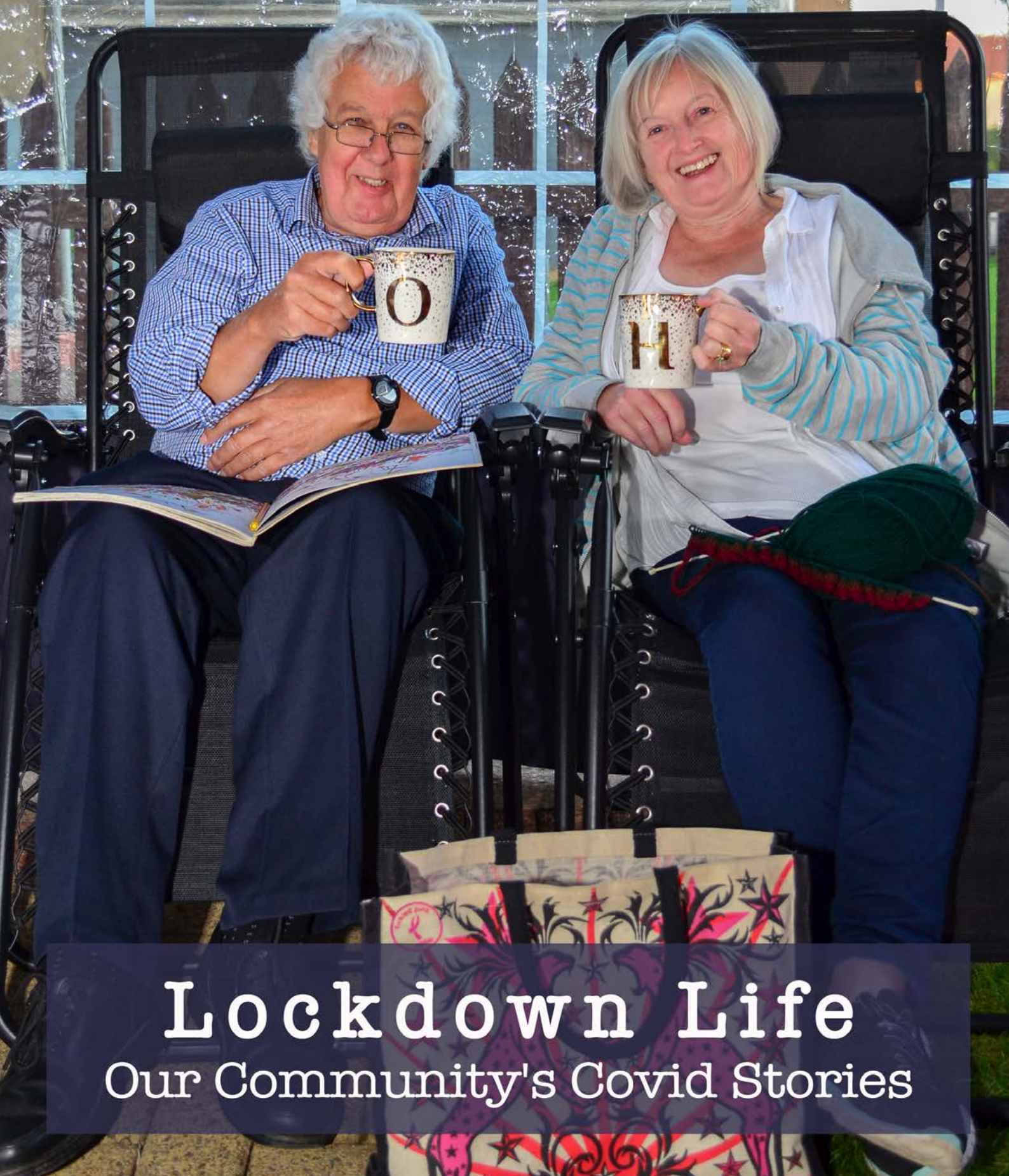




CLYDESIDER

OUR COMMUNITY'S POPULAR PRESS
ISSUE 13 AUTUMN 2020 FREE



Lockdown Life
Our Community's Covid Stories

Lockdown Life

As I sit here all alone I reminisce
On things I loved, but now I miss
I didn't know or realise I cared
But sitting now a little scared
A nod of a head as I pass by
A couple wi that twinkle in their eyes
A buddy needing a helping hand
To see them now, that would be grand

Enough of me what about the others
The aunts, uncles, sisters n brothers
They are all getting on a bit
I miss their cheek aye and their wit
It's no so bad my neighbours are good
They sometimes drop me off cooked food
One good thing, I started thinking
My health is better without me drinking

My mental health though in decline
The thoughts I have they all are mine
To share them now, would not be wise
Be rest assured, punishment would be capitalised
For lying politicos and journalists I mean
Their day of atonement will be my dream
To see them suffer as my people do
By that I mean me and you.

Well, let's move on and have a blether
Cos soon we'll all be back together
We will live our new lives to excess
The boys n girls we can impress
Wi bits of news that we have seen
Upon our afternoon TV screen
I cannae bake or
build a house
But I can tell a whale from a mouse

I wish you all the very best
To those who make it through this test
Remember how we pulled together
To help our neighbour and each other
With sadness and pain we will recall
The one's who died or suffer still
We are all Jock Tamson's bairns
Famous we are for always caring.



by Charles McKinley



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Welcome

Our last official Clydesider magazine came out back in March, just before we moved into lockdown. Over the spring and summer months we published a monthly Mini Mag and a Creative Summer Special,

Little did I expect that we would still be living semi-lockdown lifestyles as I put together the autumn issue. But here we are seven months later and one thing 2020 has taught me is, that it's best to expect the unexpected.

So, this issue tells some of the very varied stories of lockdown life in West Dunbartonshire.

From new born babies to life-long lovers, kinship carers to budding social entrepreneurs - the long months of lockdown have impacted each and everyone of us in so many different ways.

For some they have been marked by fear and isolation, for others by new opportunities and creative journeys. Our Clydesider contributors have captured some of these experiences in poems, photos and features.

There are many more stories to be told but we hope this small collection will show that while we are all sailing through the same storm, we are each in our own very unique little boat. Some are well equipped with resources and companions to help weather the lows and enjoy the highs, but many are not.

We have also included some information resources from our Mini Mags, plus creative activities and well-being tips from our virtual Creative Cafe, we hope this will help in the months of uncertainty that lie ahead.

Enjoy & Stay Safe!

Amanda Eleftheriades-Sherry, Editor



Martin Docherty-Hughes

Your MP for West Dunbartonshire (SNP)

CONSTITUENT ADVICE SURGERIES



Here to help you

Throughout the Coronavirus outbreak my constituency team and I have been working hard to provide advice and support to people across Clydebank, Dumbarton and the Vale of Leven.

In order to be as accessible as possible I'm holding weekly virtual advice surgeries for my constituents. Every Thursday I'm available via phone or video call - please get in touch if you'd like to arrange an appointment.

