



BLACKRIDGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL
NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2021

ISSUE 70



A LOOK AT WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE COMMUNITY

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

New ELC Building • Free Bus Service • First Newsletter

www.blackridge.cc



BLACKRIDGE

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Welcome to this edition of the Blackridge Community Council Newsletter. We will be continuing to do a reduced print run for the foreseeable future with newsletters available to pick up from the Post Office and the Health Centre, if you still prefer a paper copy or have limited or no internet access.

On page four of this issue you will find an introduction to our new website. All the restrictions over the past year have shown us that we need to embrace digital solutions and take an up-to-date view of how we communicate with people in Blackridge and beyond. If you register with the website, you can be notified whenever something is updated or new articles are available.

The Community Council meets on the third Tuesday of the month (except July and August). During the restrictions, we are only able to include Community Councillors in the meetings, so our usual invitation for residents to come along and take part has had to be suspended. But please don't let your concerns or comments go unheard; you can contact us at the email address below, or by using the contact us page on the website.

After all the snow and ice, we are starting to see signs of Spring approaching, the daffodil bulbs that we planted in the verges last Autumn are pushing through and there are buds appearing on the trees. Our cover image for this issue has been kindly provided by Billy Waugh, a local amateur photographer. Billy took many photographs in and around Blackridge over the past year on his walks around the area and the one chosen conveys "Spring". Look out for more photographs of the village in future issues.

It is positive that so many in our community have been vaccinated and there is hope for restrictions being lifted in a few month's time. Indeed recent announcements and reduced prevalence of the virus in Scotland makes us feel optimistic that we may get a holiday this year, even it can't be to our usual hotspots abroad.

The Community Council would like to say "thank you" to all the people who have helped to keep services going over the past year. There are too many to mention; from the Council workers emptying our bins and repairing and gritting the roads, to the local shops and tradespeople, health and care workers, and teachers. We know that it has been a difficult year, and your hard work is appreciated.

If you would like to feature an article in our Newsletter, please email mail@blackridge.cc and put the word "Newsletter" in the subject heading.

THE CAMPBELLS CHARITY LIGHT SHOW

Hey everyone, just a wee update in regards to the amount of money we raised. We have a final total amount from all shows, JustGiving, cash donations and raffle giveaways! **£4046.92**

Firstly we want to thank everyone for attending, donating and supporting us! We can't thank enough - all our friends, business friends and the general public, who donated items to give to all the children, and also to everyone who donated any monies towards this. This has been an amazing achievement for us, with it being the first year we have ever done anything like this, and as this was all new to us, it took a lot of hard work, time and money to do, but it paid off!

We are so amazed but thankful that because of all your support we have been able to help out a charity that helps families and kids in many different ways. Some families don't even have the basic amenities to give to their kids, but River Kids also help in many ways, so please have a wee read at their website and see all the things that this charity does.

"We definitely got more than we ever imagined we could get. We set a target of £500 with a hope that if it went really well we would get £2000 so we even beat that. We are in a lucky position to be able to give something back. You never know when you might be on the opposite side of that and you just have to hope someone else would do it"

This is not the last time we will be putting on our light shows, we are planning for a Halloween event and will be lighting up at Christmas again this year so that we can keep raising money for different charities.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

Del Campbell



£4046.92

Blackridge Community Council would like to congratulate the Campbells for raising such an amazing sum of money.

J. W. Thomson

MOBILE FISH SHOP

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AN INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL WEBSITE

I would like to extend an invitation for you all to have a good look around (if you haven't already) our new Community Council Website www.blackridge.cc

As a Community Council we have all had to change the way we communicate internally and externally due to current circumstances, meaning now most of our lives have become more digitally inclusive than ever before. This began in April last year by holding our meetings online (as gatherings were not possible) and after a pause in the Summer, collectively deciding to distribute a Newsletter in the Autumn but still not being able to reach as many people as we could previously. We began working together to come up with a solution to how we could adapt to the current restrictions but still keep the village informed along with firmly creating our own identity. The general consensus was that a Community Website was the way we would move forward. This is something we are all excited about, alongside the re-branding of our newsletter, giving a new image and a much clearer identity to who we are and how we support the Community. We are delighted how well these changes have been received already.

