

**WEST LOTHIAN 50+ NETWORK
MEMBERS' MEETING HELD ON 16th NOVEMBER 2019
IN THE BRITISH LEGION, BATHGATE**

1. WELCOME

The Convenor, Anne Webster, welcomed members and any new members to the meeting.

2. SPEAKER - STEWART LIDDLE

Lesley Martin welcomed Stewart Liddle from the Linlithgow Union Canal Society to give a talk on the Union Canal. He gave an interesting talk on its inception, interesting features on the canal, its history and how it fell into disrepair and its resurgence through Lottery money which helped fund the Falkirk Wheel, and the canal as it goes forward. Lesley thanked him for his very interesting talk.

3. DURING THE BREAK

Anne advised members that during the coffee break there will be greeting cards for sale as well as Christmas cards and other items. We will also be selling tickets for St Andrews Night at a cost of £25. Payment can be made by card, cash or cheque. There will be transport available if required. On the way to the venue, this will be by bus at various pickup points, on the way home there will be a taxi to your door. Tracy will be taking details as well as menu choices.

Also on sale will be tickets for the Xmas Crackers Concert in St Mary's Church, Bathgate. Please note that it will now take place on Thursday 19th December as the hall is being used for the General Election on Thursday 12th December. The cost per ticket is £5. The concert will start at 7 pm.

4. TRIPS

Sue advised the membership that following feedback from members, she was planning Sunday coach trips for January and February as follows:

(1) 26 JANUARY 2020

As the weather can be rather bleak in January and many historical properties are closed at this time of the year it was decided that we would go for Sunday lunch. We will be heading for Ednam House near Kelso stopping off on the way at Dalkeith Country Park to visit the Restoration Yard. We will depart slightly later than usual, 10 am, from the Old Railway Station. The cost of this will be £28 which will include a two course Sunday lunch with the opportunity to upgrade at the venue to three courses, followed by some time to stroll around the grounds before returning home.

You can now book your place on this trip at the office.

(2) 23 FEBRUARY 2020

Sue advised that our trip in February will be to Dawyck Botanical Gardens to see the snowdrops, stopping on the way in Peebles for a couple of hours where members can have a stroll around and a bite to eat.

The cost of this trip will be confirmed once we have details of the cost for a guided walk around the gardens.

5. MEMBERSHIP FEES

Membership fees are due for next session. As we have no funding through the Council and are having to be much more pro-active in raising our funds ourselves, we wondered if we should increase the fees every year. Our funders want to see that the members contribute. However, as the fees were increased last year and the members contribute in lots of ways raffles, race nights,

coffee morning, thrift shop, we felt that we can hold the fees at £20 in 2020. This is not to say that we may need to increase them in future years.

Fees are due from the 1st January. Tracy will take payment anytime from the 4th December to make it more convenient for everyone. You could pay it when you book your holiday, January trip or when you collect your Christmas Party ticket. It would be appreciated if you could pay your fees by 17th January 2020. We need to issue new membership cards and these will not be issued until we have payment. Your help with this would be appreciated.

6. FUNDRAISING

- (1) Ecclesiastical will be donating £1,000 to 120 charities over 12 days during the run up to Christmas. To be in with a chance please vote on the link Tracy sent out to you on Monday 11th November.
<https://www.ecclesiastical.com/movement-for-good/12-days/>
Please note you will need our charity number which is SC024257. (This is SC, zero)
- (2) Spar are holding a vote for the charity most deserving of £1,000 donation. We haven't heard yet if we have been successful.
- (3) Other Fundraising:
The Thrift Shop made £2,834
The Coffee morning made £846
The Race Night made around £1,020, final figure to be confirmed.
The recent Network Choir performances made around £1200.

