 373p Holmlea

PRIME HOGGS

A reduced entry and a very mixed show of quality sold to the same ring of competitive purchasers ensuring all classes look

to be in demand and well sold being in front of other local outlets.

Top price per head of £224 for a Texel from Beckfoot Farms and for a pen of 3 Beltex from Whiteford, Tercrosset.

Top per kilo of 552.6p/kg for a Beltex from Kennedy, Lurgan.

Overall average 396.65ppk (SQQ 417.3ppk)

Principal prices (Per head)

Beltex - £224 Tercrosset, £222 Newtonhill, £220 Inshes, £218 Tercrosset, £216 Gyralesmyre, £214 Broomhills, £214 Tercrosset, £214 Gyralesmyre, £214 Millantae.

Texel - £224 Beckfoot, £218 Millantae, £216 Gyralesmyre, £214 & £213 Beckfoot, £212 Station Yard, £212 Haster, £211 Whins, £210 Nackshivan.

Suffolk - £220 (x2) Nackshivan, £218 (x2) Whitelums, £214 Nackshivan, £208 Inshes

Cheviot - £208 Netherhirst, £196 (x2) and £195 Creca Hall, £192 Overton of Knaven

Cross - £203 Newtonhill, £200 Patties Hill

Blue Texel - £200 (x2) Seat Hill

Cheviot Mule - £200 Milton

North Country Cheviot - £194 Highlaw, £190 Haster

Blackface - £183 (x2) Maryholm

Herdwick - £182 Cockley Beck

Hampshire - £181 Tetcott

Zwartble - £176 Tetcott

Romney - £175 Tetcott

Kendal Rough - £172 Broomhills

Swaledale - £163 Cockley Beck, £152 Westernhopeburn

Principal Prices (Per Kilo)

Beltex - 552.6p & 516.1p Lurgan, 478.9p Pasture House, 468p Inshes, 460.5p Whitesyke

Texel - 467.6p & 452.8p Outertown, 449p Syke Head, 447.2p Brawliemuir, 444.4p Broomhills, 442.1p Whitesyke, 441p Tetcott, 441p Outertown

Cheviot - 460p South Bogbain, 450p Lurgan, 447.2p South Bogbain, 447p Lurgan, 446p Prior Rigg, 443.8p East Buccleuch, 441p Prior Rigg

Suffolk - 460p Nether Side, 447p Weeds, 442.5p Outertown, 436p & 435p Newtonhill, 427p Warmanbie House, 426p Govals, 422p Weeds

Cross - 445p Westernhopeburn, 414.6p Nunsleugh, 402p Prior Rigg

Blackface - 440p Westernhopeburn, 426p (x2) Maryholm, 424p Swinsty, 424p East House, 423p Swinsty

Herdwick - 428p Prior Rigg, 414p Cockley Beck

Romney - 407p Tetcott

Cheviot Mule - 393p No3 Baurch

Swaledale - 392p South Bogbain

Zwartble - 382p Dunnbeag

Hampshire - 377p Tetcott

Kendal Rough - 373.9p Broomhills

North Country Cheviot - 372p Highlaw

CAST EWES AND RAMS

All classes of cast ewes and rams sold to an increase in purchaser demand being very similar on last week's high rates of return.

Heavy ewes topped at £350 for a pair of Texel ewes from Bradley Farmer, Wester Parkgate.

Mule ewes topped at £216 for a penful consigned by M/s Watson, West Newlands

Light ewes topped at £190 for a single Cheviot from Wilson, Clackmae.

Rams topping the sale at £300 for a Texel from Beckfoot

Heavy ewes
Texel - £350 & £330 Wester Parkgate, £330 Newtonhill, £315 Beckfoot, £300 Tercrosset

Charollais - £295 Swallows Waite, £242 Beckfoot

Beltex - £265 Broomhills, £238 Tercrosset, £215 Wamanbie House

Suffolk - £262 Wester Parkgate, £240 Nackshivan, £234 (x2) & £232 Beckfoot, £228 Nackshivan, £228 Wester Parkgate

Blue Leicester - £258 Branteth, £232

Whiteside, £222 Beckfoot

Dutch Spotted - £230 Beckfoot, £225 Tercrosset

Cross - £216 West Newlandhead, £200 Coxhill, £190 Muirhead, £188 Branteth, £188 Hallburn

Cheviot Mule - £215 Hartbush, £200(x2) & £198 Auchlin, £190 Hartbush, £190 Clackmae

