

TheView

June 2013

South Lanarkshire Council



Meet the new King of horror ● Hollywood film composer inspires pupils ● Down on the 1950s farm



Comic
book
heroes

P5



Catch Big Vern and the Shootas

Fun for all at summer arts fest

By **Mhairi Anderson**

EAST Kilbride's annual summer fest has pulled out all the stops to ensure this year's event is a bumper celebration of fun.

The nine-day event kicks off Saturday, July 6 with an open day at East Kilbride Arts Centre and finishes on a high note on Sunday, July 14 with a variety spectacular.

This year's varied programme includes everything from Alice, the Mad Hatter and the March Hare for a Mad Hatter's Tea Party, to Taiko Alba drummers and Big Vern and the Shootas.

Among the many highlights is a performance by Love and Money's James Grant at the Village Theatre on July 12, when he will play an array of his classic songs from the 80s and beyond.

Festival goers can also enjoy the chance to view a wide range of work by professional and amateur artists based in South Lanarkshire, as part of the East Kilbride Arts Council's Annual Exhibition.

Other highlights include an evening with Quattro MacJazz, a Dixieland quartet specialising in Hot Jazz and Gospel led by Forrie Cairns, the great Scottish clarinet player, well remembered from the Clyde Valley Stompers' era.

Foodies will find plenty to savour, too, courtesy of food demonstrations by chefs from the town's Spice restaurant and Tinto Tapas Bar.

Music lovers will also be interested in catching the local talent taking part in South Lanarkshire Live! battle of the bands.

That's just a flavour of what promises to be a fantastic nine days of music, theatre, poetry and dance.

● Tickets can be booked at East Kilbride Arts Centre, or online at www.sllcboxoffice.co.uk.

For full details about this year's line up visit www.southlanarkshireleisure.co.uk

Classroom revolution continues apace as ...

3 NEW SCHOOLS GET GO-AHEAD

By **Lynne Carstairs**

A DECADE of investment in education was marked this month by the go-ahead for another three new schools.

The Planning Committee recently gave the green light to the trio of new school projects, representing a further £19million investment, as part of the ground-breaking Primary Schools Modernisation Programme.

To date, 76 primary schools have been completed, along with 41 nursery classes, 18 bases for children with additional support needs and 12 community wings.

A brand-new secondary /

additional support needs school – KEAR campus in Blantyre – also opened this month.

By the end of the year, the anticipated total will be 91 new primary schools completed.

This month's decision will see 21st education facilities provided for the pupils of St John's, Blackwood, East Milton in East Kilbride and St Bride's Primary and nursery in Cambuslang.

Work on all three is expected to begin over the summer, with the youngsters, teaching and support staff set to move into their new accommodation by 2015.

Council Leader Eddie McAvoyn welcomed the trio of new schools and the landmark decade for the

£812million project. "Back in 2004, the council set out on a road that few had considered, let alone tried, by setting out a commitment to rebuild – and in a few instances refurbish – every school in our estate," he said.

"From the smallest primary, to our larger, bustling campuses, we have weathered the storm of the economic downturn, and are steadily transforming our schools into centres of excellence for the 21st century.

"The three new schools approved by committee this time around provide a snapshot of just how wide-ranging and inclusive this unique programme has been – and will continue to be – as we look

forward to the proposed completion just a few short years from now."

Work on the new St John's and East Milton primaries will be carried out as tandem builds. Pupils at St Brides will be decanted to the old Cairns Primary.

Meanwhile, work is continuing on South Lanarkshire's first entirely new school since reorganisation in 1996.

The new Halfway Park Primary, costing £7.5million, which is being built on the site of a disused park pavilion, is due to open in August.

It will provide seven classrooms, gym hall, dining room, stage, staff facilities, library and IT suite, 21-space car park and multi-use games pitch.



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Woman, 94, clicks with archive flicks



Report by **Euan Duguid**

THE incredible life of a 94-year-old South Lanarkshire woman has been brought full circle – thanks to a crash course on YouTube.

Residents of McClymont House care home in Lanark have been taught how to search for, and view, local films from yesteryear on various video-sharing sites.

And among the pupils of the back-to-the-future pilot scheme is the widow of legendary amateur film maker, John Coleman, who was responsible for many historic flicks of the area.

Alison Coleman co-founded the Lanark Cine Club with her late husband in the 1960s, inspiring a rush of amateur films depicting local events such as Lanimer Day.

Some of the precious footage, shot using old-style reel film, has found its way onto the internet and specialist historical sites.

Now, thanks to computer tutorials led by home manager Charles Delaney the images, that would have all but faded into the mists of time for some residents, are available again at the click of a mouse.

Charles explained: "Many older

people are aware of computers but we were finding a lot of the people coming to us have had no contact with technology.

"What we try to do is provide opportunities for older people to learn new skills, like giving them a basic handle on various video sharing sites, including YouTube and the Scottish Screen Archive."

For Alison, being able to enjoy electronic re-runs of films from a golden age has been mesmerising.

"We, along with many others who were involved in the club, captured so much life and so many events through the decades, and some of the reels have even been lost," she explained. "But to see some of the footage from that era again has been wonderful."

It was a twist of fate that inspired the Coleman film era, with Alison taking centre stage.

Alison, above, who helped in her husband's pharmacy in Carnwath, attended a Kodak course in photography and film development in London during the early 1960s.

Part of the course touched on the subject of cine film and Alison was hooked.

Her enthusiasm rubbed off on John and she bought him a brand-new 3 turret Kodak Cine camera,

before they set up the local film club in Lanark, attracting members from around the area.

John was responsible for an annual newsreel, documenting many areas of Lanarkshire life, from gala days to Sunday school trips.

One of his biggest achievements, however, came in the early 80s, when some Vietnamese 'boat people' were resettled in Scotland after the war.

John's documentary included interviews with refugees at Kerswell college in Lanarkshire about their experiences escaping from Vietnam and adapting to a new life in Scotland.

The film has been donated by Alison to Scottish Screen Archive, who have posted it on their online film archive.

Alison added: "I haven't fallen for computers at all but I'm amazed by this whole business of being able to tap into these special moments so easily."

Brenda Hutchinson, Head of Adult and Older People's Services at South Lanarkshire Council, said: "Pilot schemes like this show how we're actively creating a system that supports a positive ageing experience – and even helping some celebrate the wonderful lives they've led already."



Pupils hit the high notes on school CD

By **Sarah Burrows**

WHAT better way to promote inclusion than to get a whole school community involved in a project?

That's exactly what St Mark's Primary in Hamilton did when they took on the ambitious task of recording a school CD.

And every pupil in the school, regardless of musical ability, sang on the 16-track CD.

Teachers, support staff and the janitor also put their vocal chords to the test by singing a number.

Head teacher Caroline Campbell said: "This has been an incredible project from the outset. Pupils were involved in picking the songs that meant something to them in terms of inclusion.

"Inclusion is a concept that is difficult to put into words, especially for our youngest pupils, but we live it.

"We are an inclusive school. Everyone has loved coming together to create a fantastic choir. Everyone involved was told that, if they were good singers, to sing out loud and, if they weren't, to sing even louder."

"There was such a lovely feeling of togetherness through singing and, when the children started to examine the lyrics about being the best you can be, it brought the whole school together in a very positive way."

Pupils were involved in all decisions about the CD, with the cover sleeve being designed by a primary 5 pupil, Hannah Tierney.

Trading Standards officer appointed chair of professional body



SOUTH Lanarkshire Trading Standards Officer Malcolm Craig is the new chair of the Trading Standards Institute in Scotland.

The 33-year-old, who has worked for the council since 2007, takes up the role having held the post of vice-chair for the last two years.

His latest two-year tenure as chair will enable Malcolm to work towards raising the profile of the variety of issues handled by Trading Standards teams across the country.

Malcolm admits he is relishing the challenge, and opportunities, the post will bring in the organisation's centenary year.

"It is an honour to have been elected by my peers in the industry to chair the Scottish branch, as we celebrate 100 years of collaborative working in Scotland. While my aim is to be proactive and positive, there is no doubt we are doing the job against one of the most challenging periods in our history. Reductions in

resources are being felt across the UK but the demand for the service we offer, as Trading Standards officers, remains high.

"I believe it is important that, as part of our Institute, we work 'smarter' to help members continually improve and update through regular training and information-sharing opportunities.