The main focus areas of our recent improvements were:

- Create our own managed digital space for wider community engagement.
- Build our own identity as a Community Council, creating a user friendly modern look and feel for the website and this could transition into any future paperwork, e.g. newsletter, letterheads, flyers, etc.
- Publish the minutes from the meetings online allowing greater transparency.
- Have a '**NEWS**' section which will share the Newsletter content primarily, but if there is something more pressing that can't wait until the next Newsletter issue, this would allow instant interaction. In addition this would also allow people with links to village to still engage without receiving a physical copy of the Newsletter.

Within the website, '**HOME**' is the landing page. In '**ABOUT US**', along with giving a brief introduction to '**WHO WE ARE**', there is an area to share the main projects the Community Council is involved in and finally in here is where you will find the finalised minutes from our Meetings over the past calendar year.

Another of the key areas is the '**VILLAGE INFORMATION**' section. In this area there are a number of options that we hope you will find useful such as 'Latest News' from the Village, along with a 'Bulletin Board' giving everyone important information about the local amenities within our village. (e.g. shops takeaway, chemist, etc.). A recent addition in this area is 'Planning' and our hope is to share significant developments having a major impact on the village. Also within here you will find 'Recipes' from the village and 'Important Phone Numbers' you may need.

There is also a '**CONTACT US**' page for getting in touch.

We all hope our new website will become a focal point for the village, ensuring that all members of the community and new residents are informed of what is happening in the village along with what is being discussed at our meetings and keeping everything very open and transparent.

Lorraine McGroarty (Community Council Liaison Officer) commented *“I am delighted to see how much you have embraced digital technology and you should indeed all be extremely proud of what you have achieved. You have, I am sure, secured Blackridge CC for the future and made it more accessible and hopefully interesting to those who were unaware of the sterling work you have been doing for years.”*

Now, as well as only having missed one meeting due to lockdown, having re-branded our Newsletter and created a website with our own image and identity, and having the capability to digitally share documents online and upload minutes, I know for sure that we have adapted to a new way of working, and have something we are all extremely proud of, and hope you are too.

Alan Montgomery, Community Council Digital Lead

www.blackridge.cc

“NEW” LOCAL BUSINESS DIRECTORY

The Community Council are hoping to create a directory to help Blackridge residents find local businesses and services. This will be in addition to the helpful telephone numbers, and we will be looking for businesses who want to be included in the directory. A business does not have to be based in Blackridge to be included, but they must be within the local area and be prepared to provide a service here.

We are particularly keen to have details of businesses connected to the building trades, property and garden maintenance, any type of service, and online commerce. We will include the business name, name of contact person, telephone number, type of service offered, any accreditations held, any websites or organisations used (such as MyBuilder or Checkatrade).

The aim is not only to help residents, but also to support local businesses. Please be aware that including a business in the directory does not mean that the Community Council has verified the business or recommends it. It is the responsibility of the customer to satisfy themselves that the business or service meets their needs in terms of reliability, honesty, and quality of work. This can be verified through membership of trade associations, reviews and recommendations from previous customers, or obtaining estimates and quotes for work.

If you own a business and would like to be included, please email mail@blackridge.cc with the words “Business Directory” in subject heading.

THE VERY FIRST NEWSLETTER 1998

Picture the scene, 23 years ago, there we were, sitting in Bill Allison's spare room, Danny Lambie 'composing', me typing, cutting and pasting, inserting graphics, photos etc. and settling on a format for the new Blackridge Newsletter, with Bill's wife Betty running around keeping us happy with numerous cups of coffee and biscuits. Along with all the members of the Community Council, we had volunteers lined up to distribute, the concept being a copy would be delivered to every home in the Village. It was an ambitious project and not common in West Lothian but we were excited about the prospect.