Dorset - £196 Beckfoot

Romney - £196 Tetcott, £175 North Corriellaw, £170 Broomlands

North Country Cheviot - £195(x2) Allfornaught, £190 North Corriellaw, £188 Low Longlands, £187(x2) & £185(x2) Beckfoot

Blue Texel - £192 & £190 Whitesykes

Light ewes

Cheviot - £190 Clackmae, £172 Glenshanna, £165 Becks, £162 Allfornaught, £160 East Deloraine, £160 Glenshanna

Blackface - £178 Whiteside, £170 Inshes, £145 West Stobs Wood, £142 Knorren Beck, £142 Broomlands

Herdwick - £174 Allfornaught, £150 East House

Easycare - £168 & £162 Broomlands

Kerryhill - £162(x2) Beckfoot

Swaledale - £155 Thornhope, £130 & £122 Spital Shields, £118 Gallowberry

Jacob - £125 West Stobs Wood

Rams

Texel - £300 & £260 Beckfoot, £258 Milnholm, £245 Kinninghall, £230 Clackmae, £210 Swallows Waite, £200 Millantae

Suffolk - £275 Beckfoot, £235 & £215 Clackmae

Blue Leicester - £238 Sheepriggs, £225 Clackmae, £225 Sheepriggs

Dutch Spotted - £220 Brownrigg

Blue Texel - £200 Whitesyke

Cheviot - £180 Balconnel, £178 Clackmae

Ryeland - £180 Brownrigg

Easycare - £168 & £160 Balconnel

Blackface - £160 Beckfoot

North Country Cheviot - £140 Drummuie

Swaledale - £120 Thornhope

Averages:

Lambs

Heavy to 442.3p (390.24p)

Over Weight to 418.2p (403.73p)

Hoggs

Light to 516.1p (418.08p)

Standard to 552.6p (420.48p)

Medium to 460.5p (414.37p)

Heavy to 468p (389.13p)

Ewes

Light to £190 (£124.84)

Heavy to £350 (£190.12)

Rams to £300 (£202.67)

LOCAL NOTICEBOARD



WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK
W/C 27th April 2026

Day	Event	Time	Location
Mon	Quilters Group	10-1	Creation Mill, DG13 0ES
	Mending Monday	1-3	
Tues	After School Club	4-5:30	Creation Mill, DG13 0ES
	Langholm Evening In Stitches	6-8	
Wed	Welcome Wednesday	10-3	Creation Mill, DG13 0ES
Thurs	Boxed bag workshop	6-8:30	Creation Mill, DG13 0ES
Fri	Langholm weekly In Stitches	1-4	Creation Mill, DG13 0ES
Sat	Langholm Producers Market	9-1	Buccleuch Centre

FORGOTTEN FLEECE TALES
OPEN 10-3PM MON-SAT

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

LANGHOLM COMMON RIDING

(Registered SCIO No. SC044989)

The Annual Public Meeting

will be held in the Buccleuch Centre on Friday 8th May at 8pm

Business:-

Election of Cornet for 2026 (voting from 6pm to 8pm)
Trustees & Members Report

Nomination forms for Cornet can be obtained from the Secretary's Office, 38 High Street and must be submitted not later than **12 noon on Friday 1st May**

Dance in the Buccleuch Centre from 10.30pm to 1am
Entry - age 16 and upwards, age verification required
Strictly no alcohol allowed for under 18s

Admission £7 Bar
R.S. Mabon, 38 High Street
Secretary. Langholm

WHAT'S ON IN APRIL

Thu 23rd	Eskdale Gardening Club Talk by Christine Hudson	Canonbie Church 7.15pm
Fri 24th	Hard of Hearing Group Brew and a Blether	Langholm Day Centre 10.30am - 12 noon
Sat 25th	LRFC Langholm Sevens Tournament	Milntown First Tie - 2pm
Sun 26th	Open Mic Session	Eskdalemuir Hub 2am - 5pm
Tue 28th	Canonbie Community Enterprise Public Meeting	Canonbie Village Hall 7pm

WHAT'S ON IN MAY

Sat 2nd	Langholm Producers Market	The Buccleuch Centre 9am - 1pm
Sun 3rd	The Apex Singers	The Buccleuch Centre 7.30pm
Fri 8th	Langholm Common Riding Public Meeting & Election of Cornet	The Buccleuch Centre Voting 6pm to 8pm Meeting 8pm