"Moving with new practices and legislation will ensure we stay relevant and well resourced to offer a much-needed public service."



20,000 pledge to get active..

LANARKSHIRE certainly got well and truly active earlier this month, when around 20,000 people turned up to join in a fun family day at Strathclyde Park and sign the pledge to Get More People More Active More Often.

Get Active Lanarkshire is part of a Commonwealth Games legacy initiative that aims to encourage Lanarkshire residents to get more active more often, by increasing their physical activity in the run-up to,

and beyond, the Glasgow Commonwealth Games in 2014.

NHS Lanarkshire's Health Promotions Manager Gabe Docherty said: "It was an absolutely fabulous day of events, with many thousands of Lanarkshire residents enjoying lots of physical activities, some of them trying out an activity for the very first time."

Gabe continued: "We are delighted thousands of people made the pledge to become more active."

Enterprise Resources update

10 long-term jobless find work fighting fuel poverty

Report by **James Davitt**

AN innovative project has found work for 10 long-term unemployed people as energy advisors.

The council scheme, Dea:SL, Domestic energy advice: South Lanarkshire, involves a new training and employment programme that delivers a local energy advice service to help reduce the number of households experiencing fuel poverty – defined as any household that spends more than 10 per cent of its income on heating.

Out of approximately 150,000 households in South Lanarkshire, just under a third – 32 per cent or 45,000 – were classified as fuel poor (both fuel poor and extreme fuel poor), according to the latest figures for 2009-11.

The area has a greater proportion of households in fuel poverty than the Scottish average at 28 per cent.

Graham Mullen, project manager for Dea:SL, said: "The scheme involves bringing people who have been out of work back into

the labour market, giving them the skills to be energy advisors and sending them out to give robust home energy advice on a bespoke basis.

"There tends to be a lack of what we term energy literacy throughout the whole of the country. The guys have specialised skills now in being able to deliver energy advice, face-to-face in the home."

By providing this personal style of service for vulnerable residents, it is hoped the scheme will help them make the best use of energy in their homes.

The scheme offers advice on a range of issues including:

- How to make the most cost-effective use of heating systems
- Ensuring the customer gets the best tariff rate available
- Addressing billing and fuel debt issues caused by incorrect tariffs, wrongly estimated bills and simple billing mistakes
- Helping householders access energy saving measures (for example, insulation)
- Helping householders get emergency financial assistance that may be available

Councillor Chris Thompson, chair of the council's Enterprise Services Committee, said: "This is an excellent example of the council delivering a project that has a real impact on people's lives.

"First of all, we have helped 10 people who were unemployed back into work.

"Not only that, they are, in turn, helping people who may be finding it extremely difficult to cope because of crippling fuel bills."

And Councillor Alex McInnes, chair of the council's Housing and Technical Resources Committee, added: "It can be very difficult for the most vulnerable members of society to access free, impartial advice about energy and fuel tariffs. Sometimes it is a simple case of them not knowing who to speak to.

"Our guys are not trying to sell anyone anything, other than helping them secure the best deal for themselves."

Fuel advisor Jim Stewart, from Larkhall, was unemployed for 10 months.

He said: "I got the chance to do this through Routes to Work South. I've had quite a varied career, mostly in customer service, but I have

never worked in a field dealing with energy advice so it was quite an eye-opener for me.

"Our referrals are coming from all different areas, by our phone lines or by word-of-mouth, and anything we can do to make people's lives easier is always going to be welcome."

Steven McAlaney, from Hamilton, who was out of work for six months, added: "We all have a perception about what is going on out there in terms of the economy but I didn't appreciate the extent to which people can struggle with fuel costs.

"The job has given me a greater understanding as to what they can get and how they can benefit from small, simple steps that will make life easier for them. We are there to offer free impartial advice – we can phone and speak to energy suppliers and give a range of options to help people."

And Ola Epemolu, from Hamilton, said: "The Dea:SL scheme is about trying to get people to realise that they can have free and impartial advice.

"We want people to get the best out of their energy use and to save money."



School pupils encouraged to 'reach for the stars'

By Sarah Burrows

SOUTH Lanarkshire pupils have taken part in an engineering challenge that was 'out of this world'.

The project was designed to encourage pupils to consider a career in engineering or other technical disciplines.

Schools from across the East Kilbride area entered a team of two P7 boys and girls to the events.

Their brief was to design, build and test their ideas to help in the exploration of the natural resources on Mars.

Teams were marked on how well they worked together and were given points if they included all of the specified design features, as well as for the overall project design and effectiveness.

At Calderglen, St Andrew's and St Bride's and Duncanrig secondaries, pupils were tasked with using a K'Nex kit to construct, among other things, a system to transport different sizes of Martian rock from a mining area to a rocket launching site to help planetary investigation.

Primary schools taking part included Auldhouse, Canberra, Crosshouse, Greenhills, Mossneuk, South Park, St Vincent's, East Milton, Heathery Knowe, Kirktonholme, Murray, St Louise, Blacklaw, Halfmerke, Hunter, Long Calderwood, Maxwellton, St Hillary's and St Leonard's.

The event was hosted by the council, in partnership with the Engineering Development Trust and EDF Energy.

Councillor Jean McKeown, chair of the council's Education Resources committee, said: "This challenge gave pupils a unique insight into the world of engineering.

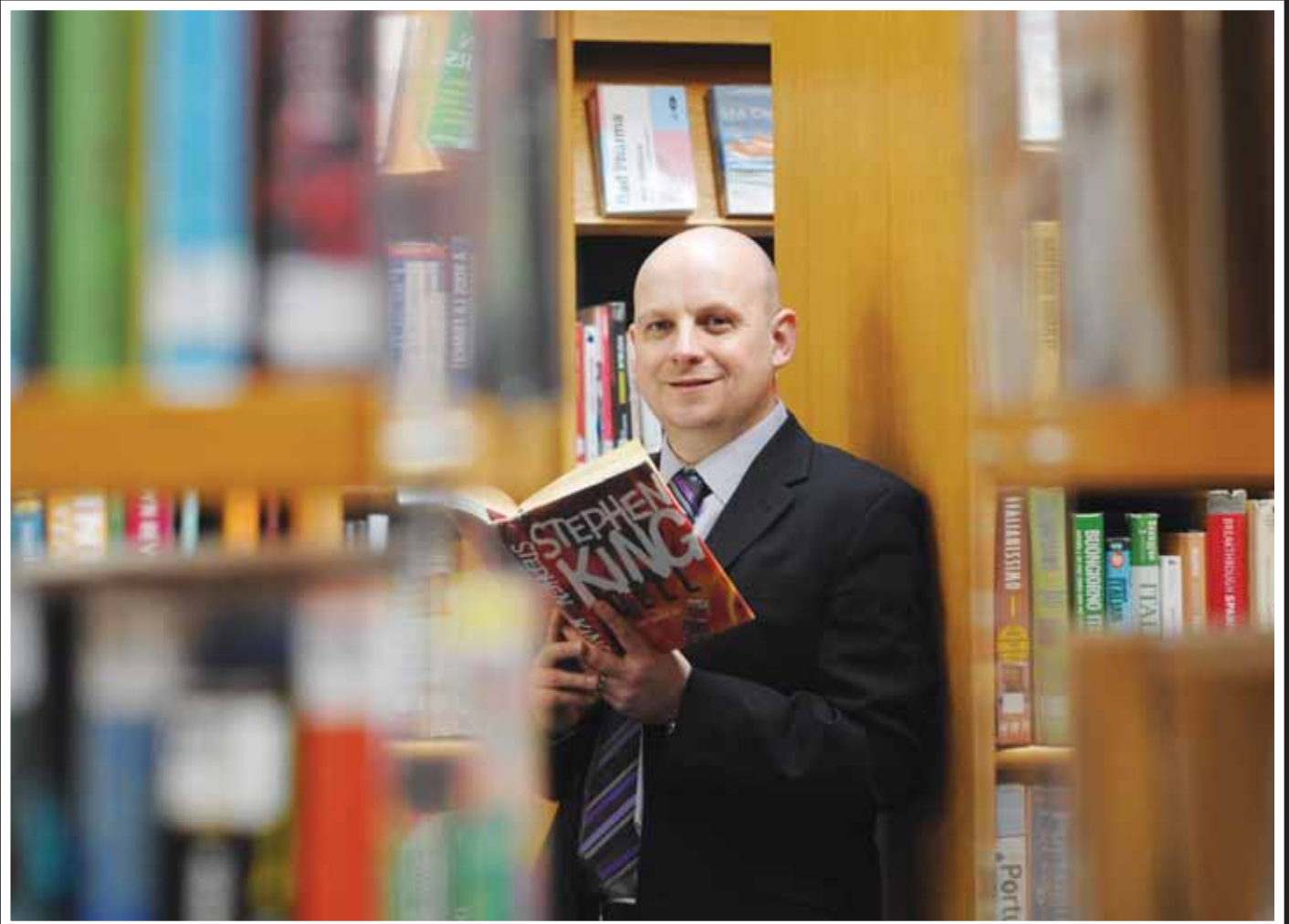
"Hopefully, it will have given them all food for thought and encouraged them to reach for the stars in terms of career choices."

