

Rural Connect Newsletter No. 17

As summer leaves us and autumn takes up residence, you can be forgiven for wanting to start preparations for hibernation. However, it would be way to soon as there is still plenty to do out and about in West Lothian and we would love to hear your ideas for the coming season; recipes, photos, poems, activity ideas, events. Give us a shout and we will do our best to tell everyone else.

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RURAL CONNECT

DISCOVER

If you have never participated in the [Linlithgow annual arts festival](#) then perhaps this is the time to start. Beginning on the 5th October until the 5th November there is a great range of activities and events that you can get involved with. Visit the website by clicking on the link above then download the programme. There is something for everyone at the festival, from opera, jazz sessions, folk music, to plays, canal cruises, real ale festival, wine tasting, and even ghost walks.



SHARE

Have you ever wondered about the Scottish Shale oil Industry? It started right here in West Lothian in the 1850's, and the world's first ever oil refinery was constructed near Bathgate. Quite a legacy to leave for the World, don't you think? Go to the [Museum of Scottish Shale Oil](#) website for more information; there is some great information to be found.



Picture from Museum of Scottish shale oil website, run by Almond Valley Heritage Trust.

CONNECT

The West Lothian Council Rangers Service has (as usual) a very busy autumn season ahead. Click on the link to the Visit West Lothian site to see the [activities programme](#) and you can have a look what's on. There are some very interesting events, such as; building bird boxes and bird feeders, autumn exploration and nature walks, then as the month nears the end we see the switch to Halloween activities where kids can get involved with broom making, spooky lantern making and a Halloween walk. Of course if you are too scared to get involved.....



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'Top Team Picks'

As always, our team gives their 'top picks' of things to see or do over the next two weeks.

If you follow one of the team's suggestions, please let us know what you thought of their 'top pick'!



Eric

Love Food Hate Waste; Scotland throws away 566,000 tonnes of food and drink from our homes every year and most of this could have been eaten. This waste of good food costs us £1 billion a year or £430 for the average household. There are two main reasons why we throw away good food: we cook or prepare too much or we don't use it in time. The foods we waste the most are fresh vegetables and salad, drink, fresh fruit, and bakery items such as bread and cakes. For more information and ideas on how to save money and food visit the web site; <http://scotland.lovefoodhatewaste.com/>



Russell

I love this website from [the Armadale Archaeological Trust](#). It has great pictures of West Lothian from above, offering a perspective that you just don't see otherwise. This organisation uses cameras on kites to take the pictures and they have some great ones. I recommend taking a look at the site and seeing for yourself, and if you are interested in local archaeology and getting involved why not get in contact with them and start taking your own pictures from the skies?



Bernice

Nature provides artist with a wide variety of materials and inspiration, from painters to sculptures. I am looking forward to [John Donaldson's](#) exhibition at Howden park centre between 18thOct – 08Dec. John is a carver and sculpture based in Livingston. He will also be giving a talk on Thursday 8th Nov 7-9pm; all for free, booking for the talk is essential. To book call 01506777666. Go along for some inspiration! We would love to see how nature has inspired you, so send us some of your pictures of your nature inspired art work!



Jemma

I have lived in West Lothian my whole life and although I was taught the history of the Bings at school, and I often use them as a landmark when I'm out cycling, I've never actually ventured onto one until last Thursday. Bernie and I took a walk up Greendykes Bing, which has protected status, to see what kind of flora and fauna we could find. It's amazing to get up there and think that it was once all underground! There are full woodlands growing on the spent shale now, and there are so many interested flowers and plants up there! To see photos from our wee adventure check out the new [Bing section](#) of our website!