Thanks,

Martin Docherty-Hughes MP

Contact information

email: Martin.Docherty.mp@parliament.uk
phone: 0141 952 2988
local office: Titan Enterprise, Queens Quay,
Clydebank, G81 1BF
website: www.martindocherty.scot
Facebook: @martindochertySNP
Twitter: @MartinJDocherty



Surgery dates may be subject to change depending on public holidays or parliamentary commitments.
Due to high demand appointment slots of 15 mins are allocated on a first come first served basis.



Lockdown Love

By Angela Clark

During lockdown couples have had to adapt to lots of changes and experienced many new challenges.

Social clubs, pubs and work places are closed and most people are spending more time at home together than ever before.

After 46 years of marriage, local artist and photographer Owen McGuigan and his wife Helen remain very much in love and believe their marriage has become stronger during this particularly strange time which has included months of shielding together.

Owen said: "Lots of marriages break up under these kind of circumstances, I think ours is better. We discuss things, we definitely talk more. Not many people get to 46 years, a lot of people throw the towel in too soon.

"Every marriage there are hurdles along the way but you need to stick in there, we're partners for life."

The couple met when Helen worked in the Co-operative in Fleming Avenue and Owen worked with Galbraiths joinery firm.

Their romance began after a family friend decided to set the two up which inevitably prompted Owen to ask Helen on a first date. Helen laughs as she recalls that first date: "He



was a shy guy, so shy that he brought his sister and her friend with him on our first date. We went into a restaurant in Argyle Street. It was a cinema as well and had a tea room at the bottom.

"I had such a dreadful headache with all this stress of having to go out with this guy, so I had a Disprin with me and decided to add it to a cup of tea. It started foaming everywhere and bits were shooting out the cup, it was so embarrassing."

The couple didn't let the events of that first date put them off and continued dating. Forty-six years later and they put the success of family and married life down to a number of things from sharing interests to having their own hobbies, lots of patience and allowing each other to grow and develop as individuals.

All of which have helped them through the months of lockdown.

Owen said: "You need a lot of patience and you've got to make allowances for people. Helen had lots of clubs and things she used to do before lockdown, she enjoys



them while I just do my own thing.

"You've got to let people be themselves, you cannae tell people what to do, that's domineering and it's not a good thing."

As well as doing things separately the couple are enjoying spending the extra time they have together and as restrictions lifted over the summer months they took advantage of cinemas and restaurants re-opening. They also invested in a gazebo for the garden as the dark nights close in.

Owen said: "Because of the latest restrictions we bought a gazebo so we sit

out at night with a wee fire on with and a wee light and just enjoy it. We can only get garden visitors so we thought this is going to last till the end of the year and winter is coming so the gazebo means our garden visitors are a bit sheltered."

The couple are not short of visitors and are also enjoying the extra time they get to spend with their family including their three grandchildren.

They intend to make every moment count and live each day loving and respecting each other to the best of their ability.

Clydesider Competitions

Poetry Competition

Subject - Festivities

Photography Competition

Subject - Winter

Closing Date - Nov 20 2020

Email entries to:

clydesidercomp@gmail.com

Rules: One entry per person to each competition, entrants must live, work or be part of a group in West Dunbartonshire; all entries must be your own, by entering you give Clydesider Creative Ltd permission to publish your work in print or online - this in no way infringes your copyright.



Our New Life

By Gail Russell

Tapping my foot in anticipation, I squinted at the small strip in front of me, watching as one pink line and then a second slowly appeared.

I'd already known I was pregnant - despite the lack of morning sickness, I'd just had a 'feeling'.

My partner, Tom, had the same reaction - we were quietly delighted and for the time-being, we kept the news to ourselves.

It was July 2019 and we had no idea we would be in the middle of a global pandemic when our little bundle of joy made his appearance.

The weeks passed by and finally it was time to go for our first scan.

Armed with a few blurry photos and the reassurance that all looked well, we went home and broke the news.

First, to my then ten year-old son, Dexter, who was delighted to finally be becoming a big brother.

"I kind of guessed though, Mum", he told me. "You're not very good at keeping secrets."

2020 rolled around and soon we began to hear the murmurs about a new virus.

It began to sink in that our families wouldn't play as large a role in the first few weeks of our son's life as we thought.

"We're going to keep him at home for a week before he meets anyone," we told grandparents and friends.

A week seemed like such a long time but we thought it was best to keep our son to ourselves for a while.

Due Date

On the 19th March, my due date, I went for my weekly midwife appointment at the Vale Maternity Unit and was met by a teary midwife. "We've been closed. We can't have any women birthing here, as of today," I was told.

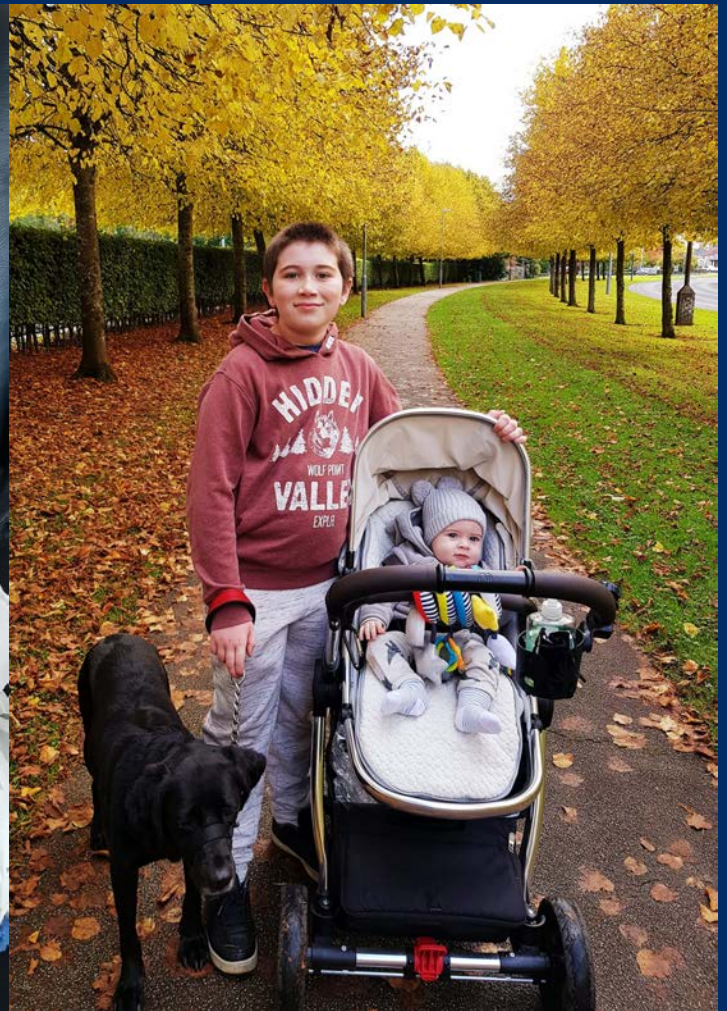
My dreams of a midwife-led water birth slipped away as I was told I'd need to go to Paisley instead.