7. GROUPS

(1) Groups/New Groups

- (i) Willie reported that he had sourced two Pilates instructors who can run classes on Wednesdays at a cost of £7 per session. Please give your name to the office if you are interested.
- (ii) There is to be a new Photography Group which will meet once a month at locations to be agreed, where they will take photographs and later view them. Robert Thompson has put his name forward to lead this group and so far there are four expressions of interest. If you are interested please give your name and preferred day to the office.
- (iii) We are hoping to start another new group entitled Chess for Fun which is primarily for beginners but experienced players are welcome if they wish to assist beginners in this 'for fun' club. It will be run initially in Bathgate either day or evening. Tommy Doyle has offered to lead this. Expression of interest and preferred day to the office, please.
- (iv) The Table Tennis venture in Livingston has fallen through because of a commercial interest in the lease. We are in discussion with West Lothian Community Table Tennis Club and Table Tennis Scotland and they have funding for 4 tables. We are close to securing a venue for 2 tables in Bathgate and are actively seeking a venue for the other 2 in Livingston and surrounding areas. Expressions of interest to the office please.
- (v) We are starting a Cycling Group called Back to Cycling. This will take place in Livingston in conjunction with the Bike Library at Croft Head, Livingston and will be led by John Matthews, a qualified bike leader.
The aim of this group is to get people back to cycling and help them gain confidence. There are over 200km of cycle track and shared cycle track/pavement which are separated from roads in the Livingston area and it is seldom necessary to leave them. The Bike Library is situated on one of these tracks.
The group once fully underway will:

Meet once a week

Start from the West Lothian Bike Library, Templar Rise, Livingston

99% of the time the routes will be on cycle tracks.

Probably a Tuesday afternoon

Last about 2 hours including a café stop

The target is for the group to start fully running in April. The group will meet once per month in January, February and March for familiarisation and training at and around the Bike Library. The first few meetings will be of restricted length and duration until everyone is comfortable.

Expressions of interest to the office please.

- (vi) Another group starting is entitled Hollywood and will be led by Frank Ellam who has a library of old black and white movies covering the period from 1920-50. It will meet once a month in the members hub (office) from 6.30 to 8.30 pm and will consist of approximately 20 members. Expressions of interest to the office.

Willie advised that the Brochure is being updated to include the new groups now up and running, Crochet, Move and Improve, Dawdlers and Tai Chi.

We are still trying to source a Spanish tutor. If anyone can help with this it would be appreciated.

(2) Other Group News

- (i) Helen Orr reported that the Move and Improve group currently had 17 members and there are still places. This class is gentle exercise. The class meets in the Bathgate Partnership on Tuesdays at 1 pm. She appealed for an old CD Player which could be kept on the premises as she is currently having to bring her own which is not ideal. If you have one you don't need please advise Tracy in the office.
- (ii) Jim Dixon reported that the men's group had been on trips on the canal on Bluebell, the narrowboat belonging to the Bridge 19-40 Canal Society. They had also recently visited the Museum of Flight in East Lothian. The membership currently stands at 45. Their next event is Christmas Lunch at Toby Carvery on 11th December.
- (iii) Jim Dixon reported that the Tai Chi classes are going well. There are currently two, five week sessions. These will end in December and start again mid-January. If larger premises could be found the class size could increase.

8. HOLIDAYS

Heather advised as follows:

(1) Chester Christmas Market Break – 22nd to 24th November

Luggage labels which include seating numbers are available from the office up until next Thursday.

(2) The Isle of Skye and Kyle Line – Friday 3rd to Tuesday 7th April 2020

This is fully booked and that there is a waiting list in operation.

(3) Lincolnshire Holiday

This holiday is being announced today. It is from Monday to Friday, commencing Monday 31st August and is for five days, four nights. The cost is £299 with a single supplement of £15 pppn. Single rooms are limited. We will be staying at the Urban Hotel, Grantham on a Dinner, Bed and Breakfast basis. There is no evening entertainment but there is a leisure centre in the hotel. This holiday includes a day in Medieval Lincoln, a morning to Easton Walled Garden including entrance and an outing to the seaport of Boston on market day before continuing

to Georgian Spalding. The holiday company is Glentons and they are providing free holiday insurance. Please note that there are no lifts in the hotel.

Deposits are £20 and can be paid from Thursday 28th November to the office. The balance will be due 24th July.