When I was approached by the current Community Council, I couldn't believe how long ago it was, and the fact that it is still running today is a testament to the commitment of the current serving officers and to the tight knit community we still have in the village today. It's not until you do it that you realise the work involved in producing this wee booklet. Try counting the words sometime, try making up those words as well and harder still getting them to make sense. It was a team effort and everyone pulled their weight, maybe in a couple of years the current council will be up for some type of award for 'sustainability' (or something?) I am trying to retrieve the other issues I was involved in as I think it would make some fascinating reading. Pride for some people who wrote articles and blushes for others, a real 'blast from the past (bet you can't wait!)

This wee article is a show of appreciation to everyone who helped pull it together for so long and for keeping it going.

Sandra Meldrum

Ingredients:

2 tablespoons Olive Oil
1 tablespoon Butter
2 large Red Onions
finely chopped
1/4 cup White Sugar
1 cup Dry Red Wine
1/4 cup Balsamic
Vinegar
Salt to taste

RED ONION MARMALADE

Heat oil and butter in a large skillet over a medium heat.

Stir in onions and sugar cook until the onions start to caramelise (approx 15 minutes)

Add red wine and vinegar simmer until liquid has evaporated 15-20 mins season with salt.

Place in sterilised jar and seal.

TAKE CARE ON FOOTPATHS & CYCLE TRACKS

As we head into the better weather and lighter evenings, we will again see an upsurge in the use of motorbikes and quad bikes on our pavements, footpaths and cycle tracks.

If you use our local paths and witness illegal motor vehicles, please report it to the police even if you can't until you go home. By reporting the problem a record of the incident is filed and helps the police to focus on the problem.

If you are someone who uses one of these vehicles, please be aware that it is illegal to use them on a core path, pavement, or cycle track, and that any incident is likely to be reported to the police.

Could cyclists please take extra care with their speed, especially in the vicinity of villages, and entry points to the tracks, as a bike moving at 20mph can do almost as much damage as a motorbike.

There has been some extremely reckless speeding by cyclists, particularly in groups, who are often timing their journey and pedalling hard, heads down, expecting everyone else to get out of their way.

On what should be a safe route for walkers, children and pets, there have been near-misses where fast-moving cyclists, have come up behind people without any warning. It's frightening, especially when walking in a group, if the cyclists want to get past on a narrow part of the path, so please be considerate to other users of the paths.



Ingredients:
1/2lb Oatmeal
1/2lb Flour
6oz Syrup
1/4lb Sugar
1/4lb Lard
1 teaspoon Cinnamon
2 teaspoons Ginger
1 teaspoon Mixed Spice
1 x 1/2 teaspoon Baking Soda

PARKINS

Melt sugar, lard and syrup together and pour over dry ingredients previously mixed together. Either rollout and cut with scone cutter place on a baking sheet and bake in mod oven till pale brown or roll into balls and place blanched almond on top and bake till pale brown.

(Especially good rolled out) When cool stick 2 together with butter. Yummy!

BLACKRIDGE EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE



When Froebel met Passivhaus!

On Monday 22nd February we had many excited and happy little faces return to school. This included the children in P1, P2 and P3 who were last in school the week before Christmas. Joining them were the pre-school children, who returned to their new Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) building next to Blackridge Primary School.

The new building incorporates Passivhaus building principles, specially designed to provide the best temperature regulation with the use of virtually no energy for heating or cooling. Blackridge ELC is the first public Passivhaus nursery in Scotland and is fitted out, following the Froebel approach, developed by Friedrich Froebel, a German educator, who considered the development of the whole child.



The Blackridge ELC environment is set out using natural materials and colours, and although Froebellian classrooms may look like they are designed for free play, they are very carefully prepared. The children have a wide range of areas to explore; role play, water tray, sensory area, tool bench, creative corner and free flow access to the outside area to play and learn.

We asked some of our parents what they thought of the new building. Here are two of their comments.

“The new building is lovely. I like the light oak, the spacious layout and the kitchen. I think the fact that the children can go in and out as they please is a brilliant idea and also this fills the room itself with fresh air.”

