



Lasswade and District Civic Society

Summer 2011

Welcome from our Chair

Welcome to the Summer 2011 Newsletter of the Lasswade and District Civic Society. The Newsletter provides the opportunity to inform members of the forthcoming activities of the Society and hopefully to encourage the recruitment of new members. Some of the Society activities are work orientated, for example the local clean ups, and some are purely social, for example the annual March wine and

cheese party. Either category of event only works when members give their time and join in. We 'the committee' would like to say a big thank you to all those who turn out, whether it be to garden in the rain or to socialise at a party, an outing, or a talk, and we look forward to seeing you again or meeting you for the first time at future events.
Jan Jerome

Web Page Development

As well as the usual Society activities we are this year engaged in three distinct projects. The first of these is an updating of the Society website in collaboration with the Jewel and Esk College, a process which will require our co-operation but the work will be undertaken free of charge by college students. Over the next academic year we will be looking to upgrade the site to comply with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

and to enhance the appearance and the functionality in the process. We can say right now that the tree will go (!) because there will, in the future, be no loading time. We will be looking to re-design the home page with more emphasis on the benefits of belonging to the Society. Changes will be transitional and during this period we will be very pleased to receive any suggestions from members.

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Diary Dates

Sunday 11th September

Clean-up day from 1.30

*Meet in Lasswade
Community garden*

Autumn Outing *Tour of
Dalkeith Palace . Details TBC*

Monday 14th November

*Talk by Pete Cain, 7.30
Lasswade Pavilion*

Projects

Village Entrance Sign

The second project is being undertaken in co-operation with the Council and is aimed at improving the entrances to Lasswade, looking in the first instance at the approach from Loanhead/Edinburgh.

There is at the moment nothing to show that Lasswade has been entered as the road sign at the village entrance is for 'Bonnyrigg and Lasswade'. It is early days yet but options are being considered and the Council is looking at

possible funding sources.



Current Village Entrance

Lasswade Weir

The third project is at an even earlier stage but thanks to the efforts of Ed Angus, who is working as project manager on behalf of the Society, some significant progress has been made. We are exploring the possibility of establishing a micro hydro project on the North Esk. Ed is in communication with Esk Valley Trust and the Council to confirm ownership. Once ownership has been confirmed to their satisfaction Community Energy Scotland has agreed to carry out a preliminary study, free of charge, to ascertain the suitability of the site for such a scheme. So at this point we can simply say

see our next Newsletter for an update!

Community Garden



We have had two garden events since the winter. The first at the end of March included a plant swap and tidy up of the garden. Any members could bring plants from their own garden to exchange or give to other members. This was fun and appreciated by

those who participated. We will do the plant swap at the next clean- up day on 11th September. So pot on any seedlings you come across this summer. Our gardeners had tea and cakes after the gardening and litter pick of the park so that we could chat too. The second garden event was a couple of weeks ago when a few stalwart gardeners tried to get on top of

the weeds at the far end
of the garden. With your

support we will continue
With this in September but it already looks tidier.

Planning Update

Kevoek Vale Caravan Park

Some of you may know already that the application to replace Kevoek Vale Caravan Park with a 64 unit residential development and 96 car parking spaces has been refused permission by Midlothian Council (MC). The reasons for the Council's decision are:

1. The proposed development as indicatively shown will have a detrimental impact on highway safety by means of increasing the volume of traffic to an unacceptable level onto the Westmill Road, which is substandard in terms of its visibility, alignment and its use for on street parking.

2. The application as submitted does not demonstrate that any proposed development can be sensitively designed and laid out in a form that is compatible to its setting in a Conservation Area, an Area of Great Landscape Value and Protected River Valley. As such the proposed development is

contrary to Midlothian Local Plan Policies RP5, RP6, RP7, RP9 and RP22.
3. The application as submitted does not demonstrate that it can provide appropriate open space and flood risk mitigation and is therefore contrary to Midlothian Local plan policies RP8, DP2 and DP3.

Springfield Farm, Polton Road

The MC Local Review Body have upheld the planners decision to refuse permission for the erection of a dwelling house and stable block in this Protected River Valley Area of Great Landscape Value to which the society had objected in principal.

Byways, 11 Church Road, Lasswade

The MC Local Review Body have now granted permission for an application from 2004 to infill land and culvert the

Wading Burn ,which the Society had objected to, but the permission is subject to a number of conditions to keep the impact on the landscape to a minimum as far as possible.

