

Stow & Fountainhall

community newsletter
in print and online
www.stow-borders.co.uk

issue **40**
Summer 2020

FREE



Grounded at Gala Water • Living in Lockdown 2020



THIS 'GROUNDED AT GALA WATER' ISSUE

These are extra-ordinary times and I invited you to send in contributions which would reflect your experiences, and hence that of our community, of living under lockdown.

Your responses have been a joy. Innovation and creativity thrive as existing groups devise alternative ways to continue together and first time connections are made between people through new thinking and the use of technology old and new. This issue contains over 150 images selected from the rich collection sent in; none are attributed as that information was often not available to me and it would have been a Herculean task to attempt to acquire it. The everyday side of life is shown in how some key services have adapted and the setting up of more formal community support.

My sincere thanks and appreciation to all who contributed to the newsletter and to the team who will deliver it even in these challenging times. The next issue will be October/November when the newsletter will aim to reflect the community over the intervening months and look ahead to 2021 in what I hope will be an easier 'new normal'.

Heather Johnston, Editor



Stow Health Centre - a Safe Space

We are continuing to provide a service to our patients, just in a slightly different format

The doctors are conducting appointments initially by telephone and where necessary then inviting some patients to come in for examination using PPE. We also offer video consultations where it would be helpful to see for example skin problems and rashes. There is also the opportunity to send a photograph of a skin problem by email. When phoning in, patients will be asked about the nature of their call - this will allow the reception staff to triage the call appropriately.

We are following strict guidelines as to the wearing of masks and using hand sanitiser for anyone entering the building. The inner lobby door is locked at all times and there is a video intercom system in operation.

The dispensary continues to process medication orders as normal.

The Doctors and Staff would like to extend a huge thank you to the volunteers from Stow and also Fountainhall and Heriot who are providing a very valuable delivery service to those patients who are shielding or self isolating. We are lucky to live in a community where we have such helpful people around us.

We hope you all stay well and see you on the other side of Covid-19.....one bonus, at least the weather has been good (mostly)!!



As your intrepid editor I can add from my experience how reassuring the process is. As clearly advised during the GP telephone consultation, I rang from the car park to say I had arrived for my appointment and waited until a callback to say a mask had been placed for me on the small table in the lobby. Suitably masked and hands prepared I then rang the doorbell and the staff member I had come to see, clad in scrubs, gloves and mask, came to collect me at the inner front door and took me directly to their consulting room so that no time was spent in the waiting room.

In the consulting room I was directed to sit/ lie in a specific spot during my consultation/ procedure. These areas are cleaned between patients. Moving from one staff member to another was reminiscent of a food parcel transfer between buzzards. Digital communication to say I was ready for transfer (okay, the buzzard analogy breaks down here); pause while confirmation is received that the next staff member is ready; quick check that the corridor is empty and I am passed expertly to the next room from one staff member to another with no chance to be 'lost' in between.

On departure I was guided out through the side exit by my staff member, so patients enter and exit through the building in a one-way system. It was as if I was the only patient in the building and held in a cocoon within the Health Centre service from first phone call to leaving. My thanks to the all the staff who made me feel so safe and nurtured.

COVID-19 HARDSHIP FUND



- £50 available to meet immediate needs for food
- £150 available for other needs after consultation
- See back page for more information

NEWS FLASH!!!



BETTER ENERGY SCHOOL AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION



Stow Primary School are Scottish Champions for the second year running in the Better Energy School Awards and Finalists in the overall competition. (Result to be announced late June 2020).

- Winner: Scotland - Totally Creative with: #100_Disrupters Anti Climate Change Rap / Lockdown Art Challenge/ #100_Disrupters Land of Dreams/ Environmentally Friendly Christmas Gifts
- Runner Up Award for: Interdisciplinary Learning During Lockdown

STILL ROOM FOR MORE IMAGES

Stow and Fountainhall CC have commissioned local archivist and historian Mary W. Craig to write a history of the Gala Water Valley. The book will examine our earliest beginnings, uncover what our ancestors did in the medieval period, explore the excitement of the Victorian era and look at the development of the valley in more modern times.



To accompany this we are looking for lots of images of the valley to illustrate the book. So we are appealing to everyone in the community to contribute some images.

Views can be of anything you think best illustrates our lovely valley; perhaps the beech woods of Stow; the steam train passing Fountainhall or farmers working with their dogs. If you are taking images of children please ensure you have permission from their parents.

If you'd like to contribute an image please send them as a tiff or jpeg file to

mwrcraig11@gmail.com Images need to be a minimum of 300 dpi, please add a title for the image and your name so we can credit you in the book. Please note, depending on how many images we receive we cannot guarantee that all will be used.



Anniversary Celebrations
 as possible so people
 support outside



OUR ESSENTIAL SERVICE - THANK YOU!

Shopping at the village shop and Post Office has been transformed in physical terms but the familiar capable and warm approach is unchanged. The management skills and teamwork of Alison Runciman and her staff have never been so needed or on show as this anchor in the parish determined to adapt to the pandemic by aiming to keep everyone safe while offering an enhanced service. The team's response to lockdown was swift and effective. Signs and two metre marked spaces were set out outside the shop and along the street, the parking lane closed along the length of the shopfront and directions given to queue along the side of the fence. Customers were asked to queue for and leave the doorway in the same direction, then cross the road to head home on the pavement on the opposite side, keeping a reassuring roadway apart.