At 9pm on April 1st, Tom dropped me off at the RAH, alone, to be induced. He wasn't allowed in the building so he headed home to wait for the call to come back in.

I was moved to the labour ward at around 1am, and I called for Tom to come in at 3am.

He arrived a short time later and after a few more hours, lots of gas and air, a morphine injection and a slightly more traumatic birth than I'd have liked, Flynn Jackson McConnell arrived at 9:52am on the 2nd April 2020.

We spent about two and a half hours together, eating toast and drinking coffee (best meal in the world, the toast when you've just given birth!) and getting to know our son.



Then Flynn and I headed back to the ward and Tom went home, only realising once he'd left that he wouldn't get to see us again until the following day.

It was almost tea time the next day before we were finally discharged and Tom drove us, very carefully, home so that Flynn could meet his big brother.

The first morning we woke up as a family of four, there was no visit from the midwife.

Full PPE

On day five Gillian, the midwife I'd seen throughout my pregnancy, visited in full PPE to administer Flynn's heel prick test. Then she left and we were alone again.

We had one more check from the midwife at day 10 when Flynn was signed over to the health visitor and that was that.

I feel very lucky that in this situation I had the experience of being a mother already and was comfortable being left to my own devices, but my heart goes out to those first time parents who were left without any

support for days on end. I can only imagine how difficult things must have been for those who would have benefitted from their midwife dropping in to reassure them their babies were healthy and thriving, to check on stitches and latches and mental health. I sincerely hope everyone got through it okay.

Six Months Old

It has been just over six months now since Flynn came into the world.

He's met most of his immediate family, though only a handful of times. He's been to only two baby classes and last week his Daddy took him to the park for the first time.

I worry how this all will have affected him and the other babies born in lockdown.

For now, all that matters is we've kept them safe and given them the best start we can during a global pandemic.

If nothing else, they'll have one hell of a story to tell their grandchildren.



'Loves Local' Campaign Supports Town Centres

Advertising Feature

A new campaign is helping to generate support for local traders and businesses in West Dunbartonshire's towns.

Dunbartonshire Chamber of Commerce, West Dunbartonshire Council and Business Gateway along with the Vale of Leven Trust, local business and community groups have been working together to develop and deliver practical proposals to support town centre and business recovery.

"LovesLocal" has been put together to link in with a national #ScotlandLovesLocal TV, press and social media campaign that calls for people to #ThinkLocalFirst and

is supported by the Scottish Government in partnership with Scotland's Towns Partnership.

For Alexandria, Dumbarton and Clydebank this means asking the public to continue to support local shops, cafes, bars and tradespeople as well as home-based businesses and freelancers.

Damon Scott, Chief Executive of Dunbartonshire Chamber of Commerce, said: "The partnership working so far has been excellent with a really positive response to the campaign and some great support and offers of help to make it a success.

"Now, more than ever, we need to support our local businesses to help them get back on their feet.

Businesses have been working really hard to ensure customers can shop

safely and our campaign messages reinforce the importance of following current guidelines.

"The success of the campaign depends on as many local people, businesses and groups coming together to support it by getting involved, contributing, spreading the word and thinking local first!"

Local business owners can join the campaign in a variety of ways, including displaying branded materials such as distance markers and posters, posting, liking and sharing local stories via social media and using the hashtags

#DumbartonLovesLocal

#ClydebankLovesLocal

and #ValeLovesLocal together with #ThinkLocalFirst

and

#ScotlandLovesLocal.

Online hubs have been developed for each of the towns and offer a valuable opportunity for businesses to build their presence online and to share news and other information that might be of interest to the local communities.

A range of the Council's free webinars are also available, including an introduction to selling online aimed at retailers who are not currently online at all or who are just starting out; how to market your business online and how to sell safely online.

Business owners can also take advantage of opportunities to meet with local advisers to discuss ways to grow their business; receive one-to-one support from a digital expert on



how to improve online presence; access up to date market information to help them spot opportunities and make informed decisions, and also get access to reports to help them better understand the market.



How Can You Help/Get Involved?

Visit the websites and share the hashtags:

[www.dumbartonloveslocal.co.uk /](http://www.dumbartonloveslocal.co.uk/)

#dumbartonloveslocal

[www.clydebankloveslocal.co.uk /](http://www.clydebankloveslocal.co.uk/)

#clydebankloveslocal

www.valeloveslocal.co.uk

#valeloveslocal #ThinkLocalFirst

#ScotlandLovesLocal

Email hello@loveslocal.co.uk or call 0141 280 0335

dunbartonshire
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

West
Dunbartonshire
COUNCIL

SITIP | SCOTLAND'S
TOWNS
PARTNERSHIP

business
gateway
your gateway to business expertise

VALE OF LEVEN TRUST



Who Cares?

Clydesider reporter Angela Clark spoke to carers Lynne Cochrane and Linda Sloan about their experiences of looking after family members during lockdown and how Carers of West Dunbartonshire is helping them through this particularly difficult period.

Lynne looks after her father Robert, who has Alzheimer's. Having moved back to the area to care for both parents she knows few people locally and before lockdown the support groups run by the Carers Centre had become a lifeline for her.

When the Centre closed its doors in March at the start of lockdown she lost a significant part of her social life and has struggled to get out of the house, which is having an effect on her own well being.

Lynne said: "It's been very difficult, Dad just sits in his room all day and watches TV as the day care centre he attended has closed.

"His Alzheimers has deteriorated and so has his mobility because he's not moving around.

"I've been frightened to go out as Dad is

high risk because he has asbestosis, so any sign of the disease in this house would be drastic.

"I haven't seen my friends since last December. They live over in Greenock but I can't get over to visit them any more.

"It's very hard, you just feel very alone. I don't have any children of my own, it's just me and Dad so the Carers of West Dunbartonshire is our lifeline to the outside world, without them I would be 100% alone."

The Carers Centre supports 1,300 carers in West Dunbartonshire. This is usually a face to face service which has had to adapt to a new way of working whilst continuing to support some of the most vulnerable people in the community.

Centre manager, Kim McNab, said: "The change when we went into lockdown was phenomenal.

"The commitment we wanted to make was that in some way or another we would try to be in touch with everybody and that simply had to be by phone because we knew people couldn't come to the Long-term Condition Support Group or the Dementia Support Group or the Book Group.

"These are the things that Lynne is talking about in terms of their monthly social activities that would keep them going and get peer support from other carers and it was lost overnight."

Linda Sloan is another carer who enjoyed the supportive lifeline that these social groups provided.

Linda looks after her husband Tom who suffers from Parkinsons disease and though she has some extended family to help she misses what she calls her "carer family" who see her through the daily struggles at home.

She said: "You do miss physically going to the Centre and attending the different support groups. What is said in these groups stays there, which is a great thing for a carer because you feel these are the people that really get it, they understand what you are trying to do.

"Lockdown certainly added to our stress. It's not good for Tom, it's not good for either of us because if you're tired or exhausted you become grumpy and you become angry at yourself because that's not the way you want to be, especially around a loved one.

"It impacts on your level of care, so any help we can get as a carer from the centre is greatly appreciated."