The E&L General Knowledge Quiz

No. 2616 answers next week

- Who presented Britain's first breakfast TV show?
- Who was the first black footballer to play for England?
- TESSAs were introduced in 1991. For what did TESSA stand?
- Who visited Britain for the first time ever in May and June 1982?
- The London Chapter of what was introduced in 1989 to patrol the London Underground?
- Which 1981 stage show became the most heavily insured in British theatre?
- Which English admiral gave his name to a weather measurement?
- Who was Britain's first female radio disc jockey?
- Which Dumfries & Galloway town was devastated by the crash of Pan-Am flight 103 in December 1988?
- What is the name of the indoor venue at Wembley which frequently hosts concerts?
- Which of the following does not stand next to a motorway: Maidstone, Guildford or Crawley?
- What is Britain's best preserved Regency town?
- Which Scottish soup is made from chicken and leeks?
- Which of the West Country's counties is the largest?
- In 1973, 30 people died in a blaze at the Sumerland complex. Where was the Summerland complex?
- The Gower Peninsula was the first place in Britain to be designated what in 1956?
- Which shopping centre is located at Brierley Hill in the West Midlands?
- Where would you find the Frontierland theme park?
- In which city would you find the St Andrew's football ground?
- Which English city is furthest from a motorway?



Crossword & Quiz Solutions from last week

Quiz 2615

- Venus
- 1974
- Hydrogen
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- 1961
- Mercury
- Edwin 'Buzz' Aldrin
- Fruit flies
- True
- Ice
- Mars
- Mars
- Water
- Mars Bar and Milky Way
- Mercury
- Uranus
- Jupiter
- Venus
- The moon
- Apollo 11

Crossword 2615

Across: 1 Perfume, 5 Staff, 9 Hainan, 10 Spear, 11 Recall, 12 Expose, 13 Air, 14 Safer, 16 Sober, 18 Sky, 20 Disarm, 22 Intent, 24 Apart, 25 Phobia, 26 Bales, 27 Settled.

Down: 2 Erase, 3 Fanfare, 4 Manila, 6 Tie up, 7 Foresee, 8 Aster, 15 Ali Baba, 17 Outmost, 18 Smith, 19 Yippee, 21 Awake, 23 Noise.

NEVER A CROSSWORD!

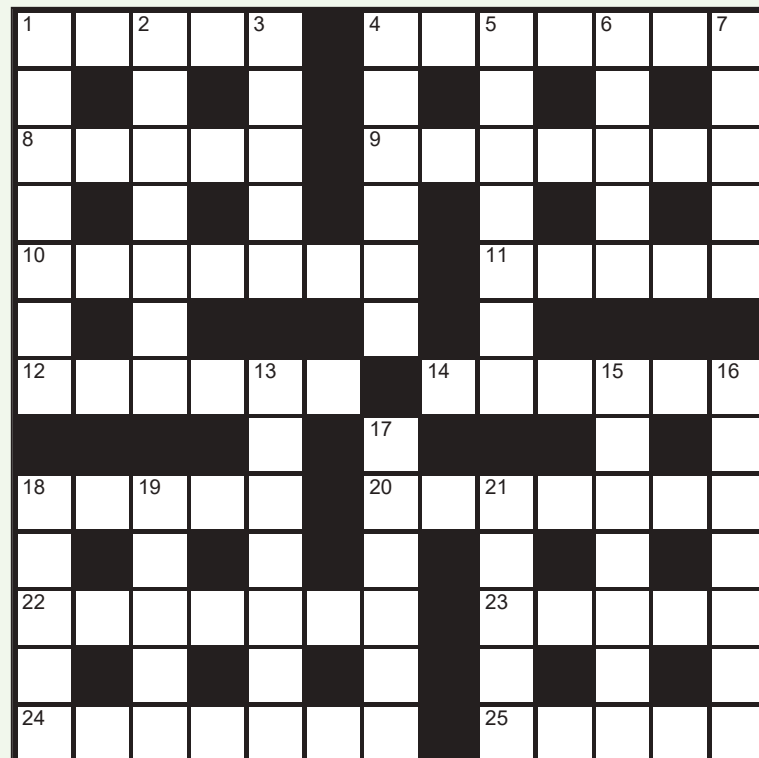
No. 2615 A mix of general knowledge and cryptic clues think. Answers next week

Across

- Cerne ---, Dorset village with a giant (5)
- Betrayal (4-3)
- About (5)
- Little one in Liguria (7)
- Nepalis upset dog (7)
- Tithe (5)
- Stopped flowing (3,3)
- Experts (6)
- Theme (5)
- Opposes (7)
- Employment vacancy (7)
- Throw forcefully (5)
- Hankered (7)
- Eats to a plan (5)