Queuing for the doorway? The entrance to the shop is now filled by a table acting as a counter. Old-style 'ask the grocer' shopping is now the norm with goods requested and delivered there while the customer stays in the doorway, but payment is new-style and taken contactlessly most of the time. Staff members wear disposable gloves which they can treat as a second skin and keep sanitising frequently without the drying effect this would have on bare skin, so possible coronavirus transfer in either direction is reduced. Shielding at home? Set up an account with a simple phone call - then payment by bank transfer wherever possible. Through the Covid-19 Action Group (see this issue's *Spotlight* article) orders placed via the group or phone are expertly fulfilled, then home delivered by a team of willing volunteers.

And the Post Office? Where the PO service can be carried out 'old-style' then shop staff take the item to PO staff and any receipt is returned the same way. If the PO service has to be accessed in person, staff in both sections check that there are no customers in the building, then the PO customer goes through to be dealt with by a gloved member of staff behind the PO glass screen as usual. PO business complete, the PO staff member asks the customer to wait, checks with shop staff that no-one is waiting in the doorway, the customer is then called forward and leaves the building through the doorway where the nearest person, inside or out, is two metres away.

The service is simply brilliant/ wicked/ cool/ exemplary... The air of calm competence and cohesion amongst the team is palpable. Through their creativity, hard work, skill and commitment, our community has been able to continue to have a local shop, Post Office and service which has gone many extra miles to adapt to the lockdown in a most reassuring way while responding to extra-ordinary requests all the time. Thank you doesn't seem enough but it is heartfelt. Thank you so very much to the magnificent Stow Shop and PO team and their magnificent leader.

SEEN A UFO? - BET YOU HAVE!

UFO Stow is a Facebook page to help people stay connected through lockdown. Why is it called UFO? Well these are alien times, and everyone has UnFinished Objects or intentions! This space supports each other and shares what we are doing and allows a 'conversation' with others outside of our household. Folk have great imaginations and their creations are just fab. Here is a small selection of what has been happening during lockdown:

- Food (a popular topic): bread; baking; fresh pasta and making jam; pizza ovens have been built
- Intricate tasks: very small jigsaws and dolls house renovations.
- Textiles: knitting, quilt making, sewing for the BGH
- Woodwork: cabinets crafted and an upmarket bird feeder
- Painting: pictures, walls and garden furniture
- Gardening (let's face it gardens are never finished!): veg beds have been created, a small greenhouse made out of stuff lying around, wildlife ponds dug, overgrown flower beds weeded, veg nurtured

The best bit about 'UFO Stow' is allowing people to 'meet' up with others who have similar interests who previously were not aware of each other within the community and the support everyone has given each other. With all the usual village events cancelled please keep posting what you are doing (no matter how small or disastrous!). We can use this page to post pictures of our gardens in lieu of the Flower Show.



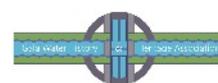
STATION HOUSE BACK ON TRACK

Stow Community Trust has been working hard to make sure we are in the best possible position to restart and complete the development of the Station House. The Board have been meeting regularly via Skype to plan what we need to do when the Station House opens up, including seeking a tenant, social distancing and maximising the use of the cycle hub. We're adhering to government guidelines around the construction work and you'll see Swinton's were back on site from w/c 1 June and planned to start back from 15 June all going well. Our original completion date for building and construction work was August but while not possible to confirm a new date, it is likely that it will towards the end of the year.

As with all community facilities, we know that there will be challenges around social distancing. We are thinking through how we do that to make best use of our new facilities when they are ready. Giving the community a place to connect and gather is going to be more important than ever. There seems to be little doubt that staying local and supporting local businesses will become more important and the new normal for us. The timing of the opening of the Station House is a great opportunity to make that available for us all.



LIVING IN AND RECORDING HISTORY



Gala Water History and Heritage Association (aka the Archive) has, like everyone else, had to change its normal working practices in these very different times. No longer based in Stow Town Hall we have, nevertheless, been busy with various strands of work. The main three areas have been: collecting isolation diaries from the community for the future archive and planning how to present those diaries when the lockdown is over (see below to contribute); investigating ways to offer more archive activities/ services via social media in the future and creating weekly school activities for Stow Primary.

The work with the school has been very exciting. Each week we have sent an activity to Debbie Mathewson who has then incorporated that into the week's work for the children. One week we outlined how in medieval times people who were ill were made to cross bridges over rivers away from other people until they were well again. We then challenged the children to find all the bridges in the area. For the next week the village was busy with youngsters finding bridges over the Gala, over the Luggate, over the Pennywhiggam, over the Cockholm and over every mill lade we have. The school Facebook page had several photos of intrepid young investigators finding bridges that we didn't even know existed!

The lockdown has also been an excellent opportunity for work to start on one of the many donations we have recently received. One collection was a large bundle of papers handed in by the family of the late minister Charles Duncan. These cover the years between the end of the Second World War and Mr Duncan's ministry (1966 to 1992). Fraser Simm has been working on them and has been able to pick up several interesting vignettes about life in the Stow of those days.