“The building looks amazing. It has all ‘mod cons’ and is great for children’s development. Definitely a welcome sight to Blackridge.”

You can see a video walkthrough of the new ELC on the Community Council website www.blackridge.cc

Angela Downie, Head Teacher.

BLACKRIDGE ADMIRAL

Sir Thomas Livingston of Westquarter and Bedlormie, Knight Baronet of Nova Scotia was born at Bedlormie on 20th November 1769. He succeeded to the family estates at the age of thirty. He was the son of Sir Alexander Livingston, 6th Baronet and Ann Atkinson.

Sir Thomas entered the Royal Navy in 1782 as a midshipman on the frigate Brune. He rose through the officer ranks, taking command, first, of the sloop-of-war Echo and a number of other vessels in engagements against Napoleonic France in home waters and in the West Indies, the Mediterranean and off South Africa. He was appointed full Admiral in 1848 and was third on the list of Admirals of the White at the time of his death five years later.

In 1803, Sir Thomas received a royal warrant bestowing on him the keepership of the palace of Linlithgow and the castle of Blackness. These had been held in heredity by the Earls of Linlithgow but they had been deprived of their positions after the first Jacobite rebellion. Sir Thomas was nearest collateral male heir of the last Earl of Linlithgow. Sir Thomas married Janet, a daughter of Sir James Stirling of Mansfield, Ayrshire, in 1809 but she died in 1831. The couple had no children and the estate was assumed by his great nephew, Thomas Fenton, who assumed the additional surname Livingstone. Fenton's son, John Nigel Edensor Livingstone was the last of the line to appear in the property records for the village and the remains of the estate were sold in 1873. Admiral Sir Thomas Livingstone is the first Blackridge person for whom a likeness survives.

The village is still producing sailors for the Royal Navy so maybe an admiral again soon?

Stuart Borrowman



DOUBLE RETIREMENT

On behalf of the management committee we would like to sincerely thank **Irene Penman** and **Pat Yuill** for their many years of service in the Craiginn Community Centre Blackridge. Your knowledge, experience and commitment have helped in so many ways throughout the years.

Thank you both for all your hard work, we will miss you so much. Best wishes for a long and happy retirement.

BLACKRIDGE GALA DAY

It is with great sadness that the committee has taken the very difficult decision to cancel the 2021 Gala Day. Members felt it would be inappropriate to try to press ahead until the impacts of the public health situation are clearer.

We will need help though to put together the 2022 event, if you would like to be involved you'll be made very welcome. Email:

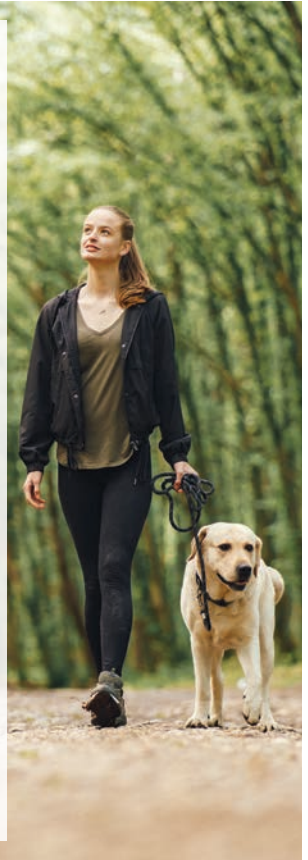
stuartborrowman@btinternet.com

ATTENTION ALL DOG WALKERS

Now that the snow and ice has disappeared, there has been an increase in the amount of dog poo on our streets. It seems that dog owners were reluctant to pick up after their dogs and assumed that, once it was buried under the snow, it could be ignored. There are still people who think it's ok to just walk away from the problem of dog poo. It's not the nicest job, but as pet owners, you are responsible for what goes into your dog and equally responsible for what comes out!

There are particular spots where the problem is most obvious, the grass verges on Station Road, the cycle track, and the path along the burn nearest the steps to Leishman Court. In fact, the area around those steps is a particular problem, as there is a lot of poo left there and sometimes there have been bags tied to the fence or bushes instead of being put in a bin. It's not acceptable to leave a bag of poo tied somewhere, it won't vanish on it's own and it's the dog owner's responsibility to take it away.