The Carers Centre continues to provide support by using other resources such as phone calls and Zoom catch ups.

They are also able to offer financial assistance and resources to help relieve the loneliness and isolation faced by many carers over the long months of lockdown.

If you are caring for someone and think you would benefit from support you can contact the Carers Centre on 0141 941 1550 or visit their website www.carerswd.org

Finding Paths

No longer rushing around
like an over worked ant.

It was not until
lockdown happened I
found so many paths

My feet treading
lightly
My breath breathing
freely
My sight seeing brightly
for the first time my
surroundings around me.

My shoulders falling
slightly as I set out for my
one permissioned walk.

No reason needed for
this breezy easy trail, just a
walk in any direction to
discover a new path.

**By Sandra
Johnston**



Remember to Follow Clydesider





Sisters Are Doing It By Themselves

by Mags Reid

"My sister Elaine has been my lockdown buddy ...keeping me sane during lockdown having garden visits and enjoying days out together at local beauty spots when restrictions lifted a little...

It's been much needed respite for us both enjoying the outdoors and nature together... blowing away the cobwebs ... It keeps me going during the week, looking forward to a girly day out at the weekend."



Remember to Follow Clydesider



Clydesider

Creativity & Well-being



pull-out

Follow Clydesider for more creative activities



Mindful Photo Walk

Compiled by therapist Helen McHugh & photographer Charlie Sherry

What You Will Need

- Something to take a photo with - a camera, tablet or mobile phone. It doesn't have to be anything fancy, in fact the simpler the better.
- Time and space – even just 10 minutes to yourself
- The right frame of mind

We live in a fast-paced world and too rarely take the time to truly focus on the space where we are, in the here and now.

These Mindful Photo Walk exercises should help both your mental wellbeing and your photography. Give them a try next time you are out and about with your camera/phone.

They can even be done without any equipment, just using your mind's eye to capture the images in your memory.

Exercise 1 - Breathe

Before you even take your camera/phone out of your pocket take time to breathe. Close your eyes and inhale and exhale three times, making your inhalation longer than your exhalation. Bring your focus to your breathing, allow your mind to settle. When you're ready, open your eyes and bring yourself back to the present.



Exercise 2 – Your Senses

The concept of mindfulness is to bring your attention to the moment so when you have a mindful walk all your senses would come into play.

So first use the breathing exercise above to help clear your mind of all your thoughts and worries. This should help you focus on everything around you. As you walk start with your sense of sound and move your awareness to the sounds you can hear around you. You are not bringing your focus to each sound, you are just allowing your mind to recognise there is a sound there, then bring your mind back to the motion of your walking.

Next bring your awareness to your sense of smell and allow it to discover any aroma nearby – a pine tree, a flower, a fruit. Just recognise the smell exists and continue your walk.

Move your awareness to what you can see, perhaps the greenness of a tree, a boat passing by or a bridge in the distance. You are not focusing on any of these, just recognising these objects are there and then keep walking.

As you're walking just allow the images, sounds, smells and textures to come to you but do not focus on any one of them, just allow them to pass you by. Then move your attention to the sense of taste, this might be observing a berry or bramble at the side of your walk. Just notice it and then bring your mind back and continue your walk.

And finally notice the textures around you – that could be the earth or gravel you are walking on or the texture of a tree's bark or a flower's petal.

This exercise is all about noticing the small details – the colour, the sound, the scent, taste and texture. Just enough to be aware of them, without being distracted by them. By being in the moment it gives our brain a rest from other thoughts.

Now your mind has opened itself and tuned into its surroundings you can take out your camera or phone and try these photo exercises – see if you notice a difference in your photos.



Exercise 3 – A Mindful Moment

Stand still, be aware of your senses and give yourself one minute to take a series of photographs of what you can see around you. Remember to look up, down and all around. Don't think about the technical side of the shot – just focus on what your mind is seeing.

That might be a detail of a leaf or the expanse of clouds in the sky, or a group of people close by. Then change your point of view and repeat the exercise.

Exercise 4 – Sensory Photography

When you finish Your Senses exercise try capturing the senses you were aware of in a photo. Try one sense per photo and get creative – you might not be able to see your sounds and smells so think how you could capture these, perhaps in abstract.



Exercise 5 – Share Your Experience

This can be with a friend or on your social media or just with yourself. Put your collection of photos together and try writing a few words or sentences to describe the experience. Save this for later, see if the exercise helps you recall the details of your walk more vividly.

If you want to share your experience with us we'd love to see your photos – just email them to clydesidercomp@gmail.com.

Draw a nice dream
inside-the cloud ☆



@f @t @zuzianova

C	F	P	C	A	R	I	N	G	C
S	R	G	E	N	T	L	E	I	E
U	I	E	Y	B	T	G	T	V	F
O	N	T	A	A	P	E	I	R	G
R	I	R	O	T	H	T	I	G	N
E	C	K	U	T	I	E	E	N	I
N	K	A	A	S	N	V	C	O	V
E	U	P	O	D	A	Q	E	R	O
G	M	P	L	R	I	V	K	T	L
E	B	Y	B	B	M	M	M	S	J

Positivity Wordsearch

Brave	Generous
Caring	Gentle
Creative	Loving
Empathetic	Positive
Friendly	Strong



Dumbarton, May 2020

The high street is hushed,
boarded up and hollow
but go through the cobbled close
and another vista opens up—
a river clean, clear and blue,
the only traffic, a swan,
solitary and dignified,
sailing beneath the bridge.

By Ann MacKinnon



Calming Sensory Bottles

Designed to soothe and relax the mind these beautiful glittery liquids are ideal for calming down a stressed out child or adult. Shake up the bottle when you're feeling anxious or your child is having a time out, then watch as the glitter swirls around. By the time the glitter settles in the bottle you will be much calmer.

Step 1

You will need:

- Warm water
- Glitter glue
- Clean glass jars or plastic bottles (for children)
- Biodegradable glitter
- Funnel

Optional:

- Biodegradable glitter stars or shapes
- Toys



Step 2

Fill bottle or jar with warm water then add the glitter glue. An inch or two in the bottom should be enough but you can add more if you like. Now shake or stir the container until the glitter glue dissolves into the water. The warmer the water the easier the glitter glue will dissolve. If using a bottle it may be easier to stir the glue into the water in a wider container then transfer it into your bottle.



Step 3

Add a heaped desert spoon of glitter and glitter stars or shapes. A funnel will make this easier if using a bottle, I quickly made one from a piece of paper and cello tape. Add more glitter for a more dense liquid and less glitter if you want the liquid to be more transparent. You can also add some small toys at this stage, less glitter works better with toys inside so they can be seen better.

Now shake or stir to mix all the ingredients together. At this stage you can add more glitter if you want it less transparent or multiple colours.

Step 4

Now you have to secure the lid. There are several ways to do this, the simplest being to turn it on as tight as you can. If it is for a child it might be best to secure it either with pva glue or with tape around the lid.