We are so fortunate that our Community Archivist, Mary Craig, lives in Stow and has been able to continue working in such innovative ways during such an extra-ordinary time. Mary has also kept in touch with all our Friends and followers on Facebook and our website stowparisharchive.org.uk and contributed to the Covid-19 booklet. **She is still welcoming contributions recording residents' experiences of the pandemic** (see the Covid-19 booklet p68). **Send material or contact her for more information at galawaterhistoryandheritage@gmail.com.**

We have had so many positive reactions to the various projects especially from the teachers, children and grateful parents. We are living through history and our Archive will be a factual reminder for the residents of the Gala Water in years to come.

WALKS AROUND STOW - WE'RE OFF!

After five years of planning, three years of applying for grants and several years of discussion, the first Walking Leaflet for *Stow Stow Heritage Trail* is ready for printing. It will be available in the autumn.

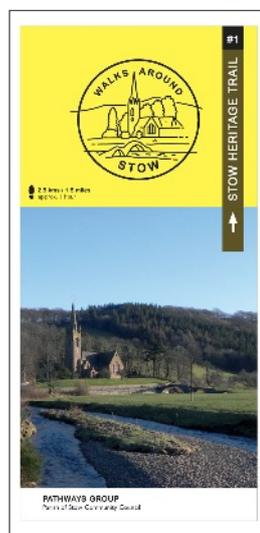
There will be ten walks in total and we are hoping to publish the next three to coincide with the opening of The Station House (Lugate bridge, Ewes Castle and Watherston fort).

As you can see we have a circular logo which will also be used as waymarkers for the walking trails which will be colour coded.

The Pathways Group is Fiona and Stuart Jeffrey, Judy and Alan McNeilly, with much welcome assistance from Wendy Ball and Mary Craig. The mapping has been done by David Langworth and the Leaflet design by Paul McLean.

A Facebook page called *Walks Around Stow* has been created.

If you would like to send any photos or information about subsequent walks please get in touch through Facebook or by email to walks.around.stow@gmail.com





STOW COMMUNITY GARDEN

Hello everyone, hope you are all well and not too bored! I bet all our gardens have been doted on and are looking amazing now, the best ever. On the contrary, Stow Community Garden has been left mostly to look after itself but the result has been a profusion of flowers, both planted and wild, with many butterflies, birds, bees and bumblebees. A few weeds too! Children love running around the path and hopping from stone to stone. Great fun. The residents of Mill Court flats also love the beautiful views from their windows, a marked difference from the wasteland that was there before.

Due to the current lockdown restrictions I feel it's better to wait to restart community gardening until it's safer to meet, which might be another couple of months. If you have time and there is nothing else left to do in your garden then please feel free to do some weeding, tidying up, planting in the community garden 😊😊. Meanwhile I have taken some photos of the nature in our community garden. Hope you enjoy them.

All the best.

Andrea Carlino



STOW HIGHLAND/CONSERVATORY DANCING

For Stow Highland Dance School since 1 April I have been putting weekly dances on the Stow Covid-19 Facebook page and the Stow Primary School Facebook page. It hasn't been easy because I feel I have to do a different dance every week as normally our weekly lessons are quite similar in that we repeat repeat repeat. I am also running out of dances I can do solo, as a lot of my dances at my normal class are in partners; a younger child with another one. It has been fun to do as during lambing my son Lewis helped with the Gay Gordons from the lambing shed. On 6 May I collaborated with Stow Primary School to show some Lindy Hop and Charleston steps to help commemorate VE Day.

As for a return date, I shall be guided by the UKA and Scottish Official Board of Highland Dancing, who I am affiliated to, and by when schools open and my personal opinion but at the moment I can't see it being until September time.

Personally, I have been putting baking recipes onto my own Facebook page (Amanda Runciman) every Monday and Saturday and had quite a few people enjoying and baking them at home. Just a bit of fun as with having everyone at home all the time food is getting devoured at an alarming rate. I started this on 23 March with Banana & Choc Chip Loaf followed by a cream sponge; the majority has been baking and puddings.

This has been great family time and I have been out walking around the farm exploring most nights after tea.



BOWSER NEWS

(that was a great headline to write...)

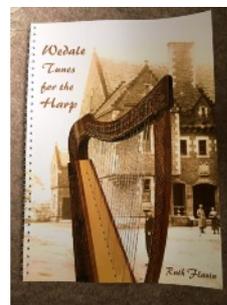


Millburn Garage have supplied, fitted and donated two new tyres for the bowser that we use for watering the station and village planters and borders. Many thanks John, as always, for your help and brilliant service to the village.

Also many thanks to Jeanette and Jimmy Redpath for their generous donation of money for purchasing plants for the village.

MUSIC & MUSINGS FROM RUTH

Lockdown has certainly had an impact on all our lives in many ways. In my own case, it has been a time of inspiration. My daily walks have brought many new tunes skipping and tripping into my mind. I find the rhythm of my feet, the sound of birdsong, the wind and the bubble of water all have their own tune. In fact, it is impossible not to find music in them! I think these sounds had become unnoticed with the business of life and the constant hum of traffic before Covid!