Duncan McSporran, EDT Director for Scotland, said: "The PreSET pilot with East Kilbride primary schools has proven to be a great success, thanks to the support of the council and EDF Energy. We hope to roll it out to more schools next year."

Curbing noise pollution

THE council raised awareness of noise and how everyone can avoid causing neighbourhood problems during Noise Action Week recently. Environmental Health officers urged people to consider the impact of noise on their surroundings and how they can help reduce the problem.

COUNCIL WORKER WRITES SPINE-CHILLER IN SPARE TIME



THE MAN WHO WOULD BE NEW KING OF HORROR

Report by James Davitt

OF all the genres in the world of fiction writing, few polarise opinion quite as much as horror.

It's the true marmite of the literary world – most people seem to either love it or hate it.

For some, it's a step too far to look into the dark recesses of the human mind, or to ponder the possibility of a supernatural phenomenon.

For others, having the hairs stand up on the back of their neck, while questioning what exactly it is that goes bump in the night is what makes a good book great.

Someone who is clearly in the 'love it' camp is South Lanarkshire Council Project Development Officer Tony Mallaghan, above, who is currently working on his third novel.

All of them can be firmly filed under the "horror" category.

"I've been influenced by a lot of writers but there's no doubt the biggest inspiration has been Stephen King," explains Tony.

"You can't help but be influenced by the books you read and, as well as King, I also love a lot of the books Shaun Hutson and Dean Koontz have written.

"Horror is definitely my favourite genre but I do love all different kinds of books." Tony has

written two novels, Deil and Godking, the second of which is available from Amazon, and he is in talks with publishers about Deil.

"Deil tells the story of two police officers in Southern Scotland who are sent out to discover the fate of a university archaeology team and energy company workers, who have vanished in a remote mountainous area.

"For many years, the locals have voiced their fear of something evil in the hills with some even telling tales of vampires.

"While the police scoff at the idea, initially, they begin to change their minds as they uncover more information, piece by piece, and chance upon a specialist army unit tasked with cordoning off the area and dealing with the situation using any means necessary.

"My second novel, Godking, is the story of a recently wounded war veteran, who goes home to a small Scottish island to settle his family's estate following the death of his mother.

"As the story progresses, strange events begin to occur in his life and he believes he may be the victim of possible demonic possession or may be suffering from hallucinations.

"What follows is a descent into his own personal hell with tragic consequences for those close to him. The story exposes the many demons, both literal and metaphorical,

that can lie in wait for our veterans." Tony's third novel tackles another staple of the horror genre – zombies.

He explains: "I am working on a zombie apocalypse series that will follow the journey of a group of survivors as they try to make their way to safety.

"I've already posted a couple of diary entries from people who may go on to be characters in the series on my blog so, hopefully, people will see the direction I am going in."

Like so many writers, Tony finds it difficult to pinpoint exactly where his ideas come from.

"I don't have a particular way of thinking up ideas for my stories," he says. "It could be something that you see on the news or television, a snippet of something that sparks an idea.

"With the new story, I am particularly interested in exploring the way people panic in crowds, how people can actually run towards trouble in extreme circumstances.

"Thinking about things like that can lead you into different scenarios in your head and you just hope the reader shares your interest in seeing how things will pan out."

● Tony's book, *Godking*, is available from www.amazon.co.uk. His blog can be found at www.agmallaghan.wordpress.com



Ladies lunch with Scots Makar Liz

THE latest recruit to Lanarkshire's Hall of Fame has been revealed – Scotland's National Poet, or Makar, Liz Lochhead.

Liz has joined a host of other famous county personalities, past and present, including rock star Midge Ure, slapstick movie star Stan Laurel, entrepreneur Boyd Tunnock and explorer David Livingstone – all of whom now grace the Celebrating Lanarkshire 2013 Hall of Fame.

The former art lecturer, born in Newarthill, just outside Motherwell, graduated from the world-famous Glasgow School of Art, after which she lectured on fine art for a decade.

But it is as a writer, through her poetry and plays, with her first poetry collection 'Memo for Spring', published in 1972, that Liz came into the public eye.

At the time, the Scottish poetry scene was largely male dominated. But, in 2011, she was appointed Scotland's National Poet following the death of Edwin Morgan, the previous Makar.

And this year, Liz attended the annual Ladies Lunch, hosted by the Lanarkshire Association of Burns Clubs at Shawlands Park Hotel, as a guest speaker.

She treated the 180 ladies to an entertaining afternoon reading from her own writings and reflecting on Robert Burns and what he meant to her.

Council backs steelworkers' monument

THE council has donated £5000 to help create a steelworkers' memorial to mark the significant impact of the industry in Scotland.

With so much of South Lanarkshire involved in, and affected by, the steel industry, from its many steel manufacturing works, to the subsidiary industries that relied heavily on the top-quality steel production, the council felt it was essential they backed the move to create a monument.

Councillor Russell Clearie, who worked in the steel industry for 42 years, said: "I am delighted that, on behalf of South Lanarkshire Council, I am able to present the Scottish Steelworkers Memorial Fund with this cheque for £5000 towards such a worthy project.

"I worked in the Clydebridge Steelworks from 1962. Ravenscraig was certainly the biggest in Lanarkshire but, across the South Lanarkshire area, there were many smaller steelworks, not only providing work for a very large number of men, but also all the subsidiary industries that relied on steel for their own manufacturing needs.

"In my time, there were always fatalities in the steelworks and also many men who died from illnesses directly attributable to the industry.

"It is very right and proper that a monument be erected at Ravenscraig as a central location to honour those who lost their lives, and also as a reminder of the lasting legacy the steel industry had across Lanarkshire."



Quick on the draw

Pupils go nuts for zany cartoonist brothers

Report by Sarah Burrows

SOUTH Lanarkshire primary school pupils recently dipped into Robin and Lorenzo Etherington's zany world of comic art and storytelling.

The famous comic book duo, authors of *Monkey Nuts* and *Baggage*, visited five local schools last month as part of a campaign aiming to change how pupils and teachers up and down the country think about comic books.

Among the schools they visited was Robert Smillie Memorial Primary in Larkhall, where they showed pupils how to devise original characters, worlds and stories for a 21st century audience.

Aside from original material, the talented brothers – Robin writing and Lorenzo illustrating – have also produced comic work for *Transformers*, *Star Wars*, *Wallace and Gromit*, and *Terminator*.

They've also worked on movies such as *Dreamworks' Monsters vs Aliens* and *Madagascar*. "It is a

genuine honour to be invited to take part in the Scottish Friendly Children's Book Tour," said Robin.

"For more than a decade, Scottish Book Trust and Scottish Friendly have been exciting readers, writers and artists by bringing a host of incredible authors to schools and libraries across Scotland and England, and we feel truly privileged to join their ranks.

"We enjoyed bringing our own brand of comic tomfoolery to the classrooms of Lanarkshire and to inspiring a new generation of young creators by demonstrating the power, freedom and fun to be found waiting within the pages of a good book."

Chris Newton, children's events manager at Scottish Book Trust, said: "Scottish Book Trust is delighted to have the Etherington Brothers on the Scottish Friendly Children's Book Tour.

"We hope that the brothers will inspire pupils in South Lanarkshire to have a go at writing and drawing their own comics and, most importantly, have a long and lasting impact on the children's enthusiasm for reading."





