

Lasswade District Civic Society

# Newsletter

SPRING 2019



## Chairman's Report

As I write this, in mid-January, we are having an extraordinarily mild and benign winter, but of course, this is Scotland, so by the time you read this, we may be under a foot of snow! Whatever the weather, spring will soon be upon us and the countryside around us will begin to burst into bloom, reminding us of why we choose to live in such a beautiful area. I know that many of you will take photographs, either on your cameras or your mobile phones, of the things you see when out walking and we are very keen to build up an archive of such pictures.

In this issue of the Newsletter, you will see details of our photographic competition. Please do not assume these have to be taken with professional equipment in order to have any chance of winning. The quality of pictures taken on mobiles nowadays is incredible and you can send them to us electronically if you prefer. Even if you do not want to enter the competition, please keep your pictures coming, so that we can enhance the visual impact of our website and show off to the world the beauty that is around us all.

*George Clark*  
Chairman

## Secretary's Report

Beautiful, sunny winter days have offered up some wonderful opportunities for taking photographs of Lasswade. I do hope that you will send us your images, be they scenic, unusual or amusing. The results of the Photographic Competition will be announced at the AGM on Wednesday 24th April in St Leonard's Church Hall from 7.30pm.

We look forward to your comments on the proposals for Mavisbank House and Grounds. Lucy Wood, who has been appointed as Engagement Officer for the Edinburgh Greenspace Trust, has very kindly agreed to give a Talk to the Society.

Members have brought to our attention a number of areas that require maintenance and repair. Unfortunately Midlothian Council have taken the decision to put all non-essential works on hold until they determine the 2019/20 Budget. We will continue to petition the Council to carry out necessary repairs. We have, for example, highlighted the poor condition of the bus-stop within the the Community Garden and noted that without maintenance, the roof and windows will rot because of water ingress. Gutters and a down pipe need to be attached to the shelter, to divert rain.

Please let us know when you spot problems with the infrastructure.

We would like to thank once again, the Society's Reps who give such dedicated service on your behalf. I wish them dry weather as they deliver your Newsletter, collect subs and find out what issues you wish the Society to take up on your behalf.

We do hope that you will join us at the Annual Civic Society Party, which represents great value at £5 a ticket, where there will wine, nibbles and a warm welcome! St Leonard's Church Hall from 7.30pm on Friday 1st March 2019. Your Rep will have Tickets

*Rosemary Mackay*  
Secretary

## Update on the Plans for Mavisbank House and Grounds

The Landmark Trust (TLT) and Historic Environment Scotland (HES) continue to work together to explore the potential for a project at Mavisbank. Whilst no detailed proposals have been identified, the Landmark Trust's ultimate goal would be for holiday accommodation and the provision of community facilities, possibly artist's studio space, within the building.

As you may be aware the Landmark Trust <https://www.landmarktrust.org.uk>, specialises in restoring old historic buildings to provide holiday accommodation.

The Civic Society has polled Members twice in the past few years and almost 100% of responses supported a light-touch approach to the development of both the house and grounds.

Restoration of the house and grounds would require significant funding and the TLT and HES, recognise that Midlothian Council cannot provide financial support. HES and TLT may apply in Autumn 2019 for a Grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. That would need to be followed by approaches to other funding sources due to the scale of money, likely to be required for any TLT project.

A successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund would require to demonstrate considerable Community engagement and support for any project, as well as showing how that community would benefit from the investment. To that end Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust have received funding from HES to undertake Community engagement in the Loanhead, Bonnyrigg and Lasswade areas, in an effort to promote the House and grounds. Lucy Wood has been appointed as the Engagement Officer, to undertake this work. Midlothian Council's Communities and Planning Teams have been tasked with assisting Lucy in her work.

All parties are aware of significant concerns raised by Midlothian Council regarding any development which increases traffic through Polton Bank, Lasswade.

It is recognised that access is one of a number of issues that would require detailed consideration before any application, could be put before the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The reasons the Lottery gave for turning down an Application in 2013, related to

- There being insufficient evidence of community engagement and involvement in the Project.
  - Ownership of the property not being known and secure.
  - Project not having suitable access into the grounds of the house. Consideration has been given to constructing road access from Loanhead to the House, with attendant street lighting.
- As yet no such application has been considered by Midlothian Council.
- Concerns over the long-term sustainability of the project in terms of visitors and income.
  - Heritage Lottery not being convinced of HES's (then Historic Scotland) full support for the Project.

Given the bio-diversity and historic value of Mavisbank House and Grounds, many Members, including Tom Delaney, who carried out a comprehensive Ornithological Survey, have expressed an interest in the future of this site. We look forward to your comments.



## Upcoming Events relating to Mavisbank

Lucy Wood, is planning a number of events celebrating the history and bio-diversity.

### Wednesday 27th February 2019 - A Talk in the Woods

Walk along the River Esk and a Talk about John Clerk and/or Midlothian and The Enlightenment (details to follow by e-mail)

### Saturday 23rd March 2019 - Explore Mavisbank : Birds

Family Event - Activities including a survey of birds at Mavisbank, listening to birdsong and a study of habitats.

### Wednesday 27th March 2019 - A Talk in the Woods

Walk in grounds of Mavisbank with Poetry/Reading Workshop (details to follow by e-mail)

Lucy is working with a number of Primary Schools in Loanhead on Projects related to Mavisbank and the Scottish Enlightenment.



## Autumn Talk

Many Thanks!