Down

- Finger pointer (7)
- Negotiate (7)
- Hindu religious teacher (5)
- Delicate in meaning (6)
- Restricted (7)
- Kitchen tear-jerker? (5)
- Cog (5)
- Brutal bully (7)
- Wrap up (7)
- Nuns (7)
- Counterfeit (6)
- Temperamental (5)
- Perplexed at the Greek letter (5)
- Holy war (5)



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POP UP SHOP

LANGHOLM POP-UP SHOP
May 2026

- Sat 2nd May (74 High St)
Katrina Kenny – Beatson Cancer Centre Bake Sale
- Thu 7th - Sat 9th May (74 High St)
Langholm Gardening Group – Fundraiser
- Fri 29th May (74 High St)
Langholm Shotokan Karate Club – Fundraiser

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Green Bowling season commences

Local clubs look forward to a great summer of competition

Canonbie

By Chris Jagger
Canonbie & District Green Bowling Club President Gordon Sandford greeted members at the start of the new season and played the traditional opening first bowl.

Canonbie is a Try Bowls venue, a scheme promoted by Bowls Scotland to get new players into the game.

The club offers a range of club competitions, friendly fixtures and informal social playing sessions, and participation in the Border Friendly League. Potential new members of all ages and abilities will always be welcome at the club. Playing sessions are on Tuesday 2pm (social ladies), Wednesday 7pm and Sunday 2pm – come and join us, or contact us to find out more on 07539 280933 or canonbiebc@btinternet.com or Facebook.



Langholm New

By Luke Tolson
Langholm New Town Bowling Club opened their green and club for the 2026 season on Sunday.

President David Pool welcomed a good turnout of 40 regular and new members to the club which was great to see.

Thanks to Avril and Carole for putting so much time into fundraising for the club before the new season! Much appreciated.

There were 26 members playing for the Mary McKone pairs competition in great weather!

The winners were – Paul Warwick and Neil Campbell
Runners-up were – Ian Scott and David Pool

The green ran well for the time of year and thanks again to the green keepers for their hard work throughout the winter.

We have some new team wear which will hopefully arrive for the beginning of May. We have secured sponsorship for polos shirts, hoodies and jackets which will be available soon, at a very reasonable to price.

We have invested in the club-rooms with new roof sheeting, new kitchen flooring and painting to spruce the club up. Thanks to everyone involved.



New town members old and new gather to watch president David Pool roll the first jack of the season



Wolfburg wins big at Kelso

Horseracing



SANDY THOMSON'S hot-streak continued when Wolfburg landed the Reg and Betty Tweedie Handicap Chase at Kelso. (Pictured)

Ridden by Patrick Wadge, the evens favourite had a sustained tussle on the run-in with Walk On Quest before prevailing by a nose.

“That was a tough performance after his win at Carlisle last time,” Thomson said. “It’s also great to win this race as Reg and Betty, along with my late father, who was also chairman, did so much to improve the track here.”

Thomson and Wadge went on to complete a double when Remberthename took division one of the Scottish Racing Academy Handicap Hurdle.

Boley Bob could be a future star after a fluent Rules debut success under Henry Crow in the Church House Investments Buccleuch Cup, which is the oldest race staged at Kelso and dates back to 1885.

Winning training Joe O’Shea said: “He’ll go to Stratford for one more run this spring and then have the summer off. Next season he will hopefully be winning the hunters’ chase at the Cheltenham Festival that we won last month with Barton Snow.”

Derek Fox-ridden Smoke Trail, due to go novice chasing in the autumn, was an impressive winner for Lucinda Russell and Michael Scudamore in the Adam Scott Celebratory Novices’ Hurdle.



Langholm Old

Langholm Old president, Louise Keeney sends forth the first jack of 2026

By Trish Henderson

Langholm Old Town Bowling Club's 2026 season got underway on Saturday 18th April with president Louise Keeney welcoming everyone to the newly refurbished club. Louise started with a huge vote of thanks to all everyone involved with the refurbishment of the club from the funders, workman and club members with a special thanks to Brian Jardine for his work in securing funding for the works. Secretary Trish said

“We had a large turnout of club members and new members to watch President Louise roll the first jack of the 2026 season which was followed by an enjoyable game of jumble pairs. A good day was had by all and we wish everyone a very enjoyable season.”



Badminton Nostalgia

Gilnockie badminton champs 2001

In April 2001 the Gilnockie badminton Club, which was then based in the Buccleuch Hall, won the Annan Badminton Federation League. This was a mixed handicap league, and the team had fought off the challenge of teams from Springfield, Eaglesfield and Kirtlebridge.