Making a drama out of antisocial behaviour helps spread message

By **Andy Livingstone**

PUPILS are being steered away from antisocial behaviour and helped with alcohol issues through the power of drama.

The council's Antisocial Behaviour Strategy noted a clear link between alcohol consumption and antisocial behaviour – something regularly highlighted by tenants as a main concern.

A working group set up to tackle alcohol-related antisocial behaviour, including the Police, Liber8 Lanarkshire, Lanarkshire Alcohol Drug Partnership, and relevant council services, has put in place several actions, such as the successful interactive drama, 'Is This Me..?'

Delivered to S1 pupils in South Lanarkshire, the play encourages them to think about making positive lifestyle choices in relation to alcohol.

After each performance, actors discussed parts of the play where a particular message was given, or decision had to be made, with the young people.

The script was written for South Lanarkshire Council by Arkeen Theatre Company and covered the key issues that the Alcohol-Related Antisocial Behaviour Working Group wanted to highlight, including:

- agent purchasing – buying for someone underage – and consequences for the agent
- health implications for young people
- peer pressure and relationships
- consequences of acting in an antisocial manner, including the impact this can have on the young person's future
- implications for the wider community.

Pupils also received an information leaflet from Victim Support, designed to support young victims of crime.

After the play, 51 per cent of pupils said they would feel more confident about not getting involved in antisocial behaviour and 44 per cent said they would feel more comfortable asking for help, if they or a family member was affected by alcohol issues.

The success of the production has led to funding being secured from Lanarkshire Alcohol and Drug Partnership to roll it out to all South Lanarkshire schools this year.

A DVD of the drama and workshop is being produced for schools and other relevant organisations.

Improvements hit new heights

INVESTMENT in the council's housing stock is hitting new heights – literally.

The ongoing improvement programme includes an extensive catalogue of works to five of the council's multi-storey blocks.

As part of the council's plans to improve energy efficiency, reduce fuel poverty and help reduce carbon emissions to tackle climate change, five high-rise blocks at Springhall Court in Cathkin, and Logan Tower, Rosebank Tower, Standford Hall and Sherry Heights in Cambuslang, are all being given a facelift.

This includes external wall insulation and rendering, as well as the installation of new landing windows, flat doors and windows.

Closes are also being decorated, bird-netting installed on the verandas and extractor fans on the roof overhauled.

By **Euan Duguid**

AN appeal has been launched for volunteers to help older people beat loneliness and isolation in South Lanarkshire.

Healthy Valleys, a charity set up to improve the health of people in the area, is now aiming to bring those who have spent time in hospital back into the heart of communities.

The pilot programme, called Re-Connect South Lanarkshire, has been established as a partnership project with Healthy n Happy Development Trust to help the delivery of the Reshaping Care for Older People programme.

In practical terms, the programme is looking at ways to support the growing numbers of people aged 65 and over, focusing on providing more care at home and in the community.

And Fiona Gairns, Healthy Valleys' development worker for older people, explained that social interaction is a crucial factor to improved well-being and quality of life.

"Following a stay in hospital, and with no carer support at home, older people can very quickly become isolated," Fiona explained.

"By matching up volunteers with isolated older people and by visiting them in their own homes, our aim is to help people link into local support, feel part of their communities and gain maximum independence."

Over a period of around six weeks, fully trained Community



Isolation-busting project in volunteer rallying call

Connector Volunteers will visit each older person at home to develop a relationship and work with them to identify their interests and skills.

The volunteers will then support them to link into local existing services, groups and clubs.

Healthy Valleys' work will play an important role in the overall aims of the Reshaping Care programme.

Over the next six years, there is expected to be 25 per cent more older people who may need some sort of assistance

to live well in their own homes.

In response, Reshaping Care is combining the expertise of volunteers, such as those working with Healthy Valleys, with partner agencies, including NHS Lanarkshire and North and South Lanarkshire councils and the independent sector.

Older people at risk of isolation will be referred to the Health Valleys' pilot scheme, from both health and social work colleagues.

Fiona added: "We can provide a great support to help the other agencies and professionals

who are doing a fantastic job. It's about linking in and we feel the Re-Connect project will prove to be invaluable to that collaborative approach.

"This is an ideal volunteering opportunity if you want to make a difference to the lives of older people in your local community and make new friends while developing your skills."

● Healthy Valleys is recruiting now and ask that if you can commit a few hours per week call 01555 880666 or email info@healthyvalleys.org.uk

Iconic burgh hall to reopen after facelift

Sympathetic restoration returns building to former glory

By **Mhairi Anderson**

LANARK Memorial Hall has been returned to its former glory after a major facelift and reopens at the end of the month.

The council was determined from the outset to ensure a sympathetic restoration and upgrade of the prominent three-storey building to ensure that it retained its historic features.

Councillor Hamish Stewart, chair of the Community Services Committee and chair of the Board of South Lanarkshire Leisure & Culture, acknowledges the project has taken much longer to complete than planned but is delighted with the results.

"The end of the road is in sight and this wonderful building will soon be a focal point, with fantastic new facilities to be enjoyed by the people of our community,"



he added. "Legal agreements were a little more complicated than was anticipated.

"Ground works, too, were affected at critical points in the project by extremely wet summers and unusually long, cold winters.

"And unforeseen ground conditions led to the steelwork of

the new-build part having to be redesigned during the project.

"We can now look forward – not back and, very shortly, we will be able, once again, to enjoy full use of our newly restored Lanark Memorial Hall."

Internally, upgrading work has included the installation of a new

sound and lighting system, IT equipment, replacing furnishings and fittings, including kitchen and bar facilities.

Externally, detailed landscaping has been carried out, as well as improvements to the fabric of the iconic building.

The Grade B-listed Lanark Memorial Hall is steeped in history and tradition.

It is not only an important landmark for the people of South Lanarkshire but it has been a focal point for many years as a meeting place and cultural venue for the people of the town and surrounding area.

The foundation stone for the hall was laid in 1925 and the building itself was erected in 1926, as a tribute to the men of Lanark and district who lost their lives during World War I.

● Lines are open for bookings, so please phone South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture on 01555 667999 or 01555 770308.



Communities have their say on local issues

By **Andy Livingstone**

SOUTH Lanarkshire Council hosts a number of public consultation events annually to raise awareness about its services and get feedback from local communities about the issues affecting them.

The 'Positive Communities' events were held across South Lanarkshire last autumn and will take place again later this year.

They are designed to encourage residents to give views on local services and issues.

The events also allow the council and partners to provide wide-ranging information about the services provided and how issues, such as antisocial behaviour, are being addressed.

Following last year's events, feedback was passed to the six local problem-solving groups across South Lanarkshire who continually review and identify trends of antisocial behaviour at a local level.

They are vital in preventing and tackling antisocial behaviour, as it is not a responsibility for any one organisation or group.

The information provided from communities helped the council and partners to identify priorities for each area and create local action plans.

Councillor Jean McKeown, Chair of the Safer South Lanarkshire Board, said: "In addition to the Positive Communities events, residents also have the opportunity to complete a survey.

"I'm pleased to say the number of surveys completed by local residents has increased significantly from 246 in 2010, to 680 the following year and 1617 last year."

New heating systems help deliver savings

WHEN it was formed in 1996, South Lanarkshire Council inherited a wide range of housing built in different eras.

This meant council tenants across South Lanarkshire have been using several different heating systems.

Now the council is working through a programme to upgrade existing heating systems and has, so far, completed replacement work in more than 2800 properties.

In some cases, homes have to be connected to a gas supply and this process can involve several visits to the property.

The benefits once the system is installed are immediate, with lower heating costs and homes that are easily heated throughout.

To ensure the council is able to help as many tenants as soon as possible a timetable is essential.

Missed appointments can cause major disruption and it is therefore vital that tenants are available at home at the agreed time.

It may be a brief disturbance and inconvenience but it is clear that it is well worth it in the long-run, in terms of comfort and expense.



■ Siobhan Miller and Rua MacMillan entertained children at the Mini Music Festival

Live music strikes right chord with youngsters

NURSERIES, primary schools and some secondary pupils have benefitted from live music performances by professional musicians.

South Lanarkshire Council's Cultural co-ordinators recently piloted the Mini Music Festival, which saw around 2500 children participate in a music session.