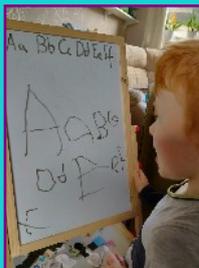
The weather has been glorious and with the onset of Spring and the peace and quiet of the countryside I have found myself writing music as a means to express my appreciation for the area of the Scottish Borders in which we live. This has resulted in a book of 15 harp tunes. Each tune has an easier part, an intermediate part and a counter melody or accompaniment. Included in the book are poems from the area, an arrangement of a beautiful song

written locally and images of Stow from the archives. The publication is a celebration of our local area, Stow of Wedale, its people and its outstanding natural beauty. I feel privileged to be secluded in such tranquil, picturesque surroundings. What better musical instrument to express this tranquility than the harp!

I am in the process of bringing out a second publication, adapting the same tunes for violin, cello, flute etc. Copies of 'Wedale Tunes for the Harp' and 'Wedale Tunes' can be obtained directly from Ruth Flavin rpflavin@hotmail.com m: 07584636497



HOME SC



Super fun FRIENDS
 Idle Safe in Stow PLAYING WITH SIBLINGS I get tired
 So good to have days with my family
 Miss my friends a lot Idle
 I GET TIRED Sunshine FRIENDS SUNSHINE I get tired
 More outside play MISS MY TEACHER
 I miss my friends SUPER TON FRIENDS Some ways good
 FUN THINGS SUNSHINE
 Idle
 Sunshine
 FAMILY FRIENDS
Family
 MISS MY FRIENDS
 No words I can't see my friends Friend
 Idle
 Idle
Technol
 Fun things Miss
 Sunshine
 Misses s
 Technol
 Missing friend
 MISSING FR
 Sunshine
 SUPER

some children are represented by an image of their work

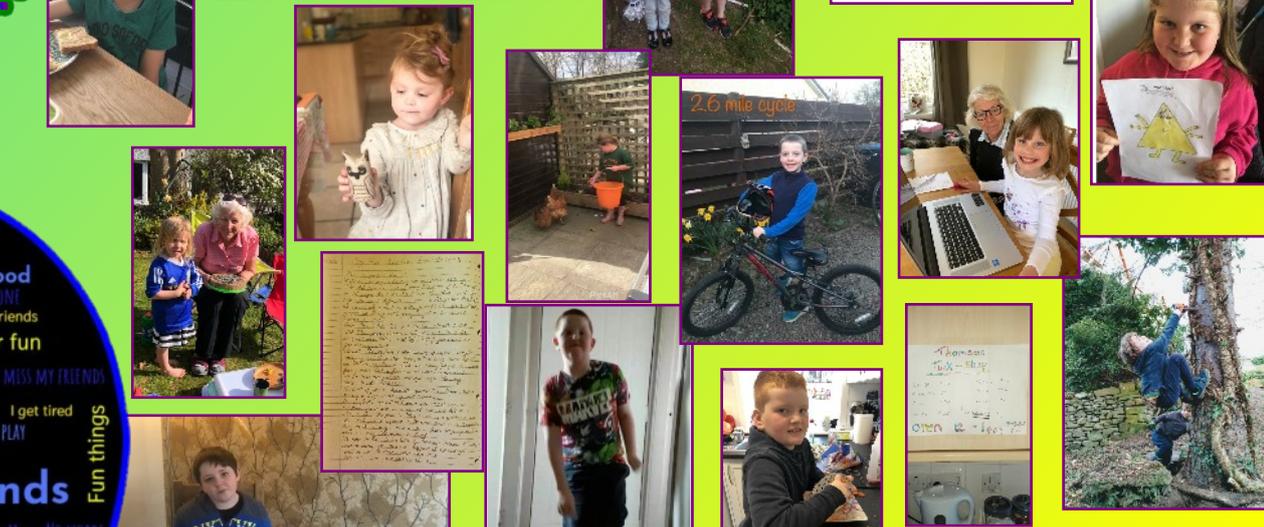
SCHOOLING

PRIMARY



CHILDREN SAID SCHOOLING MEANT...

Fun things
Some ways bad No words
Miss my friends PLAYING WITH SERENGS
TECHNOLOGY
No words Some ways good
PLAYING WITH SERENGS MISSES EVERYONE
Miss my friends
red **Family** Super fun
Some ways bad I MISS MY FRIENDS
Lucky with weather MORE OUTSIDE PLAY
Missing friends Fun things
MISSSES EVERYONE Family No words
Miss my teacher Family
Safe in Stow
I miss my friends
MISSSES SCHOOL Fun things
Miss my friends
oggy Family
Miss my teacher SUNSHINE
get tired Idle SOMEWAYS BAD
School SAFE IN STOW
oggy SUNSHINE
Idle



AND FOR THE STAFF...



THE STAFF SAID SCHOOL-DIRECTED HOME SCHOOLING WENT LIKE THIS...

Stow Primary School's schedule for remote learning has been in place since week one of the lockdown, commencing on Monday March 23.

During this time the staff have been in regular contact with each other through virtual channels and attending online meetings. These virtual meetings have allowed contact to be maintained between class teachers with plans being discussed to formulate whole school learning activities that are then distributed via emails to each class.