Your Calming Sensory Bottle is now complete. Next time you are feeling anxious or overwhelmed shake it up as hard as you can then sit it on a hard surface, watch the glitter shimmer as it swirls around and take some deep breaths until it settles at the bottom again. Hopefully you will then feel more settled too. They also work well as a timer for a child in a time out, helping a child learn how to self soothe. **Remember when throwing out DON'T pour down the sink.**



Well Being Tips

"The most grounding and calming thing I have been doing through pandemic times has been to reach out regularly by phone to friends and family.

Taking time to connect with loved ones is a great way to get out of your own head, checking in on someone who might be feeling alone helps them and you. And you can have a laugh while doing it!"

~Sam Begbie, musician

Well Being Tips

"A regular fitness routine is important. Start one thing at a time, do it once a week until it becomes a habit, then start adding to it. If you are exercising you start to eat better and feel a difference mentally."

**~ Phil McGuinness,
Judo Coach**

Well Being Tips

**"Be kind to yourself.
Celebrate small successes and achievements."**

**~ Damon Scott
Chief Executive Dunbartonshire Chamber
Commerce**

Well Being Tips

"For me that's getting up in the morning, going to the gym, coming home and then starting my working day.

Have a planned lunch and then an end of the working day time and sticking closely to it.

So a routine that involves structure and physical exercise is my biggest tip...oh and don't watch too much news!"

**~ Michael Byrne
Lived Experience Trauma Support (LETs) Ltd**

Well Being Tips

"I would say 'get up, get dressed and go outside, even if only for 10 minutes. It helps keep me positive. If I don't do this, I find my mood slides. "

~Ann Pryce, therapist

Well Being Tips

"Stay connected to a supportive community even if that is virtually online."

**~ Damon Scott, Chief Executive
Dunbartonshire Chamber Commerce**

Well Being Tips

"Choose a healthy news diet. Watching and reading too much negative news can make you feel stressed and helpless.

Our recommended reads - *Positive News* magazine and '*You Are What You Read*' by Jodie Jackson."

~ Clydesider

Well Being Tips

"Doing activities in the outdoors connects people to natural and urban environments which gets the heart and the lungs pumping and the brain firing on all cylinders."

~ DACA

Reliable Resources

Local & national helpline numbers and information sources to cut out and keep.

Local Numbers

Food For Thought - 01389 743908.

Emergency food aid referral line.

West Dunbartonshire Community

Foodshare 01389 764135 - emergency food aid delivery

Dumbarton District Women's Aid - 01389 751036

WDC 'No Homes for Domestic Abuse' - 01389 738510

Clydebank Women's Aid - 07832 710065 or 0141 952 8118

Dumbarton Area Council on Alcohol (DACA) - 01389 731456 or 0141 952 0881

WD Citizens Advice Bureau - information on benefits, welfare rights, employment rights and general well-being

Alexandria - 01389 752727

Clydebank - 0141 435 7590

Dumbarton - 01389 744690

Independent Resource Centre - benefits advice 0141 951 4040

WD Housing & Homeless 01389 738282 or Freephone 0800 197 1004 (option 5)

Clydebank Community Addiction Team - 0141 562 2311

Dumbarton Joint Hospital - 01389 812018

Stepping Stones - 0141 941 2929 - mental health charity providing telephone support

Big Disability Group - 0141 237 4560
thebigdisabilitygroup@gmail.com and on Facebook - support and information to people living with disabilities

WDC Additional Support - text 'help' to 07800 002582 or visit www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/coronavirus/additional-support

National Helplines & Websites

NHS 24 - 111 for urgent health advice if GP or dentist is closed www.nhs.uk

NHS Inform Scotland - 0800 028 2816 - General advice line

Breathing Space Scotland - 0800 83 85 87
www.breathingspace.scot Mental Health helpline

Age Scotland - 0800 12 44 222 - advice, help or simply a friendly voice of support
www.ageuk.org.uk/scotland

Chest, Heart & Stroke Scotland Nurses Advice Line - 0808 801 0899. Text: NURSE to 66777. Specialist nurses answering questions, provide advice, and information to anyone with a chest or heart problem.

Scotland's Domestic Abuse & Forced Marriage Helpline - 0800 027 1234.

Available 24/7 www.sdafmh.org.uk

Rape Crisis Helpline - 0808 801 0302 or TEXT: 07537 410027

Samaritans Helpline - 116 123 anytime or email jo@samaritans.org (response time 24hrs)

Alcoholics Anonymous - national helpline 0800 917 7650

www.alcoholicsanonymous.org.uk

Gov.uk - Government guidance on all aspects related to impact from COVID-19
www.gov.uk/coronavirus

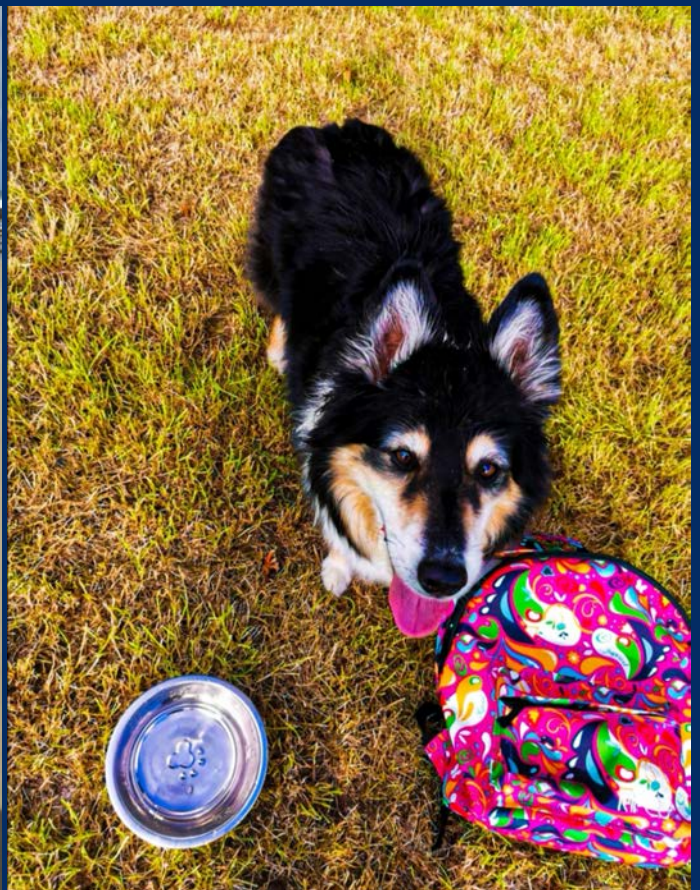
World Health Organisation -
www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019

Young Scot - Information and advice for young people
www.young.scot/campaigns/national/coronavirus