The co-ordinators teamed up with Live Music Now, which is the largest provider of live music to the UK's welfare, educational, justice and health sectors, with a unique resource of specially trained musicians.

The organisation works strategically with groups in the community whose access to live music would normally be restricted, such as children with special needs, adults with

learning difficulties, older people, hospital and hospice patients, prison inmates and young offenders and refugees.

Award-winning musicians Siobhan Miller, Jeana Leslie and Rua MacMillan brought their specially crafted musical programme, 'Traditional Tunes for Tiny People' to early years pupils in the Hamilton Early Learning Unit and Blackwood nursery class.

The project was designed to bring high-quality Scottish traditional music into the lives of young children, by taking these outstanding young musicians off the stage and into nurseries. The enjoyment was clear to see with the children joining in with clapping, singing and step-dance.

Film composer inspires pupils to follow dreams

By **Sarah Burrows**

AROUND 150 third year pupils gathered at Hamilton's Town House recently to be inspired and informed about pursuing a career in the creative industries.

The conference, organised by South Lanarkshire Council, was open to all secondary schools in the area.

At a pivotal time in their school careers, the students had the opportunity to hear from Oscar-nominated composer Patrick Doyle.

Patrick, originally from Lanarkshire, has written the film scores for numerous blockbuster movies such as Brave, below, Harry Potter, Thor and Sense and Sensibility.

He talked fondly of his education in Lanarkshire and says he can pinpoint a comment one of his music teachers made to him as being pivotal in his choice of career.

A music teacher spotted his emerging talent early on and told him he had a gift for music and that he could write music, too.

"I didn't believe her at the time but I often thought of her encouraging words and got back in touch with her a few years ago to thank her," says Patrick.

The composer hailed the creative industries seminar as an excellent showcase for pupils.

"This event is a fantastic chance for young people to see what opportunities are available in the creative industries," says Patrick.

"It is very encouraging that pupils in South Lanarkshire are getting the opportunity and the encouragement to think outside the box." His advice to pupils is to take



Composer Patrick Doyle with talented guitarist Brandon Brown at the recent Creative Industries seminar

an interest in all aspects of the arts, develop a passion for what they are doing and keep reading.

He told pupils: "Some of my success is due to being in the right place at the right time but I worked very hard to make sure that I had a good knowledge of music and drama, and that was why I was picked to do my first film score.

"Most importantly, I have had a great laugh in doing what I do and so can you.

"You all have the right to do something you love, so if you work hard and put in the long hours, you will get to where you want to be."

As well as hearing from Patrick, students had the chance to participate in a range of workshops, such as film making

and editing, sculpture and other art forms, as well as music making.

Pupils were also able to visit an information zone to find out more about further and higher education routes, as well as specific careers in the creative industries.

Councillor Jean McKeown, Chair of South Lanarkshire Council's Education Resources Committee, said: "I am delighted the second creative industries conference was such a success.

"Pupils who attended were selected because they have shown an interest in music, art, drama or technical skills.

"This event was an ideal opportunity for them to grab that interest and think about how they can move in a career pathway that will get them to where they want



Back to basics down on Ma

A 6am start for most of the year, and working until darkness falls, might not be everyone's idea of their dream job.

But for Maggie McDougall, right, stockman at the 1950s National Museum of Rural Life farm in East Kilbride, it is all in a day's work and part of her love of farming.

Indeed, Maggie's passion for farming dates back to her childhood.

"I'm a farmer's daughter, so it's in my blood and I have worked on, or run, a farm for the last 25 years," she explains.

"The only break I had was when my youngest child was born and I turned to baking for a short while."

Maggie added: "I get up at 5am to milk the cows and, most nights, I will be out and about until it's dark."

"During lambing season, though, you could say that I'm on call during the night as well, as I need to keep an eye on the ewes." For more than 11 years, Maggie has

Special feature by **Sarah Burrows**

worked on the 1950s farm at the National Museum of Rural Life at Killochside, where she lives with her husband, David.

"When the job of Stockman was advertised by the National Museum of Rural Life, both my husband, is a shepherd, and I applied. As you can imagine, it was a very tense night as we waited to hear if either of us had been successful," she chuckled.

In the end, it was Maggie that prevailed and she hasn't looked back since. Moving to East Kilbride suited her young family and the role at the farm gave her the opportunity to do what she loves, and help others to learn about farming life.

"Don't get me wrong, there are some times I'd like to use a hi-tech tractor or a quad bike to assist with farm duties, but, in the main, I love getting back to basics," admits Maggie.

"Things were very different in the world of farming back in the 1950s. Take feeding the cows, for instance, you still have to calculate how much milk each cow gives and in order to work out how much feed she needs."

"Nowadays, this would all be done electronically and we show all young visitors to the farm that they'll need to do their maths at school, as it can get quite complicated with

'I'm a farmer's daughter, so it's in my blood and I've worked on, or run



Pictures by Anne-Janine Nugent

cs working ggie's farm

...this out for each cow." Maggie continues: "I sometimes use a Ferguson tractor on the farm and a lot of visitors think it is a museum piece, as they can remember the model from years gone by."

"And they are very surprised to find out that we still occasionally use it on the farm."

Maggie also uses the farm's Clydesdale horse, Mairi, to give occasional demonstrations of harrowing in the fields.

Despite the long hours and demands of the job, Maggie recently graduated from Aberdeen University with a post graduate degree in Agricultural Business Management, which she completed via distance learning. "Looking back, I don't quite know where I found the time but I thought it was important to keep my skills up. I am all for lifelong learning."

Maggie says that while it is a working farm, it is also still very much a teaching farm.

From nursery and primary school classes, to agricultural students gaining work experience, Maggie and the Visitor Services staff are delighted to host their visits and answer their questions.

Says Maggie: "I think it is incredibly important that children, from as early an age as possible, understand where their food comes from and have an awareness of basic environmental factors."

"Sanderson High School has an allotment at the

...museum and the pupils grow a variety of vegetables they then take back for Home Economics classes.

"And, although I don't often get to take primary school tours, I love it when I do get the chance, as the kids' enthusiasm and willingness to learn is such a tonic."

"I usually get more involved with secondary tours where pupils are looking towards a career in agriculture."

"And we also have university students who come in regularly for work experience."

"The skills they can learn on this farm are second-to-none and I take great pride in seeing those who have undertaken work experience here end up in the agriculture field."

Maxwellton Primary in East Kilbride recently visited the farm, one of the numerous local schools having taken a trip to the museum over the past 12 years.

During their visit, class Teacher Kirsteen Helsby explained: "We chose to visit Kittochside at the start of our farm topic."

"Experiencing something first-hand – such as the noise or smell of the animals – will really improve the children's understanding when we take the learning back to the classroom."

Even the heavy rain during their visit didn't dampen the enthusiasm of the 25 primary one pupils.

They had been looking forward to it and asked lots of pertinent questions of Maggie, such as where do lambs go and where do they come from. The answer was a very diplomatic – ask your mum and dad!

● The National Museum of Rural Life is open seven days a week from 10am until 5pm.



...n a farm, for 25 years'



Iconic building re-opens after £766k facelift

FOLLOWING a £766,000 refurbishment, one of Cambuslang's best-known Grade-B listed buildings has reopened to the public.

Cambuslang Institute, which has been closed since September 2012, reopened after a major facelift funded by South Lanarkshire Council, together with a grant of £56,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

This additional grant money, as well as helping towards the cost of repair works, provided funding to help the council's project partners, The Friends of Cambuslang Park, to research, interpret and display the "scavenging" maps of the county from 1800 to 1974.

The additional funding will also be used to research significant events, such as the 'Cambuslang Wark' gatherings of 1742, which influenced the wider world, including the revivalist movement in America.

The Cambuslang Institute has, in the past, been home to a variety of cultural and sporting events and provided meeting areas for local people.

It is managed on behalf of South Lanarkshire Council by South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture.

In addition to the original facilities that have been upgraded, the Institute now has a new sound system, a soft play area for children up to the age of eight – that can be booked for birthday parties – and a welcoming new reception area.

The council worked closely with Historic Scotland to ensure the upgrading of the building was carried out with care and sensitivity.

Councillor Hamish Stewart, Chair of the Community Services Committee, said: "We are grateful to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the grant towards the upgrade that will help safeguard the future of this iconic facility in Cambuslang.