These regular meetings have been complemented by staff reviewing key learning stages on a fortnightly basis, sharing direction with parents that provide the format for future learning.

ELCC staff have initiated and developed learning plans which are aligned to school learning and then sent out via email.

In the early stages of lockdown the Parent Council undertook a Survey Monkey to provide clarity and understanding around the impact home learning was having on parents and children. The results were directional, guiding teaching staff on the necessity around streamlined communications and general modifications to ensure continued successful home learning.

Communication throughout has been crucial in the organisation of work and delivery around literacy and numeracy:

- pupil-friendly links have been embedded through the use of email and online platforms, enhanced by teacher support and guidance.
- at this critical time class teachers have communicated regularly with parents via email, supporting continuation of core areas across the curriculum.
- we have also seen opportunities for some older pupils to self-manage the receipt and completion of work, nurturing independence and self-confidence.

Throughout the course of lockdown pupils have been able to engage in a wide range of activities, both on-line and off-line. We have seen pupils embrace tasks set through Study Ladder, Sumdog, Spelling City and EPIC to enhance and fulfil on core subjects across the spectrum. These areas have been coupled with offline opportunities and outdoor activities through IDL and Expressive Art challenges, whilst strengthening vital links with their outdoor environments. Whole school activities have also been

initiated through interdisciplinary learning allowing for further connection with the outdoor environment, whilst adhering to lockdown rules.

The commitment to online platforms has facilitated learning across the key areas of literacy and numeracy (basic maths) this has proved invaluable to the completion of curriculum led tasks.

Literacy has been further supported through the purchase by the Parent Council of 'The Night Zoo Keeper'. This an online resource, aimed to develop key literacy skills, yet delivered in a fun and engaging format.

Focus around health and wellbeing has also been key, aligned to building resilience under the current circumstances.

We have continued to see growth and support from our community partners. This area of learning has been assisted and nurtured under the thoughtful direction of Mary Craig, Anna Houston and Amanda Runicman.

Social media has facilitated a network that enhances the sharing of pupils' home learning and community spirit. Regular Facebook and twitter posts have documented our pupils' involvement across many activities and projects including Clap for Carers, the 2.6 challenge fundraiser, special celebrations and much other curriculum led creativity.

Further channels have been implemented to ensure connections remain between parents/ children and class teachers. Parents have been encouraged to send in regular photos/ videos to share and evidence learning activities during remote learning. Further enhancements through general Homeroom access and class WhatsApp groups have supported parents, providing a forum to share pictures and videos.



STOW PUMP TRACK UPDATE

Despite lockdown, plans have still been progressing for the development of a pump track for Stow. We have recently submitted a pre-planning advice application for construction of a pump track on the land between the Bowling Club and Mill Lade (thank you to the Community Council for funding this). We are waiting to hear whether our application to the wind farm fund has been successful for funding to cover the design costs for the pump track as well as all the surveys and assessments that are required for a planning application.

Cycling has seen a boom in popularity during lockdown both for recreation and active commuting. It has been wonderful to see so many families out on bikes enjoying the quieter roads. However, I also know that many young people are looking forward to the time

they can ride their bikes with friends again. I'm sure a pump track in Stow will be valued more than ever when the freedoms we have all previously taken for granted are eventually restored!

We are incredibly lucky to live in the beautiful Gala Water valley. I'm sure I'm not alone in saying lockdown has given many of us the opportunity to really appreciate what we have around us. Investing in our community feels more important than ever and a pump track will be a fantastic amenity.

If our wind farm application is successful then we will be proceeding with the design phase. If you would like to be part of the user group who will be consulted as part of the design process please let us know by contacting stowpumptrack@gmail.com. It is unlikely that we will be able to hold a public meeting in the near future but we will keep you informed and involved as best we can via online communication.

PIPE BAND NEWS

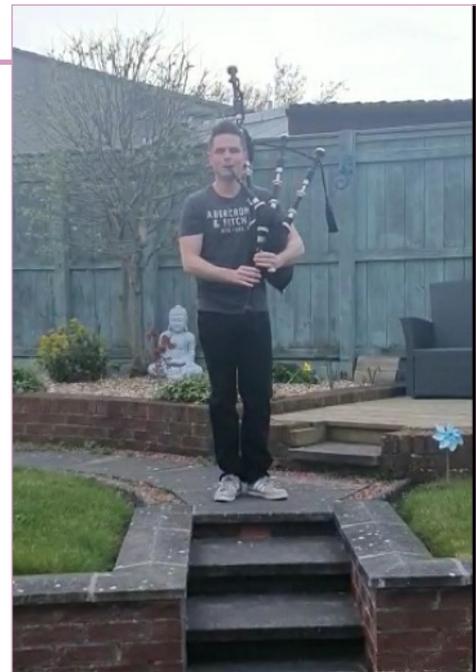
We were poised in March watching and waiting while all the pipe band competitions were cancelled one by one for the whole year. We were holding out for the later competitions like Cowal Games and Peebles which might be in with a chance of going ahead but no. All the work and practising over the winter months squashed.

However, we got on Zoom and kept in touch with everyone and started to organise a quiz and this really took off. Each week someone takes it upon themselves to set the questions (five rounds, ten questions in each round). We have had players from Edinburgh, Hawick, Galashiels, Selkirk, Lauder, Stow and Newtongrange playing each week. We have had up to 26 playing one night! We also took the opportunity to discuss new tunes for next season and are looking forward to getting back to a practice soon.