Professor Jim Murray gave a very interesting Talk about Education in Lasswade from the 19th to the 21st Century. This was a very well attended evening and Members enjoyed a very thoroughly researched and engaging Talk, about Lasswade as a long-standing centre of excellence in Education. There were a number of both Private and Public a schools in the Village in the 19th Century and children travelled from throughout the County of Midlothian to attend lessons in a wide variety of subjects, including Latin and Mathematics.

We would like to thank Jim for so generously sharing his detailed and rigorous research and hope that he will make a return a visit in the future.

## An unexpected donation to the work of the Society

The Committee have expressed their thanks on behalf of all Members, for a generous and unexpected donation of £100, made by a Member who wishes to remain anonymous.

## Moving to a cashless Society!

Our Treasurer in an effort to meet the needs of all of our Members, is introducing a Direct Debit facility for the payment of your Subs. Details will be sent out in the New Year.

There is no obligation to take this option and Reps will still be calling your door if you prefer to continue to pay by cash.

A number of Member, old and new, have suggested that we have an alternative to cash, as they now rarely carry money.

## Photographic Competition

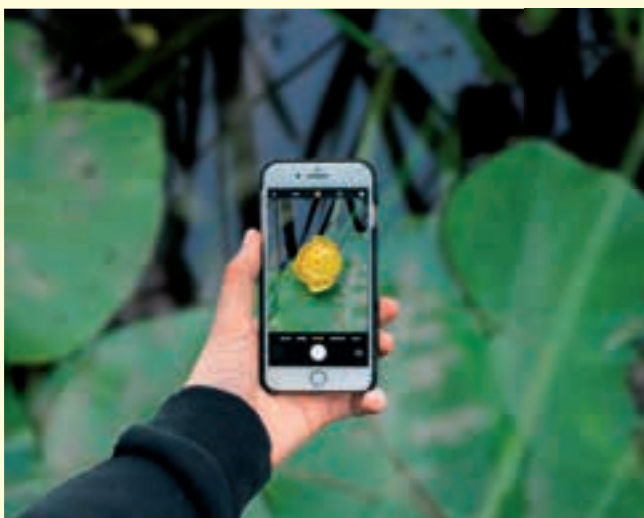
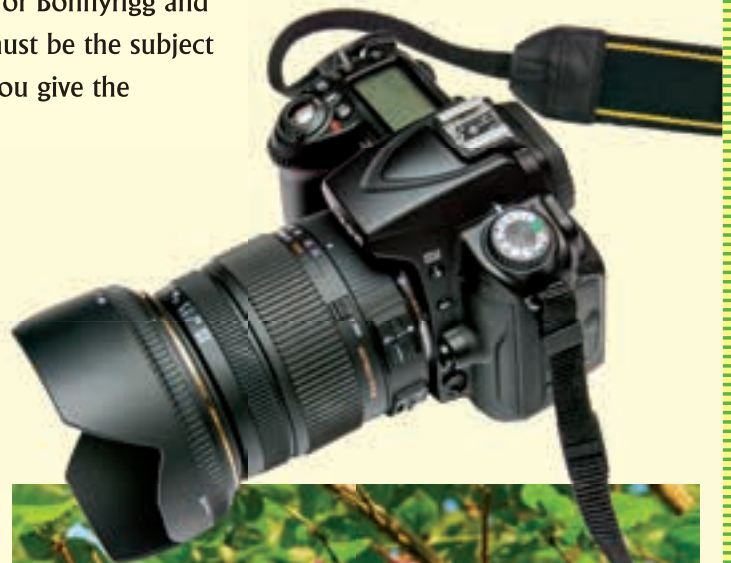
The closing date for the Competition is **31st March 2019**. This allows you to include images of the forthcoming Winter and Spring.

Please e-mail entries to [dequinceyrose@aol.com](mailto:dequinceyrose@aol.com)

The Competition is open to anyone living in Lasswade or Bonnyrigg and there is no limit on the number of entries. Lasswade must be the subject of the photographs and by entering the Competition you give the Society the right to reproduce your images.

There will be a First Prize of £100 with a second prize of £25 and a third prize of £10.

*We look forward to receiving your entries!*



## Dates for your Diary

- Sunday 24th February** Reps Afternoon Tea Party
- Friday 1st March 2019** Annual Civic Society Party in St Leonard's Church Hall from 7.30pm  
£5 a Ticket. There will be Wine & Canapés, Beer and Soft Drinks.  
We do hope you can join us!!
- Wednesday 24th April** AGM - St Leonard's Church Hall from 7.30pm
- Sunday 19th May** Litter Pick and Garden Clear-up - Meet at Community Garden - 2-4pm  
There will be coffee and cake!



**Contact details:** Through the contact section of our Website [www.lasswadedistrictcivicsociety.com](http://www.lasswadedistrictcivicsociety.com)  
Or to Rosemary Mackay (Secretary LDCS) [dequinceyrose@aol.com](mailto:dequinceyrose@aol.com)

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### Lasswade & District Civic Society Standing Order Form

If you would like to pay your Annual Subscription by Standing Order, the details you require are as below. You can set this up yourself on-line or go into your Bank and ask them to do it for you.

**Name of Account:** Lasswade & District Civic Society

**Sort Code:**   -   -   (Bank of Scotland, Loanhead Branch)

**Account No:**

**Amount:**  £3.00 Single  £5.00 Joint (*please tick as appropriate*)

**\*Date to Pay:** 15 February

**Frequency:** Annually

**\*\*Reference:** YOUR SURNAME AND INITIAL(S)\*

\*If the 15th of February has already passed or you would prefer to have a different date for payment, please ask your Bank to make the first payment and then give any date between 1st and 15th February for subsequent payments.

\*\*PLEASE be sure to put your Reference in otherwise we shall be unable to link your payment to yourself.