"This is the latest in a number of successful partnership projects with the Heritage Lottery Fund, which has seen the improvement of facilities across a range of venues throughout South Lanarkshire."

Young cyclists learn rules of the road

TEACHERS, staff and volunteers from schools across South Lanarkshire have been taking part in cycle training.

The new Bikeability Scotland training teaches the rules of the road, how to maintain bicycles, road positioning, cycle helmet wearing, visibility and safe and responsible cycling.

A training course for instructors was recently held at Chatelherault Country Park, with nearby residential streets also used to practise on and off-road manoeuvres.

THE sound of children in the classroom is as everyday as it gets, but add in the babble of a baby and you have a unique programme designed to boost pupils' relationship-building skills with their peers.

Primary three youngsters at St Columbkille's Primary School in Rutherglen are coming to the end of their time with 10-month-old Jackson Montgomery and his mum, Susan.

And it all came about thanks to 'Roots of Empathy', an initiative led by charity Action for Children Scotland, which aims to reduce problem behaviour – including fighting and bullying – by encouraging children to interact in a nurturing manner.

It sets out to teach primary school children to understand their own feelings, and the feelings of others, by using a baby as the 'tiny teacher'.

The idea is that this raises levels of empathy among classmates, resulting in more respectful relationships and a dramatic reduction in levels of aggression.

Action for Children is responsible for delivering this programme throughout Scotland and, with the support of the Scottish Government's Early Years Change Fund, will be working with all 32 Scottish local authorities next year – the first country worldwide to take this approach.

Independent evaluations of the programme carried out in Canada – where it originated and has been active for the longest period of time – revealed a significant increase in peer acceptance in 74 per cent of children and a 39 per cent decrease in social aggression.

Impressive statistics such as these can't be ignored and were a key reason why Integrating Children's Services – part of Education Resources – has rolled the initiative out across South Lanarkshire, including the Rutherglen and Cambuslang area.

At St Columbkille's, the 26 children in the P3 class are enjoying their last but one of nine sessions, which take place every few weeks across the entire school year.

Susan was recruited by her health visitor to the programme when her little one was just weeks old, and the decision was an easy one for the first-time mum, as she is a teacher herself.

The 31-year-old is currently on maternity leave from her post as a Geography and Modern Studies teacher at Hamilton Grammar, and jumped at the chance to introduce her son to the classroom environment.

"When my health visitor asked me if I wanted to get involved with the programme, I was happy to agree," she explains.

"Although the concept itself was new to me, as a teacher I know how important the teaching of real-life skills can be.

"We first visited the school when Jackson was just three and a half months – really just a babe in arms. And, in that time, the children have seen how quickly he has changed. Every time we come in, he can do something new. They really seem to be taken by him, which is lovely to see.

"And, over time, they have got used to the fact that he has all sorts of reactions to different situations. Sometimes, he's all smiles, other times he's a little grumpy, or cries. It's good for kids to see this as normal behaviour and not something to be angry, upset or stressed about."

Susan, from Cambuslang, admits that the programme ending at the forthcoming session will be difficult for all involved.

"The children have all grown very attached to Jackson," she smiles. "They love coming up with ideas of how to play with him, or how to console him if he's upset – maybe it's his teeth, or he's hungry.

"I know we will all feel a little sad when it's done but we have certainly gained from it, and I hope the pupils have, too."

Charlotte Hamilton, a Community Learning and Home School Partnership Worker, is responsible for leading the 'Roots of Empathy' sessions at St Columbkille's.



Baby's day out

Teaching pupils how to understand their own feelings can help to build relationships among classmates and reduce the potential for aggression in the playground, as **Lynne Carstairs** has been finding out



She starts by laying out a large green mat, which baby Jackson obligingly plops himself down in the middle of.

His audience of seven and eight-year-olds quickly gather and make a circle sitting around him, chattering among themselves.

For many young babies, this could be an intimidating turn of events but Jackson is clearly used to, and enjoys, the attention.

Explains Charlotte: "We always start our sessions with a welcome song, which Jackson loves. His mum carries him to every child to allow them to say 'hi' individually to him. It's a lovely opener and really relaxes everyone."

"Now that Jackson is older, I have noticed that he really engages with it, too."

After meeting and greeting all of his friends, Jackson is placed back in the middle of the group, where he starts playing happily with a ball.

When he drops it, there's a rush to pick it up and give it back to him. All of the children react with smiles when the baby comes close or visibly responds to them. And there is a definite competition for his attention – more so from the boys in the group.

Today's session is called 'Who am I' and is designed to teach the youngsters about what Jackson wants and needs, and how, without being able to speak, he can communicate this to those around him.

Charlotte leads the group in a mini Q&A session with Susan, and every hand shoots up.

"How do you know when he's hungry or thirsty?" quizzes one boy; "where does he get fed," asks another; "why can't he speak?" one girl wants to know.

Susan's teaching skills are obvious as she calmly answers all the questions in a way the children can understand. They like the idea

that mum can figure out what his different cries mean, that he gets fed in his high chair at the family table and find it hilarious that they were apparently all unable to speak at one time, too.

Throughout it all, Jackson has remained happily in the centre of the group, rolling the ball back and forward with two or three of the children.

At one point, he leans a little too far and rolls right over, landing with his legs in the air. There's spontaneous applause and laughter from the children, who clearly think this is both cute and hysterical.

The shock of the stumble, and the surprise of the noise, startles Jackson and he starts to cry inconsolably. The instant reaction from the children – to whom he is like a collective little brother – is to make it better.

Together they decide they will sing him one of his favourite songs to calm him down. Lots of ideas are thrown up until they decide on 'Twinkle Twinkle, Little Star'.

One verse and a chorus in, and Jackson is beginning to settle, his eyes widen, taking it all in. The relief among the children is palpable.

Despite the fall, there are still multiple theories from the young classmates as to why baby got so upset – "I think he's hungry" and "maybe he wants a toy" venture some.

After a few baby snacks, a little juice and a cuddle from mum, he perks up further and gets back in among the kids, striking up a 'baby babble' conversation with one little girl, who looks delighted.

Charlotte then leads them through themes and ideas – what is different about babies, increasing their understanding of wants, needs and reactions.

They are asked what difference they see in

him since last visit? Lots of answers are happily shouted out and many want to tell longer stories about what their own siblings get up to.

Jackson chats away throughout, as if adding his own tuppence worth to the debate.

And Charlotte points out that, even though Jackson seems happy and relaxed, every now and then he looks to his mum for reassurance. It seems to be something most can relate to.

The whole session has lasted half an hour and, before long, the kids are back on their feet singing their goodbye song to Jackson.

They stroke his head and arm and tickle his tummy as he is taken around once more to say his individual 'cheerios'.

He is like the class mascot, one of the gang.

The next session that the P3s spend with Jackson will be their last, at which point Charlotte will present Susan with a photo album of special moments shared over their time together.

She admits it is often an emotional experience for all involved: "From previous experience, the children, baby, mum and I all become one big group. There's an emotional attachment formed and it can often be difficult for the children, in particular, to realise that such a lovely part of their school life is coming to an end."

"However, giving these children the chance to recognise, and cope with, such emotions is actually the very reason the programme exists."

"Their whole experience with Jackson has evoked so many reactions and, from my perspective, it is really worthwhile to have given them such an experience."

"It's an ideal age to impart such important life skills, and is sure to bring real and lasting benefits."

New chairs appointed to committees

HAMILTON councillor Allan Falconer has been appointed as the new chair of South Lanarkshire's Social Work Committee.

And Larkhall councillor Andy Carmichael is the new Licensing Committee chair.

Both appointments were unanimously approved by councillors at the Executive Committee on Wednesday, May 29.

Councillor Falconer replaces Council Leader Eddie McAvoy, who acted as interim chair following Councillor Jim Handibode's decision in April to stand down from the role after 15 years' service.

Bothwell Councillor Maureen Devlin moves from her role as Licensing chair to depute chair of Social Work, joining fellow depute chair Clydesdale councillor Lynsey Hamilton.

Council Leader Eddie McAvoy said: "Allan and Andy bring a wealth of experience to their new roles."

"Maureen also brings great experience to the Social Work Committee as a new depute chair and, on behalf of the Executive Committee, I wish them well."