(4) Walking Holiday, Algarve, Portugal

This holiday is also being announced today. It is from Sunday 1st November 2020 and is 8 days/7 nights in Armacao de Pera and flies from Edinburgh. Three guided walks are included which include:

- (i) 5.5 miles climbs totalling 150 metres;
- (ii) 5 miles climbs of 50 metres;
- (iii) 5 miles ascents of 80 metres.

You will be staying at the Holiday Inn Algarve. This holiday is ATOL protected. There are 15 rooms available without single supplement. The total cost of the holiday is £849 with a deposit of £125 making your cheque payable to 'Preferred Travel Services' with a completed booking form or complete your credit/debit on the booking form. Return your completed booking form to the office **in a sealed envelope** marked for the attention of Heather Waddell and Algarve Walking Holiday written on it. This must be done by Wednesday 8th January 2020.

(5) China

Jim Dixon reported that there are 23 currently signed up for China and there are two places left. The dates for this holiday are 18th to 28th May 2020.

9. 25 YEAR CELEBRATIONS

We did well with the planting of trees on Sunday 22nd September. However, due to the rain, although we managed to plant everything, we didn't get them all staked. We have arranged a day, Wednesday 4th December to go back to Beecraigs and finish the staking at 10.30 to around 12.30. John Fleming will also lead a walk and talk about some of the history of Beecraigs.

If you are interested please give your name to the office. It is hoped that the Men's Group can also participate.

10. 2020 EVENTS

Anne advised the membership that we are already planning for 2020 events. We would like to know what you enjoyed from this year, any suggestions you have for next year and anything you might like us to look at. The headings to consider are:

- Speakers
- Trips
- Holidays
- Social Events

Please give your suggestions to the office.

So far, we will be arranging a Daffodil Tea on Sunday 15th March, more details later.

11. OFFICE MEETINGS

We are keen for members to feel that the office is their hub and can be used to pop in.

We have re-arranged the office and invested in couches and chairs to make the area more member friendly. To encourage members to use it as a hub and a meeting place we plan to offer tea and coffee in the office every Friday during opening hours.

We need volunteers to welcome people, make the tea and coffee, chat to members, tidy up the cups etc. If anyone would like to help and can give some time, even an hour or so, can you give your name to the office. We plan to set up a rota to cover the times.

The first meeting is planned for Friday 29th November. Everyone is welcome to pop in for a cup of tea and a chat.

We now have an induction loop in the office which covers one metre. It is currently situated at the reception desk but can be moved around the office.

Members will recall the appeal for socks etc for Socktober which has been really successful. Anne Webster and Sue Visser will be taking these to the West Lothian School Bank next week. Watch Facebook for pictures.

12. CHRISTMAS OPENING HOURS

Last year there were two get togethers held over the Christmas and New Year period in Rosemount Court facilitated by Allan Dungavel and Jim Dixon. These were enjoyed by all who attended. This year we plan to have 4 days and to hold these in the office. The office (which in future will be referred to as the Hub) will be open on these days and we will have mince pies, tea and coffee. With our new couches and chairs we have a cosy welcoming area for members and we hope you will pop along for a coffee and a chat.

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| ○ Monday 23 rd | Open 10-2 Drop in with tea, coffee and mince pies. |
| ○ Tuesday 24 th | CLOSED |
| ○ Wednesday 25 th | CLOSED |
| ○ Thursday 26 th | CLOSED |
| ○ Friday 27 th | Open 10-2 Drop in with tea, coffee and mince pies. |
| ○ Monday 30 th | Open 10-2 Drop in with tea, coffee and mince pies. |
| ○ Tuesday 31 st | CLOSED |
| ○ Wednesday 1 st | CLOSED |
| ○ Thursday 2 nd | CLOSED |
| ○ Friday 3 rd | Open 10-2 Drop in with tea, coffee and mince pies. |

13. NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting is the Christmas Party which will be in the Royal British Legion on Saturday 21st December from 10.30 until 12.30pm. Tickets will be available on Wednesday 4th December at 10.00 am from the office. We look forward to seeing you all.