Parent Club www.parentclub.scot



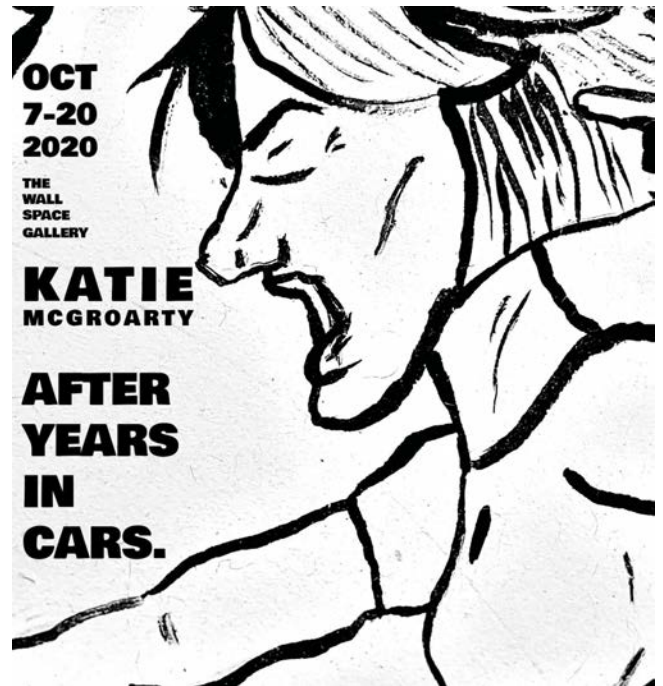
Photo Competition - Lockdown Buddies



Winning entry by Peter Jarvis (top) with runners-up
Chrisitina Logan & Casey Kearney (l & r)



Photos clockwise from top left by Katie Kennedy, Amanda Ward, David Coote, Tommy Crocket, Michaela Burns & Claire Hughes



Creativity During Lockdown

By Jenny Watson

This year has thrown us so many curveballs and obstacles it has been hard to keep track. We have had to adapt to many new ways of working and living. Our lives have been flipped inside out and upside down with routines ever changing and evolving.

Technology has really come to the fore for those working from home. Living rooms have turned into dance studios and gardens into football stadiums. New paths have been forged on local walks and nature has been thriving.

We are all being more creative than ever. Unfortunately lockdown has had a massive impact on the Arts. Theatres are struggling to open; concerts cancelled for the foreseeable. Art colleges, like all schools, couldn't end the academic year the way they normally would. This had a major impact on those in the middle of their studies.

For Raymond Wilson, Clydebank performer, poet and student at The Royal Conservatoire Scotland, it has had its challenging moments, but lockdown also

provided Raymond the opportunity to try new ways of working and learning from home.



"Once I got into it, I found it super creative because it's a whole new medium of creativity, of making live performance, live theatre but doing it online with the restrictions it brings.

"There's no budget, the only set you have is the room behind you, the only costumes you have is the stuff you've got in your wardrobe, so having to figure out how to do that in an interesting way was really experimental, fun and creative.



"We ended up making some good work through that, I think because we were pushed to explore those boundaries and make our own work during lockdown, I really enjoyed that."

Raymond found he has been writing more but also sharing his work on his social media platforms. He has a busy couple of months ahead creating a horror show that

will be released around the end of October and he will also be facilitating a series of community poetry workshops for Clydesider in November.

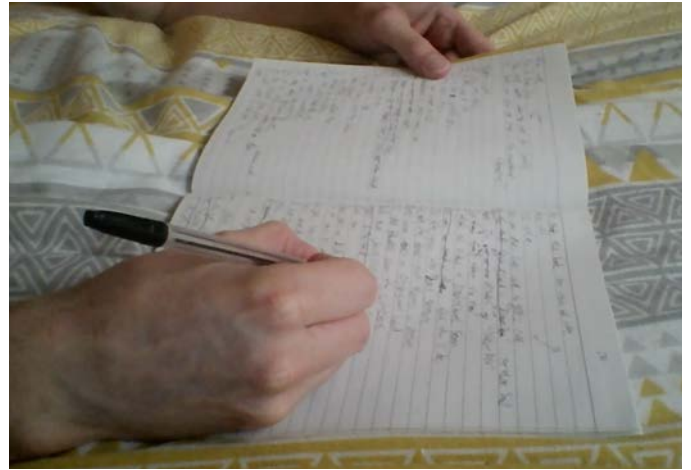
For Alexandria's own Katie McGroarty, things have been a little different for her graduating year.

Katie studied Intermedia at Edinburgh College of Art. Her last year of studies was spent creating and preparing for her end of year exhibition. This is a prominent and important event for students providing an opportunity to showcase their hard work to creative circles.

Unfortunately, due to Covid the exhibition was cancelled. An online exhibition was created by the Art College but many of the students either could not submit further work for did not feel it was showing their work at its best.

The students decided to create their own online platform and showcase themselves via an exhibition they called Alt-D. You can view their work at www.alt-d.online

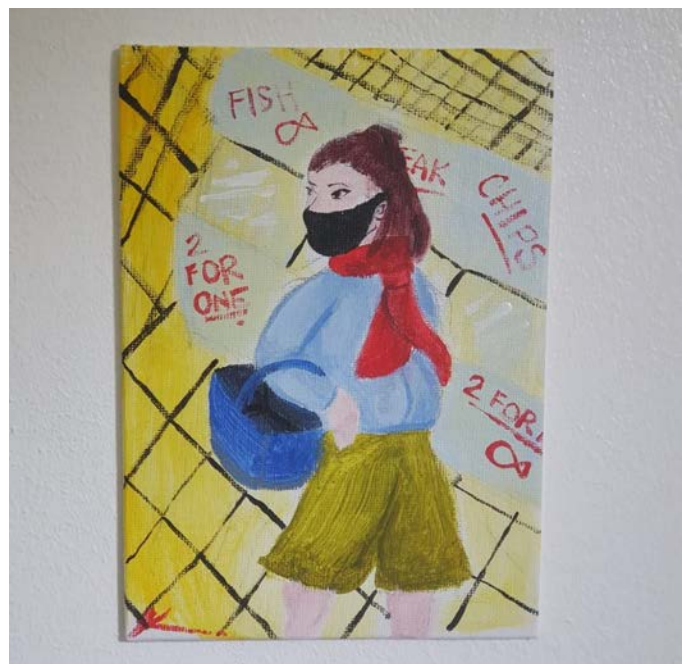
Katie also had her own exhibition during October in The Wall Space Gallery, which



is based in Paisley but is currently an online gallery. She continues to produce and sell her art.

For anyone looking for help to get their artwork out there during these tough times Katie advises to go online. "Facebook groups like 'Women in the Arts Scotland,' 'Girls That Make Stuff', 'Creative West Dunbartonshire' are not just good for showing your work but also for advice." A lot have been in the arts for a long time and are a wealth of knowledge. Find a community, even if it is online. Also, just start. You don't need to get anywhere with it, just do it because you enjoy it."

The light at the end of the tunnel may seem much further away for the arts industry right now but by continuing to be creative and creating, between us all we can keep the Arts alive.



From Letting To Living

By Amanda Eleftheriades

“At the start of 2020 Maureen Cummings was an office manager at a Belvoire Letting Agency in the west end of Glasgow, a job she had enjoyed for the past 10 years.

Then in March when Covid struck and Scotland, along with most of the world, went into lockdown, both her and husband Gordon, found themselves furloughed and at something of a loose end.