Following Councillor Handibode's decision to step down, Councillor McAvoy said: "I want to thank Jim for his many years of service as Chair of Social Work Resources."

The Executive Committee also agreed that Councillor Handibode will now sit on the Licensing Committee and Councillor Gerry Convery on the Social Work Committee.

Last chance to have say on the Local Plan

THE communities of South Lanarkshire have one final week to comment on their council's vision for the continued growth and regeneration of the area.

The proposed South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan comes to the end of its consultation period on June 28.

The new plan is the successor to the first South Lanarkshire Local Plan, which was adopted in 2009, and will guide the council's decisions on development proposals.

Members of the public can view and comment on the proposed plan at council offices, libraries and Q&As – as well as online at www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk – until next Friday.

Full of beans after street cafe consent

A FORMER estate agents in Rutherglen is set to open up as a pavement café.

The plans for the shop unit at 237-239 Main Street in the Royal Burgh were approved by councillors at a recent meeting of South Lanarkshire's Planning Committee.

Applicants, Mr and Mrs Houston, were granted consent for the change of use, along with alterations to the shop front, installation of a canopy and temporary consent for an external seating area.



Reshaping care is essential for today's elderly and the future

By Euan Duguid

PEOPLE in Lanarkshire, and across Scotland, are now living longer and, generally, healthier lives than ever before.

More people living healthier lives means that older Scots make up a much greater proportion of the population.

That's a measure of the vast improvements made to healthcare in recent years but it also presents us all with a major challenge.

For most of us, this shouldn't make a huge difference to the lives we lead.

But many people will require extra help with their general health, maintaining independence at home or simply staying in touch with families, friends and communities.

In the future, we will continue to look to the NHS, local councils, the private sector and to voluntary and charitable organisations to provide high-quality support and services – whether in hospitals, care homes or in the community.

But we need to find ways of delivering services in future to many more older people, while continuing to improve quality and standards.

By 2016, we expect the number of older Scots requiring some form of care to rise by up to a quarter, rising to nearly two thirds by 2032.

It is clear that our current set-up needs to adapt to meet this increase in numbers.

A plan needs to be put in place – not just for today's older people but for future generations.

To make this happen, work on the Reshaping Care for Older People programme began in Lanarkshire in 2011, involving NHS Lanarkshire, North Lanarkshire Council, South Lanarkshire Council, voluntary organisations and the independent sector. (Which includes care homes and some care at home services).

The RCOP programme is backed by a Scottish Government Change Fund in Lanarkshire until 2014/15.

This funding is being used to pilot new and better approaches to transform support and care to more effectively meet older people's needs.

Research shows most older people would prefer to remain in their own homes with support, if they are unable to look after themselves.

But supporting and caring for older people is not just a health or social work responsibility.

Unpaid carers, such as family and friends, also play a vital role in providing this support.

In practical terms, RCOP is a collaborative approach to devise ways to support the growing numbers of people aged 65 and over, focusing on providing more care at home, homely settings or in the community.

The central aim is to allow people to continue to live full, positive and independent lives, while being less dependent on the formal care system.



Get out, get active, get involved ...

That's the motto of Seniors Together, the campaigning group aiming to improve the quality of life for older people. **Annie Stuart** meets the local volunteer who has taken this message very much to heart

ALMOST 20 years ago, Ada Thomson managed a charity shop, running the retail operation and co-ordinating and supervising volunteers.

A conversation she had with one of the ladies who came in to help has stuck with her ever since.

"I asked her what motivated her to come into the shop week after week, in rain, hail or snow, with very little reward," recalls Ada.

"She said that after she retired, she felt she was losing all the skills she had while she was working.

"But since starting to volunteer, she had realised the skills hadn't disappeared, they were still there and she could use them and feel a sense of achievement again – she felt worthwhile."

Ada smiles: "I decided, at that moment, I would volunteer when I retired – and I never forgot her words." Ada, 71, retired 12 years

ago and spent many years volunteering in Glasgow before moving to South Lanarkshire in 2009.

She is now a volunteer with Seniors Together, a network of organisations working in partnership to change attitudes towards, and services for, older people.

Partners include South Lanarkshire Council, South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture and NHS Lanarkshire.

Christine Calder, project manager, explains: "There are two sides to Seniors Together – the campaigning side, which aims to improve the quality of life of older people, and the active ageing side, and Ada is involved in both.

"She is enthusiastic – a real motivator. Our mantra at Seniors Together is 'get out, get active and get involved' and Ada did exactly that.

"Even more importantly, she didn't

just want to volunteer, she wanted to encourage others to do it, too."

Concerned about the lack of activities for older people in her home town of Bothwell, Ada approached Seniors Together and asked if she could set something up.

"I could see lots of retired people in Bothwell and Uddingston but not a huge number of activities available in the area," says Ada.

"I've always been pretty active, outdoor bowling and walking, so I thought I'd start a badminton club for older people. It got a great response."

In fact, the Saturday afternoon South Lanarkshire Leisure Forever Active class for Seniors, which runs in Uddingston Sports Centre from 12 noon until 2pm, has been so popular it now covers a variety of sports, including badminton, table tennis, curling and bowling.

Ada has also started a Forever





Active line dancing group for seniors in Bothwell Community Hall, which now has around 20 members.

On an unseasonably chilly May morning, the welcome is warm as the band of women – and one man – practise their steps to the strains of Achy Breaky Heart and Blue Roses.

“We can do 10 dances now – that is truly amazing,” laughs Irene Black, who has been coming along to the class for several months.

“Ten dances. I’d never have believed it.”

Irene, 68, met Ada at the local bowling club after Ada had organised a ‘lineathon’ dance event in aid of a breast cancer charity.

“I tried line dancing before but the classes tended to be very busy and I found them quite competitive,” Irene explains. “Ada takes you through things step by step, and it’s a lovely atmosphere.”

She adds: “When my husband died, I had to find a new life. You can either sit in the house and do nothing, or get out there and get involved.

“People think when you get to our age, you can’t be active but it’s not true.”

She smiles: “I love the line-dancing class now, and I also go to the Saturday morning group, trying out sports I’ve never done before in my life. It’s great fun.”

Ada, who has three daughters and four grandchildren, lives in Bothwell with her husband, Charles, whom she met through a walking group.

“Ada is one of those people who motivates people to get out there and do things,” explains Charles, who has popped in to the line-dancing session.

Not to take part – “I don’t dance,” he shakes his head – “but to pick up

a new box of badminton racquets delivered to the hall for Ada’s Saturday morning class.

“I have had health problems but it’s all about keeping moving, keeping active. It makes a huge difference.”

Ada agrees. “Keeping active gives people a new lease of life,” she says.

“Just because you get older doesn’t mean you don’t still want to contribute.

“The work that Seniors Together does is really important because it is sending out that message that there are still plenty of opportunities to get involved.”

Ada travelled to Denmark recently on a study visit with Seniors Together, and she also helps to organise South Lanarkshire’s Big Event, a conference and activity day celebrating older people.

She is already helping to plan the new Active Ageing Festival for the autumn and, as well as her classes, is a committee member for the Seniors Together offshoot group, forward @fifty.

“I had more free time before I retired,” she laughs. “But it’s all good. Why on earth should you just have to sit around and do nothing when you get to your 70s?”

“I love volunteering and I realise now what that lady meant all those years ago, sitting chatting to me in the charity shop.

“I feel a real sense of achievement when someone like Irene comes to me and says she is now doing all these active things she’d never done before. I feel like I’m giving something back – and experiencing new horizons, every day.”

● For more information on Seniors Together and forward@fifty, visit www.forward-at-50.org.uk



HEAR YE, HEAR YE ... THE THIRD ANNUAL MAUSOLEUM FESTIVAL OF

Go back to the a taste of life in

VISITORS to Hamilton Mausoleum next month will be transported back in time to the 1500s with a commemorative re-enactment of the brave Lanarkshire men who fought for King James IV at Flodden Field in 1513, writes Mhairi Anderson.

The iconic landmark is the historic setting for the third annual Mausoleum Festival of Living History on Saturday, July 13.

Organised by South Lanarkshire Leisure & Culture's Museum Service, the free event offers family fun and hands-on activities between 12 and 4pm.

Scattered around the famous Mausoleum grounds will be a living history encampment featuring period tents and awnings, with military displays, as well as craft, food and cooking of the period.