You may have heard some of us piping in appreciation of the NHS at 8pm on Thursday nights in Stow (Jane and Conor) and our pipers have been playing in Edinburgh (Dale Miles) Lauder (Euan, Karen, Calum and Gabriel) and Galashiels (Stuart and Alistair).

Our Pipe Major Stuart Robinson took part in the 1st remote piping competition for the 'Competition League for Amateur Solo Pipers' (CLASP). He had to play marches, Strathspeys, reel and jigs and the most complicated was a Piobaireachd.

To describe a piobaireachd is not easy. It consists of a theme or 'ground' with variations (which vary in number and complexity) that follow a theme. The theme is often very slow, and the general effect of the whole piece of music is slow – slowness being a characteristic of Highland music, though not, obviously, the dance music. Nothing resembling piobaireachd has been discovered in any other country in the world. Also the Great Highland Bagpipe is the only instrument which can reproduce piobaireachd satisfactorily to the ear of the devotee. Stuart was awarded 1st in Grade 1, what an achievement. Well done.



EVER WONDERED WHO LOOKS AFTER THE QUOITING GREEN, THE MULTI-COURT, THE...?

Many people in the community are aware of the existence of the Stow Parish Trust. It was set up in 1997 to secure parcels of land within Stow for the benefit of the community. Over the years the Trust has received an income from the sale of small sections of land. The Trust's annual outgoings are the running costs of the Old Church flood lighting and the insurance of the Trust's property and land. The main asset remaining is the Quoiting Green. The Trust is responsible for the management of the Quoiting Green, which is used as the site for the annual Hogmanay bonfire and the Stowed Out music and arts festival. It has recently been used as a wedding venue. The Trust has recently worked with community groups who have planted trees along its perimeter. Anyone wishing to use the Quoiting Green should contact the Trust in the first instance.

The Trust has and continues to assist many groups and organisations within the community. These include contributions towards the purchase of medical equipment in the Health Centre, Primary School trips, the original installing and the recent renewal of floodlighting in the Old Church, the construction and running of Stow Multi Court, the Community Council, Christmas lights, the raising of headstones in the old churchyard and many other groups and projects.

The Trust is also a charity and as such it files an annual report to OSCR (Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator). Information can be obtained by logging onto www.oscr.org.uk and searching under the charity number SC027344.

The stated charitable objectives of Stow Parish Trust are:

- The relief of residents of Stow Parish who are suffering from poverty, sickness and distress through the provision of financial assistance.
- The advancement of education of the inhabitants of Stow Parish.
- The provision, or assistance in the provision, of facilities for recreation or other leisure-time occupation in the interests of social welfare with the object of improving the conditions of life of the said inhabitants.

The current trustees are: Jim Redpath, Alison Runciman, Hamish Hunter, Fiona Jeffrey, Fiona Hodgson, Jack McKenzie and Tina Cunningham. Four meetings are held each year. For any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Hamish Hunter on 01578 730510.



Stow Bowling Club

We just got our new changing facilities finished when we went into lockdown. You will have been watching the progress throughout the year, of the new cabin being erected; joining it to the lawnmower shed; getting it painted; erecting the gutters and getting the decking painted. Oh and of course the clock put up. We must take this opportunity to thank the wind farm for the grant which made this all possible. With all the lockers and bowling bags being taken out of the clubhouse this gave us a large back wall area to put something on, and did we! We now have a huge bowling scene which makes the club look more modern and definitely distinguishes it as a bowling club.

Everything was getting geared up for the season which started in April and ends September. All competitions were postponed until further notice. Hamish has done a tremendous amount of work keeping the flowers and weeds down surrounding the green and Nod has been keeping the green maintained so that we can return to bowling as soon as we can. We have two old rollers in the grounds that were the original rollers for the green many years ago, Nod has managed to get them working again and moved them for all to see and painted them in Stow colours.

Bowls Scotland have been really good during the period keeping us up to date with bowling issues and giving advice on the green. Recently we heard that we can return to bowling but not as we know it. We have followed all the Bowls Scotland guidelines and returned on Sat 30 May.

No big gathering was allowed for the opening of the Green so Jane as president rolled the first Jack on that day and Hamish raised the flag. We can now play on our own, or with one other household. At the current time no competitions can be held but at least we can play and practice the game we love.

We are looking forward to the rest of the season and hope we may get a chance to open the clubhouse and play some in house competitions. We hope to extend the season if the weather permits. Jane, President

GALA FOODBANK - CASH HELPS TOO



For those who cannot give goods as usual due to restrictions on shopping in person but who want to continue their support, Gala Foodbank has set up a website with a link to a justgiving page [justgiving.com/crowdfunding/galashielsfoodbank](https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/galashielsfoodbank) where money can be donated enabling the group to buy fresh food to add to the range of foods available.

STOW & HERIOT CHURCH HAS GONE ONLINE

Our church buildings are closed at the moment, but our church is still very much alive! We miss seeing each other but our services have moved online, we have a new Facebook page, and we are trying to keep in touch with others by phone and cards.