The Gilnockie team included Evelyn Morrison, Janice Johnstone, Lyn Gardham, Sue Weston, June Carruthers, Fiona Steele, Fiona Graham, Bryan Coombes, Ian Murray, John Murray and Hamish Currie.



All systems go for Langholm Sevens

Milntown is prepared and ready for a great day

Rugby Sevens

By Kenneth Pool

Twelve teams will compete for the Scott Cup at the Langholm Sevens on 25th April at Milntown. First played for in 1930, the cup, presented by the Scott family of Waverley Mills, is one of the oldest trophies played for on the Kings of the Sevens circuit.

Representing the borders will be Hawick, Gala, Jedforest, Kelso, Melrose, Peebles and Selkirk. Teams from Edinburgh will be Watsonians, Edinburgh Accies, Heriots and making a welcome return to the sevens, Boroughmuir.

First Tie 2pm

Playing in 4 pools of 3 teams, each team will play two matches before the semi-final stages. First tie of the afternoon will be at 2pm and the final is scheduled for 6.30pm.

The Langholm club is look-



Langholm Sevens 2025 | Photo by Stan Wilson

ing forward to welcoming supporters from the town, the districts and further afield. Chairman Kenneth Pool said "we are lucky at Milntown that we get great support from both the local community and visitors alike. There will be excellent hot food on sale, provided by Kirkups, naturally the bar will be open and of course Spectrum will be on hand

to provide the famous after-sevens disco and karaoke in the evening."

He added "With 12 good teams confirmed we are looking forward to some good competitive ties and some excellent rugby on show. Hopefully the weather will be kind, and the crowd will be in party mood and enjoy the day to the full as in previous years."

Admission to the Sevens will be £10 with concessions £5 and under 16s will be admitted free. Admission will be by cash only however the bar payments will be by cash or card. Gates will open at 12.30pm.

Langholm Sevens Draw 2026

Rugby

- Pool A: Melrose, Hawick, Heriots
- Pool B: Edinburgh Accies, Boroughmuir, Jedforest
- Pool C: Kelso, Gala, Peebles
- Pool D: Watsonians, Langholm, Selkirk

The first tie will be at 2pm with approximately 18 minutes between ties with the semi finals taking place at 5.36pm and 5.54pm and the final at 6.30pm.

- Tie 1: Melrose v Hawick,
- Tie 2: Edinburgh Accies v Boroughmuir;
- Tie 3 Kelso v Gala;
- Tie 4 Watsonians v Langholm;
- Tie 5 Hawick v Heriots;
- Tie 6 Boroughmuir v Jedforest;
- Tie 7 Gala V Peebles;
- Tie 8 Langholm v Selkirk;
- Tie 9 Melrose v Heriots;
- Tie 10 Edinburgh Accies v Jedforest;
- Tie 11 Kelso v Peebles;
- Tie 12 Watsonians v Selkirk.



Division A clash

Football

On Saturday in a home game Legion faced Highfields United from Berwick in a Border Amateur Division A clash.

The first half of the proceedings were overshadowed when manager David Borthwick was involved in a painful clash in midfield. An ambulance was called – this is never what you want to see on a Saturday afternoon or any afternoon in fact. I'm sure we can all pass on our best wishes to the gaffer.

The first half saw spells of possession and territory shared between the teams, but after a string of convincing finishes it was Highfields who led into the break on 0-3.

Langholm offered more threat initially in the second half but couldn't quite provide the finishing touch. A

goal did eventually come through young fullback James Borthwick whose long-range strike found its way through the hands of the Highfields keeper and into the net (1-3). This was James' first goal for the Legion. With the boys pushing to reduce the deficit further, the game was soon put out of sight by some more calm finishing by the visitors. It is hoped that the squad will be stronger next week as they approach a run of very important away league fixtures followed by the Waddell Cup semi-final.



Hawick Sevens

Rugby

Langholm took part in the Hawick Sevens in the third round of this year's Kings of the Sevens competition. They were drawn against eventual winners Melrose and found it tough going. They then went on to beat Watsonians in the quarter final of the plate competition before going out to Peebles in the semi final. The squad were Zander Shipley, Aidan Wilson, Callum Helling, Joe Ry-lance, Bailey Donaldson, Ru Forbes, Ben Jardine, Jamie Gormley and Greig Cartner. Langholm host



their own sevens on Saturday. They will play in Pool D along with Watsonians and Selkirk.

Their first tie against Watsonians is at 2.55pm and the tie against Selkirk is at 4.05pm.

E&L SPORT