There will also be demonstrations of military and civilian dress of the 1500s, as well as dramatic and loud demonstrations of musketry and weaponry of the type used at Flodden.

Visitors can even try out their own skills with the bow and arrow in the 'have-a-go' archery area.

Another side of 16th century life will be presented in the Mausoleum Chapel, where there will be demonstrations of high-status female costume, as well as an insight into cosmetics, cooking and midwifery of the period.

In the chapel will also be displays by local craftspeople and an opportunity for visitors to buy their products.

There will be plenty of activities to keep younger visitors entertained, including a bouncy castle and face-painters, who will be on hand for anyone who perhaps fancies trying 16th century war-paint or cosmetics, or the ever-popular butterfly or tiger face.

This year's festival links to the year-long Celebrating Lanarkshire 2013 campaign and also the 500th anniversary of the battle of Flodden, in which many Lanarkshire men lost their lives.

Two of the most important Scottish families at the time of Flodden were the Hamiltons and the Douglasses, both prominent local dynasties.

Younger visitors can look forward to a visit from Mausie and Leum, the mausoleum's two lion mascots.

Anyone who has been to the Hamilton Mausoleum will be familiar with the two imposing lion sculptures guarding the entrance to the crypt.

And, on special occasions such as the Mausoleum Festival, Mausie and Leum mingle with the crowd, hoping to be the 'mane' attraction.

If the weather is good, there is plenty of space for families to enjoy a picnic in the grounds, however, there will also be mobile catering available, as well as toilets onsite.

The festival provides a wonderful opportunity to visit the Hamilton Mausoleum, which is one of the most famous buildings, not just in South Lanarkshire, but in Scotland. >>>



Pictures by Anne-Janine Nugent



LIVING HISTORY OFFERS VISITORS THE CHANCE TO ...

future and try the 16th century



The mausoleum is one of the finest private tombs in the country and was built by Alexander, 10th Duke of Hamilton, a flamboyant character nicknamed 'El Magnifico'.

It was unfinished at the time of Alexander's death in 1852 but he was, nevertheless, laid to rest in an Egyptian sarcophagus, lying on a black marble pedestal in the mausoleum chapel.

However, festival visitors needn't be alarmed, as all the remains were removed from the mausoleum in the 1920s.

Although the black marble plinth remains in the chapel, the sarcophagus was removed to Bent Cemetery in 1921. The chapel is very impressive inside with its massive dome and its beautiful floor is made from pieces of marble from all around the world.

Its impressive bronze doors were cast from the famous Renaissance Baptistery doors in Florence.

However, one of the first things any visitor to the mausoleum will notice is its world-famous echo, one of the longest in the country at around 15 seconds, which actually prevented it ever being used as a chapel, as originally intended.

Visitors at opposite ends can hold a whispered conversation with each other and pick up every word, without anyone in between hearing any of the chat. The voice carries up the walls and over the archway to the other side without a sound being heard in between.

This acoustic effect is why it was nicknamed the Whispering Walls or 'Whispering Wa's', as it is affectionately called in Lanarkshire.

The mausoleum has been described as "an extraordinary work of architectural sculpture" – it even had its own ducted central heating system.

It has a remarkable Roman-style domed structure of panelled masonry standing 120 feet high, with a base covering about 110 feet in diameter and sits on a beautifully formed terrace just a little north of the site where the Hamilton Palace once stood.

Exactly opposite the entrance to the chapel is a massive pedestal of black marble. The sarcophagus was one of the relics of Memphian antiquities brought from the land of the Pharaohs and, on its lid, was the representation of an Egyptian Princess.

Alexander bought it in Paris on behalf of the British Museum for the sum of £632. 8s 2d, believing it had belonged to a member of Egyptian royalty. When this was found not to be the case, he purchased it for his own use.

The casket was six feet long and built for a woman of five feet six inches.

Although the Duke might have shrunk a little in old age, local legend has it that he insisted on being placed into the casket after his death and ordered his staff to "Double me up ... double me up" and, according to the legend, they popped his knees and folded his legs under him.

● For further info contact Joyce Brown, Museum Access Officer, on 01698 476165 or at joyce.brown@southlanarkshireleisure.co.uk; or Aileen Meechan, Assistant Museum Access Officer on 01698 476170, or aileen.meechan@southlanarkshireleisure.co.uk



Recycle Week 17-23 June 2013

70,000 Tonnes and Counting...

On average, every household in South Lanarkshire recycled ½ a tonne of waste last year, totalling 70,000 tonnes throughout the area.

You can count on us.....

We are committed to providing recycling services to our customers wherever possible but we can always do more. Please use these guidelines to ensure you are making the best use of your services and help us Recycle for South Lanarkshire!



Blue recycling bin*

Yes please

Mixed papers

- ✓ Newspapers and magazines
- ✓ Catalogues, pamphlets and telephone directories (including Yellow Pages)
- ✓ Cardboard
- ✓ Packaging card (including Tetra-Pak)
- ✓ Junk mail, envelopes and office paper
- ✓ Wrapping paper, greetings cards and books

Metal products

- ✓ Food and drinks cans
- ✓ Clean aluminium foil and trays
- ✓ Aerosol cans (empty)

Mixed plastics

- ✓ Milk cartons
- ✓ Water and drinks bottles
- ✓ Detergent bottles (including shampoo etc)
- ✓ Trays, pots and tubs

Please ensure that all containers are empty and have been rinsed out

Please remove all bottle tops

No thanks

Glass

- ✗ Please dispose of any glass bottles and jars at local recycling sites or in your burgundy glass recycling bin

Wood

- ✗ Please dispose of any wood at your Household Waste and Recycling sites or through the special bulk uplift service

Clothes

- ✗ Please dispose of any items of clothing at clothing banks, charity shops or through the special bulk uplift service

Food waste

- ✗ Please place all food waste in the normal household waste bin

Paper

- ✗ Any paper that has been in direct contact with food such as chip wrappers
- ✗ Wallpaper

Plastics

- ✗ Carrier and bin bags
- ✗ Polystyrene
- ✗ Polythene
- ✗ Crisp packets and sweetie wrappers

Cardboard

- ✗ Any cardboard that has been in direct contact with food such as take away pizza boxes

Scrap metals

Burgundy glass bin*

Yes please

Glass bottles

- ✓ Wine, beer and spirit bottles

Glass Jars

- ✓ Coffee, jam and sauce jars

Please remove lids and rinse out

No thanks

- ✗ Pyrex jugs and dishes
- ✗ Mirrors
- ✗ Window panes
- ✗ Ceramic
- ✗ Light bulbs

Garden waste

Please dispose of any garden waste through our **free** garden waste collection by using the online form www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk or by calling **0303 123 1020** or at any Household Waste and Recycling Centres

* Kerbside services available depending on the type of property you live in. Contact us to find out more.

If you don't have recycling bins at home yet or are clearing out or doing some DIY, you can recycle everything from clothing to wood and metal at one of our excellent Household Waste and Recycling Centres (listed below). You can also look out for smaller recycling containers across the area.

Carluke Waste and Recycling Centre Castlehill Industrial Estate, ML8 5WB	Opening Hours Summer (April to September): Monday to Friday - 7am to 8pm Saturday and Sunday - 8.30am to 5pm Winter (October to March): Monday to Friday - 7am to 5pm Saturday and Sunday - 8.30am to 4pm Enquiries: 0303 123 1020
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East Kilbride Waste and Recycling Centre Peel Park Industrial Estate, G74 5LW	Opening Hours Summer (April to September): Monday to Friday - 9am to 8pm Saturday - 9am to 7pm Sunday - 9am to 6pm Winter (October to March): Monday to Sunday - 9am to 6pm Enquiries: 0141 781 9151
Eastfield Waste and Recycling Centre Cambuslang Road, Rutherglen, G72 7TS	
Hamilton and Blantyre Waste and Recycling Centre East Avenue, Blantyre Industrial Estate, G72 0JE	
Larkhall Waste and Recycling Centre Strutherhill Industrial Estate, ML9 2TL	
Strathaven Waste and Recycling Centre Hamilton Road Industrial Estate, ML10 6UB	

If you require any further information or assistance, please contact the Waste Education Unit on 0303 123 1020 where one of our officers will be on hand to advise you.