Your Minister never thought she'd be doing podcasts or be on YouTube, and we have all been learning new digital skills! We lit Stow Church up in blue throughout lockdown (with thanks to Euan Clarke for the wonderful drone photographs, here and on the front page) to show our gratitude for all those caring for others, and to remember God's care through all our days.

Do phone or keep checking our website - [stowandheriotchurch.org.uk](https://www.stowandheriotchurch.org.uk) - for information about our church buildings opening up again. We know these are difficult times and the people who are ill, grieving or anxious are especially in our prayers - if you've a prayer request, or would like help or information from your local church, the Minister, Victoria Linford on **01578 730237** or any elder would love to hear from you.



WIND FARM FUNDS

APPLICATION DATES 2020
EDF LONGPARK (Foundation Scotland)
& SSE TODDLBURN
(combined deadlines & panels)

DEADLINE	PANEL MEETING
5 July	25 August
4 October	24 November

Notification of the outcome within two weeks.

The Parish of Stow Community Funds Panel is operating both the SSE Toddleburn and EDF Longpark funds as business-as-usual, albeit with panel meetings taking place via telephone or video. The process is also able to offer more flexibility through the ability to fast-track any Covid-19 related emergency applications.

Notes
on
the
Wind

AWARDS
since last newsletter

EDF LONGPARK

Parish of Stow Community Council

£14,153.68

To fund supply, operation and maintain two vehicle activated speed indicator signs on the A7 through Stow to enhance public safety and wellbeing

Parish of Stow Community Council

£7,500

To fund essential items and community activities to help with efforts to relieve the effects from the Covid-19 virus, and specifically those addressing urgent, basic and essential need and hardship, including via Stow's Covid-19 Action Group

Stow Pipe Band

£6,000

To purchase 6 new drum harnesses and up to 40 piper sporrans, thereby contributing to the Band's appearance and performance

Sound Out

£5,341

To partially fund the Stowed Out 2020 festival, thereby contributing to social and cultural life in the area

SSE TODDLBURN

Parish of Stow Community Council

£3,000

To enable the CC to deliver additional services through their Covid-19 response

Parish of Stow Community Council

£2,915.99

To fund the community newsletter for the next two years

Fountainhall Village Hall Committee

£1074

Awarded for two replacement radiators in the hall

Luwatala Link: Parish Partnership with Malawi

Covid-19 has reached Malawi where even simple precautions are difficult. The Parish Partnership builds on the long-standing church link with Luwatala and takes it out into the community. The link is supporting people in Luwatala to have access to WhatsApp, developing direct communication with the community through a shared phone. The messages coming from Luwatala tell us how they are coping as the first Covid-19 cases are reported in nearby Zomba. Realising that soap is a luxury item, and there is no cash income to purchase masks or medication; the partnership is assisting to provision these important resources for protection. All the vulnerable in the community have now received soap and village areas have some medication and basic hand-washing facilities. The community was most anxious about being able to have food, especially if a lockdown is implemented, so a donor has set up a maize store. Young tailors, based at the church in Luwatala, are learning to make masks for the community with our gifts towards the cost of fabric and elastic.

Luwatala appreciates their friends in Stow and Heriot who are offering friendship and support. We are exchanging stories and photos on how our communities are experiencing the issues surrounding Covid-19. The choirs at Luwatala church have sent some wonderful 'a cappella' singing for us to enjoy and we can share this part of their worship online at Stow and Heriot church website (3 and 31 May services). We keep each other in our prayers.

For more information on the Parish Partnership and how we are working with Luwatala during this pandemic see <http://luwatala.link/> or telephone Eve on 07963 520690.

[The website is being moved to the site above and should be live soon. From there, there is an opportunity to donate via a link to a justgiving.com page for anyone interested in helping in this way. Ed.]



You know the old saying 'if you want something done, ask a busy person'. Well, in the spotlight in this edition is someone who doesn't need to be asked; someone who is eternally busy but nonetheless puts her hand up - or, more accurately, wields her phone and keyboard - and gets stuck in wherever she sees a need and where she thinks her combination of skills, experience and commitment to the community can help. Our spotlight is on Jemma Macvie (known professionally as Jemma Reid) who set up the Stow Covid-19 Action Group and brought us the 'Keep Safe, Sound and Smiling' information booklet delivered to all households in the Parish during April (with thanks from all of us to the stalwart delivery team behind the community newsletter who made that possible).

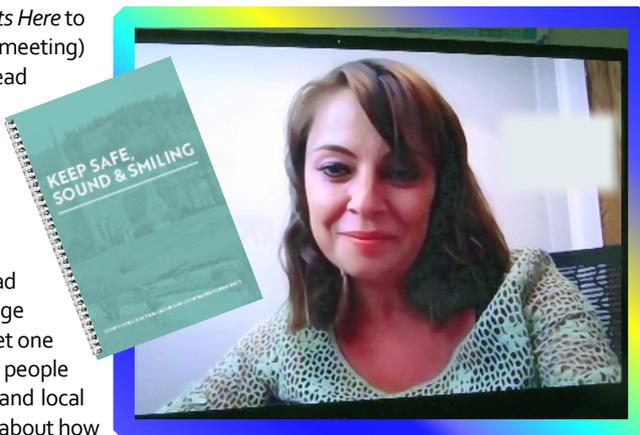
spotlight on

JEMMA MACVIE/REID

By now the organising was being shared. Louise Mercer volunteered to run the soup making and delivering group; shop deliveries were increasing and existing networks of support were becoming clearer. Jemma welcomed this show of the strength and resilience of our local community and from comments and feedback that she's received, describes the Covid-19 Action Group as rather like a big 'security blanket over the villages' of 'what and how to do' in support of a great deal of community support already happening.