The pair decided to offer their help to anyone in their village in Old Kilpatrick who needed shopping or prescriptions collected.

Maureen set up a small Facebook page, little expecting it would change her life. It started with local shops contacting her to pass on left-over bread, milk and other items near their sell-by date.

Initially Maureen and Gordon were taking them up to foodbanks in Clydebank but within weeks the pair decided to concentrate their efforts closer to home and established Old Kilpatrick Food Parcels (OKFP).

Maureen explained: “We made up some leaflets and put them through doors in the village.

People kept saying we were wasting our time because no-one in Old Kilpatrick needed food.

“On our first day at the start of May we gave food parcels to 21 people, the following week that had doubled.

“The donations started coming in fast and furious so we felt we needed more than one distribution place and the minister at Dalmuir’s Barclays Church offered us the use of their hall.”



“In the first week just five people turned up, surprising Maureen who had expected a much higher demand.

It was then it dawned on her that many people who are struggling with food bills are also unlikely to see the promotions she was putting on social media.

So with the support of a local printer she had 2,000 leaflets printed and along with an ever-growing team of volunteers they did a leaflet drop across Dalmuir.

The next week 40 people turned up.

Fast forward four months and the OKFP team gave out a record 176 adult food parcels plus 91 children’s packs in a week. After receiving a call from the Council’s Crisis team for an emergency food parcel delivery to the high flats in Mountblow, Maureen was shocked to discover there were families living in what looked like boarded up blocks.

Again this was part of her own learning journey about her community and the scale of poverty in some parts of it.

This eye opener spurred Maureen to action and the following week she took the food that hadn’t been handed out at

at Barclays Church up to the high flats and started beeping the horn of her car.

She quickly had the attention of local residents and handed out 11 food parcels. When she went back the following week a queue of 18 people were waiting for her and two young helpers from the refugee community housed in some of the flats, offered to leaflet the blocks.

By the end of September her mobile foodbank was handing out over 40 parcels a week.

And she is adapting the parcels to meet the needs of the different communities that OKFP is supporting.

"In Old Kilpatrick and Bowling it is mainly older people, at Barclays Church it's mainly families and in Mountblow we're supporting refugees and people in recovery," she said.

This has meant sourcing instant meals for the Mountblow flats, many of which have no cooking facilities and teaming up with Hungry Bites roll shop who are making up fresh filled rolls each week.

Maureen is committed to OKFP and though she is due to return to work it will be in a job closer to home.

And she now has a small army of volunteers to help her and Gordon, many of whom have benefited from the OKFP support themselves.

"It's a way of life for us now and we're loving it. My mind is constantly thinking of ideas to help and I'm learning so much about my community.

"Before we would spend our money going to pubs and restaurants at the weekends or away on holidays to cheer ourselves up because work was so stressful.

"Now we're spending 24 hours a day together working on something we both believe in.

"For something that is so horrendous as this pandemic has been we have found a way out of the rat race. It has been really great for us as a couple and as individuals, it has really helped my self worth and opened our eyes to what is around us in our community."

Clydesider Crossword LOCKDOWN

ACROSS

DOWN

3	Symptom (3,5)	1	WW1 nurse Glasgow hospital named after (6,6)
9	No visiting other households (8)	2	Regular update (8)
10	Protective covering (4,4)	4	Staying apart (6,10)
12	What to wash frequently (5)	5	Isolation from others (10)
14	What to avoid (7,5)	6	What the virus is (10)
15	Time between contraction and symptoms (10)	7	Worldwide perspective (8)
16	Safety helmet etc (initis, 3)	8	Germ-killing fluid (9)
17	Sense which is lost (5)	11	Corn Various (anag,11)
		13	Symptom (6)



Nature on the Hoof

Words & Photos by Paul Murdoch
Lockdown wasn't the best of times, but at least I had a garden and access to the hill and moor beyond. The more I walked the same path, the more I noticed the beauty that flourished despite our nightmare.

During those daily walks, I remembered how I'd played on that same hill as a boy and how lucky I'd been to have people in my life who'd taught me what the birds and flowers were all called.

Sam Kennedy, a teacher who became a friend, was a fellow bird watcher and he knew his way around a camera. Back in the 70's, his genuine enthusiasm inspired me to buy a cheap Russian model and have a go.

By 2020, I'd long lost my old Zenith, but made one of those impulse buys so many of us did to cheer



ourselves up - a Sony HX400v.

With no idea how to work the camera and zero interest in reading instructions, I set off, up the hill, to see what I could find. On the upside, I knew where to look, what most things were and when to see them. My camera skills slowly returned and my son, Ryan, a pretty sharp photographer himself, gave me some useful tips on editing and composition.

I began posting the local shots on Facebook and soon had a wee following that sparked some offers and projects. Nature on the Hoof was born and my first wildlife calendar is now available for 2021 at www.neetahbooks.com/nature-on-the-hoof

You can enjoy a weekly Nature on the Hoof post from Paul on our Facebook page and there's an autumnal taster opposite.



Weighing only ten grams, that wee bird makes the 8,500 mile journey back to the Dark Continent for the second time.

As the summer visitors check out the winter visitors check in. Redwings and Fieldfares travel here from Iceland in October.

Members of the thrush family, they love our winter berries and often feed together in one big flock.

Migration

Words & Photos by Paul Murdoch
Migration... Quite a thorny subject these days, but in the animal world, it's almost business as usual.

Our fair-weather visitors include the obvious candidates like the Cuckoo, the Swallow, the House Martin and the Swift.

All arriving from Africa between late March and April - but there is another among them who was perhaps less conspicuous, yet is our most common migrant.

Two million pairs of Willow Warblers (opposite) breed in the UK which is three times the amount of Swallows. Often hidden in trees and bushes, you just don't notice them as much. Before that return journey to their winter home in South Africa, they stock up on as many West Dunbartonshire bugs as they can.



One of the most beautiful birds to look out for is the Waxwing (top left), with an elegant little tuft on its head and a robber's black mask, it's mainly light brown with flashes of yellow and red on its wings and tail. About the size of a Starling, it gets its name from those red wing-markings which reminded people of sealing wax.

It would be great if you could send in any info on sightings to natureonthehoof@gmail.com



And So It Grows

By Holly Munn

Months of lockdown saw many people shopping small and staying local. It also forced a number of career changes.

For Old Kilpatrick couple Sarah and Andy Smith the future is now looking green with the sprouting of their new business 'And Sow It Grows Local.'

Lockdown saw Sarah furloughed from her driving job and then suddenly out of work.

"I spent all the time thinking, what else can we do," she said.

And from there an idea began to form.

"Initially we looked at growing mushrooms, then I looked at microgreens, and that's much easier."

With minimal equipment required, simply soil, air, light, and some water with seaweed extract they are fairly low maintenance. And it is this lack of fuss that makes it so easy to get into.

While some produce take months to grow, microgreens can grow in as little as one to two weeks. Reared in either water or soil they're used as a nutrition supplement, visual and flavour enhancement.