There are plenty of bins, including a new one on Station Road at the entrance to the cycle track, and it's not difficult to pop a bag in your pocket, please be a responsible dog owner and clean up after your pet. The Community Council will be working with Council Officers to improve signage, identify people who are breaking the law, and where possible ensure that enforcement takes place and fines are imposed.



usave

Convenience Store

32 Main Street, Blackridge, EH48 3RJ

Monday to Saturday 6.30am to 6.00pm
Sunday 6.30am to 3.00pm

POST OFFICE

Monday - Saturday: 8am - 5pm
Sunday: 8am - 1pm

Everyday Personal & Business Banking
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Post Office Account Withdrawal • Mails • Drop & Go
Cheque Deposits • Travel • Parcelforce Express Service

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*Friendly and Helpful Staff
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Proud to be a part of the Community

COVID VACCINATION - FREE BUS SERVICE



HAVING DIFFICULTIES WITH TRANSPORT TO GET YOUR VACCINE?

HcL are delighted to share that we are offering FREE transport for people with mobility challenges to get their vaccine. Any person who has challenges with getting out and about due to age, disability, health issues, additional support needs or geographic remoteness is eligible to use the service - you do not need to be registered with HcL already.

Bookings are subject to availability. We recommend passengers call as soon as they have their vaccine appointment and we will do our very best to help transport as many people as we can, under current guidelines.

CALL 01506 633336 FOR TRANSPORT IN WEST LOTHIAN

BLAWHORN MOSS

I was up at Blawhorn Moss NNR on Wednesday 17th, February late in the afternoon, and heard in the distance a motorbike. I was about at the entrance gate to the reserve when a motorbike went along the Millennium Way from our car park going East. Just one bike, going at top speed.

It is incredibly dangerous to be riding at that speed with adults and children and dogs on the paths. Obviously, no permissions have been granted by NatureScot for motor vehicles of this kind in the parts of the area that we own or manage. This is dangerous and illegal behaviour. Walkers and other legitimate users of our walkways should be able to use these paths freely, without having to worry about motorised traffic.

I would ask local people, if they see such activity, to report it to the police. It would be helpful in tracing anyone, perhaps from their clothing or vehicle, if members of the public could take a photograph, as long as it doesn't cause a confrontation, or put them in any danger. I am not convinced that signs would help, as it's well known that motor bikes are not allowed. Perhaps some of the access points could be adjusted to "kissing gates" with restricted access, but we have to be aware of the access needs of people with prams, bicycles, or mobility scooters.

David Pickett, Nature Reserves Manager



IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

POLICE/FIRE

Police HQ Livingston	01506 431200
Police (Non-Emergency)	101
Fire (Emergency)	999

HOSPITALS

St. John's Hospital, Livingston	01506 523000
University Hospital Monklands, Airdrie	01236 748748
Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh	0131 536 1000
Western General Hospital, Edinburgh	0131 537 1000
University Hospital Wishaw	01698 361 100

HEALTH

Blackridge Health Centre	01501 751238
Harthill Health Centre	01501 751795
Armadale Health Centre	01501 730432
District Nurses / Midwife /Physio	01501 730339
Blackridge Pharmacy	01501 751175
NHS24 (Out of Hours Service)	111

SCHOOLS

Blackridge Primary	01501 751223
Armadale Academy	01506 282145
St. Anthony's Primary, Armadale	01501 731668
St. Kentigern's, Blackburn	01506 656404

UTILITIES EMERGENCIES

Scottish Gas	0800 111 999
SP Energy Networks (Electricity)	105
Scottish Water	0800 077 8778

TRAVEL

Rail Service Enquiries	0845 7484950
West Lothian Traveline	01506 775288

WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL

01506 280000

LOCAL COUNCILLORS

Stuart Borrowman	01506 281702
Andrew McGuire	01506 281717
Sarah King	01506 281741