Jemma knows a lot first hand about the strength of rural communities. She and husband Chris are both from Berwickshire, met in Edinburgh and when Jemma was pregnant with the first of their two sons, now aged 9 and 5, came to Stow, fell in love with a house, moved in, and almost immediately found Stow to be a friendly and supportive place.

It was through her work in tourism (see Newsletter No. 38 Winter 2019-20 for a summary of her presentation on *Midlothian and Borders Tourism Action Group* and *Scotland Starts Here* to Stow Community Trust's public meeting) that meant Jemma was a bit ahead of the pack as a conference she attended in early March on Tourism in Scotland included talk of a possible, imminent pandemic. Soon after the conference Jemma met with a colleague in Coldstream who had set up a Covid-19 Facebook page which then inspired Jemma to set one up for Stow. Linking up with key people and organisations in the parish and local authority followed and thinking about how to reach the many folk who don't use social media. From this came the Stow Covid-19 Action Group and booklet.



Jemma spoke specifically with the shop/PO and the surgery asking how and where the group could be used to help. A call had been put out for volunteers, all offers logged by Jemma, as were those seeking help. The need for prescriptions to be delivered was the first area to take off, swiftly followed by requests for shopping and at the same time, through her SBC contacts, Jemma became the Resilience Group contact for Stow. Links were made with Jenny Mushlin, Resilience Co-ordinator for Fountainhall, and Jemma's contacts with the Council's Emergency Team from organising past events meant an easy transition to setting up Stow Covid-19 Action Group as each side already knew the other. To build confidence that the volunteers were legitimate, SBC provided hi-vis vests, plus sanitiser gel, and the surgery put the phone number of the recipient on each prescription so the volunteer could ring the household to say when the prescription was on the doorstep and wait at a safe distance to see it collected. Meanwhile contact with the Community Council led to a successful, and swiftly dealt with, application to the Windfarm Panel to enable the production of the booklet for each household (with a few over which have gone to Heriot Community Council).

If you remember the wonderful celebration day for the opening of the railway on 5 September 2015, you've experienced Jemma's event management skills in action, as she created that event for 1000 people from scratch, in six weeks, again because nothing was planned and she thought the event shouldn't go unmarked.

An events, sales and tourism professional, Jemma grew up in the hospitality industry through parents who ran two hotels. She 'lived and breathed' hospitality which led to her career - one which previously has taken her all over the world - and which led in turn to her

setting up her own business when she realised there was a need for professional event management in the Borders. In addition she is on the Board for developing the young workforce in the Borders, is a member of the Borders Food & Drink Network, and closer to home, she is the Chair of our thriving Stow Kids Club.

To say that getting involved is a strong theme in Jemma's life is to understate it. As she says, 'It just comes naturally; it's just who I am. If I get an idea and I'm passionate about it I just get stuck right in and I do it!' She gets great satisfaction in seeing other people benefit from what she's achieved. Looking ahead a bit, when we are able to meet again in public groups Jemma's keen for us all to have a 'massive' party - street; park; green; wherever - as a celebration of the lifting of lockdown and a way to exchange thank-yous for support shared and freedom retrieved. I'll raise a glass to that! But for now we need to wrap up our interview. Jemma has two online meetings that afternoon; one for work and another with Stow Kids Club Board to discuss how the after school club will operate in the 'new normal' when schools, in a carefully managed way, go back to onsite learning after the summer. So she has to rush off to get ready. With this dynamo - of course she does!!! It's good to know that no matter how busy she gets, our community wellbeing will always be on her 'to do' list.

NEXT NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2020 : No. 41

COPY DATE DELIVERED FROM
12 October 20 30 October 20

These dates could be later depending on the impact of Covid-19 and government guidance on our 'new normal' lives. If you would like to be kept in touch with any changes to the planned publication date, please email and ask to be put on the reminder list. Issue 42 will be out in early 2021.

to: Heather Johnston, Editor
heather@southcottage.co.uk
01578 730507

If you are a new business in Stow Parish CC area and would like a mention in the newsletter, please contact the editor for an email reminder of the copy date nearer the time email the editor and ask to be put on the list

COVID-19 HARDSHIP FUND

Stow & Fountainhall Community Council, through the support of the Windfarm Panel, have set up a Covid-19 Hardship Fund. The service is confidential.



The Fund is to assist anyone in the Community Council area who is struggling financially due to the effect of the pandemic and can award up to:

- £50 to meet immediate needs for food
- £150 for other needs after consultation with Community Council Office Bearers

To apply please contact Jenny Mushlin, Secretary, Parish of Stow Community Council, preferably by telephone on 01578 760297 as it's easier to chat than about your needs. Alternatively contact Jenny by email on jjmushlin@gmail.com