In the past Sarah has volunteered at Erskine doing horticultural therapy but this was her first foray into microgreens and it's been one big learning curve.

"There's a lot of people teaching you how to do it - YouTube basically.

"Because you have a two-week turnaround, you make your mistakes and think 'I overwatered that, I underwatered that'. You have so many successions within a few months you get quite experienced."

So now they had the skills, all they needed was premises.

"We started at home in our spare room, but realised quite quickly that wasn't going to work."

Next thought was the garden shed, but they knew they would quickly outgrow it.

So they are now in a unit in Dumbarton where their array of shelves and trays, each with its own organic soil, is growing a mix of cress, broccoli, radish pea and sunflowers. And they're continuously expanding their range of products.

"I'm working on a thing at the moment for dogs and cats. They're great for them, especially peas and wheatgrass,"

And their produce has taken off, they've found themselves with repeat custom after just a few weeks. and are hoping to expand.

They would love to see their microgreens on the plates of many a café and restaurant in Glasgow but for now it's back to business as usual, working together and watching things grow.

The Shielding Beard

By Brian Wright

What was 12 weeks became 16 and is likely to stretch farther into the unknown. Many have greater physical challenges than I, however maintaining a sense of well-being is challenge enough for us all.

I decided very early that I wasn't about to tally off the days. It looks good in the movies, helping a prisoner count down to his release. It doesn't work so well when you don't have a release date to aim for. Instead, I felt that the tallies were more likely to weigh heavily on the prospect of no release at all, so I found myself a different daily prescription.

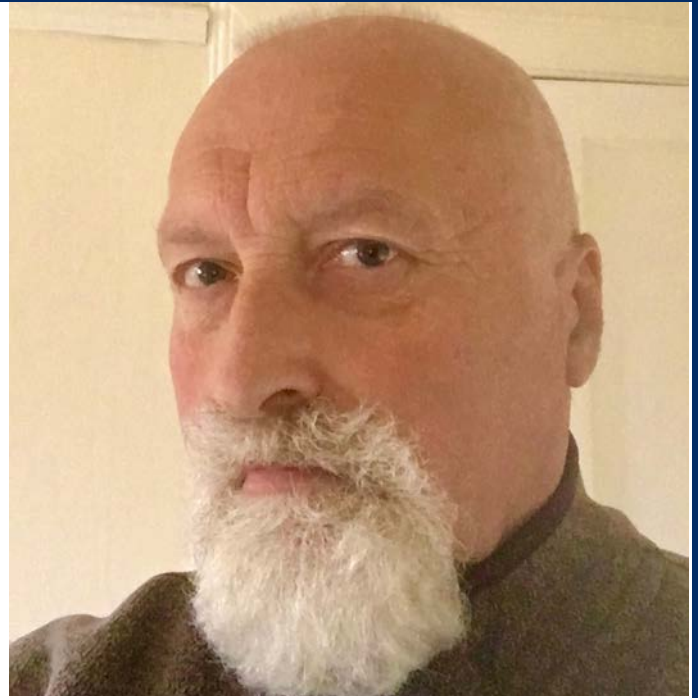
Living on my own for so long now, I've appreciated seeing a different face in the mirror every now and again.

Nevertheless, a healthy respect for the skin I was born with meant regular plastic surgery was never going to be the solution. So, I'm now countless days and weeks into my current bearded makeover.

I think this is the longest I've gone without reverting back to a fresh face, and consequently the longest I've let a beard grow. I went for the goatee look. That way I still get to shave each day and use up some of the seemingly endless time that every lockdown day has challenged us with. In any case, I decided the potential mystic oriental look of a long straight goatee would go well when I'm meditating in my zen garden.

So, what might have begun as one of my regular makeovers has become a challenge thrown back at the lockdown; I refuse to concern myself with the time you steal from me, how long will you let my beard grow?

Already it looks impressive against my tanning face. I'd like to claim that it has been bleached by the ubiquitous sunshine. It hasn't. It's not even been



bleached by virtue of advice from The Donald. It has long since lost the dark pigment of my youth. It's bleaching is by age alone. Funnily, I've pictures of myself a toddler with blond curly locks. They say age brings along a second childhood, so it appears with my hair, albeit on the opposite end of my head.

When my hair was longish as a teenager, I had a nightly routine; pull the hair straight and carefully lie on it; try not to budge overnight; and hope for straight hair in the morning... at least on one side of my head. Without such care, my hair took on a life of its own. And not so much curly.

At its very worst my head was beset by a wave pattern that would've baffled the brightest of physicists. No ocean on our planet ever cast waves in so many directions at one time.

My quest to discover how long a lockdown beard might grow is now hindered by the self same issue. Will I only reveal the answer by judicious straightening of the white chargers that pore forth from the follicles of my lower jaw?

Yes, many have greater physical challenges than I, but this lockdown shielding does not deserve to be made worse by my reasonable attempt to lessen it.

Clydesider Credits

A big thank you to our fantastic team of volunteer contributors, even in these trying times you have stepped up to the plate and helped produce this powerful testament to lockdown life in West Dunbartonshire - you are a real joy to work with.

We would also like to thank the Corra Foundation who have funded the print costs of this issue and the next two. As many of our usual community distribution outlets are closed and others are trying to keep surfaces clear we have reduced our print run from 10,000 to 2,500, this has a knock-on impact on advertising so without this grant we would not be able to publish Clydesider. An additional vote of thanks goes out to all the community organisations who have helped with the distribution, making sure the magazine reaches those least likely to read our stories online.

About Clydesider

Clydesider Creative Ltd is a not-for-profit social enterprise based in West Dunbartonshire. The Clydesider community magazine promotes the positives our area has to offer in terms of people, place, scenery and history and showcases the creative talents, ideas and experiences of local people.

This year has been different as we switched to a monthly Mini Mag during lockdown, this was more an information resource about what support was available locally.

We are also busy online with regular video interviews and community spotlights as well as our new for 2020 Creative Cafe From Your Couch, follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for details.

Despite the difficult circumstances we are always keen to hear from people who would like to get involved and contribute to Clydesider - if you are interested in volunteering please email theclydesider@gmail.com

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2020

Walking out among the trees
This Covid's bringing me to my knees
Trying to keep my fear from show
Knitting poppies on the go
Eating scones with strawberry jam
Reading books to keep me calm
Relaxing in my cosy chair
Finding solace in a prayer
Looking up at dreamy clouds
Staying out of busy crowds
Doing Tik Tok with the kids
Banging pots with saucepan lids
Eating everything in sight
Turning daytime into night
Watching a butterfly spread it's wings
Looking at nature and simple things
Stripping my soul till it's bare
Telling myself that people do care
Tending the garden and flowers I've planted
Realise how much I've taken for granted
Trying hard to just hang on
Listening to all my favourite songs
Writing poems and stories too
Hoping they will comfort you
Living each day with Covid 19
Wondering if this is just a bad dream

By Maureen Spratt



----- ✂
Cut out your mask and the holes for your eyes, pierce the white
holes at the sides and feed string or elastic through to fit
around your head then you're ready for Halloween!