The Old Mill, West Mill Road, Lasswade
Plans to redevelop and re-open the Old Mill as a restaurant and café have been submitted to MC. An opening date is eagerly awaited.

Thanks to those who have alerted us about planning issues, sometimes members hear first!



Any offers for this?

Lasswade Churchyard clean- up

In June we had a clear out of the overgrown vegetation in the old graveyard.

Before



A mountain of garden waste was generated and we really earned our tea and

*cakes that day!
Thanks to those of you who come and help with*



After

these clean- ups. We hope that they are social as well as productive so all are welcome to join us even if just to support our efforts with your presence!

Climate Change by our local expert, David Sugden

The report: Facing up to climate change: breaking the barriers to a low-carbon Scotland, was published by the Royal Society of Edinburgh in March 2011. The report and a two minute film are available on the web site of the Royal Society of Edinburgh or at www.achangingclimate.co.uk. The film is also on YouTube under climate change. This report has sections dealing with local and regional opportunities and barriers. David's involvement was as Chair of the Inquiry. A key feature is that the Inquiry and the report represent an independent view.

Forthcoming Events and Diary Dates

Sunday 11th September
1.30 in Lasswade Park River clean- up, litter pick and plant swap. If we have enough volunteers we will have a group starting at Polton end of river too. We invite all members to come for a cup of tea and a slice of cake and plant swap at about 4 o'clock in the community garden. We would like to see you even if you prefer not to do the clean up . Pot up your plants to swap!

Monday 14th November
7.30pm Lasswade Pavilion Autumn Talk by Pete Cain. Pete has been really involved in the re generation of the Springfield Mill site and is a keen naturalist. His talk will be accompanied by slides,

Autumn Outing

We are planning a tour of Dalkeith Palace but unable to confirm details as yet.

Newsletter credits

Thanks to Jan for her photos.

Thanks to Angus Macrae for the printing of this edition

All contributions for future newsletters to Bridget Mackay

<http://www.lasswadecivic.com>

AGM

At the AGM we were given a much appreciated talk and film by Jane Eckesall about the work and background of the Esk Valley Trust. Formed in April 2001 with the aim of caring for the beauty, history and character of the two rivers North and South Esk, the Trust stimulates public interest and has gathered considerable support for its cause, which includes the promotion of a long-distance path to be known as the Esk Valley Way.

The North and South Esk rivers rise in the Pentlands, combine at Watersmeet in Dalkeith Country Park, and flow to the sea at Musselburgh. We were particularly interested in our general area around Lasswade, from the mills at Polton and Roslin, through Lasswade, and on towards Dalkieth.

There were some fascinating insights and pictures of the old industries of the area, including the two paper mills in Polton and those that needing the water power such as the early corn mills, and the St Anne's Carpet Factory. Some years later, the Duke of Buccleuch

complained about the pollution in the river from the carpet mill, and Lord Melville was persuaded not to renew the lease of the land. New premises were found further upstream in Roslin Glen and the manufacture of the world famous tapestry carpets continued. Nowadays, thanks to determined local controls, the water runs clear and teeming aquatic life flourishes once again in the river.



Esk Goosander

In 1867 a branch line from the Edinburgh to Peebles railway was opened to serve the paper mills in Polton with a long tunnel between Broomieknowe and Lasswade stations and a beautiful six arch viaduct, designed by Thomas Bouch, across the valley at Lasswade.

Mention was made of Mavisbank House, once one of Scotland's finest buildings, designed by William Adam for Sir John Clerk as a summer

residence convenient for his work in Edinburgh. From the late 19th century until 1951 it was used as a hospital for the mentally ill but later, back in private ownership, it was gutted by fire in 1973. The house is now a ruin but does attract interest, not least since the recent 'Restoration' TV series.

We were reminded of the origins of Lasswade, named according to legend because at one time, before there was a bridge, a sturdy local girl would struggle across the river carrying travellers on her back - hence 'Jenny lass, wade!' Rather less romantically, the name is probably derived from the Anglo-Saxon laes or leswe, a common, and weyde, a meadow

New Committee

We would like to thank David Sugden, our outgoing chair, for all his work. He will continue to keep an eye on the Core Paths for us.

New committee

Chair Jan Jerome

Secretary Sheila Barker

Treasurer Adam Lansdown

Membership Secretary Rosemary Mackay

Social Secretary Bridget Mackay

Planning Sheila Murray

Committee member Michael Stoneham

We have one vacancy within the committee

