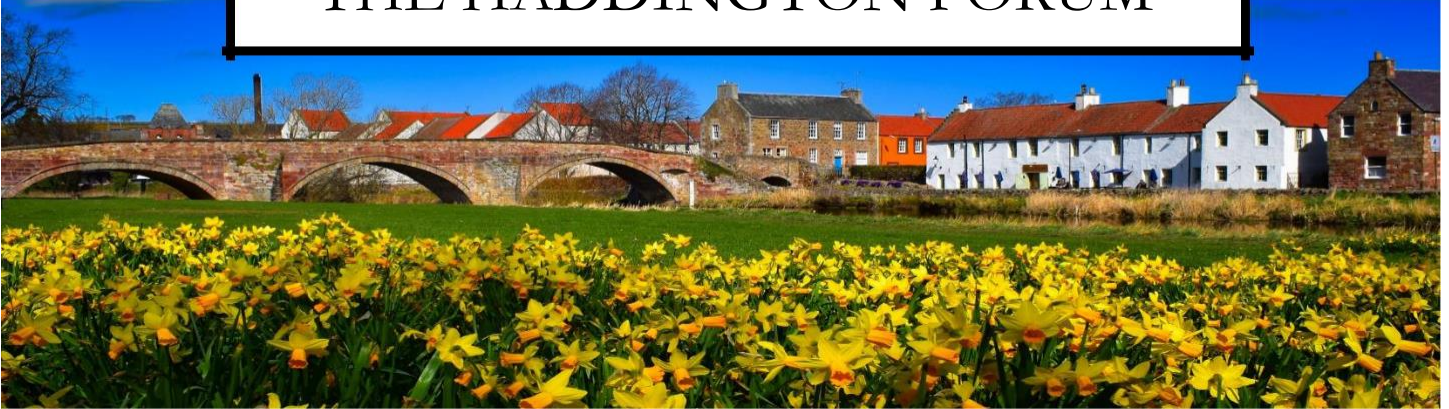


# THE HADDINGTON FORUM



Issue 1 (Special Edition)

## **WELCOME TO THE FIRST EDITION OF THE HCTRA NEWSLETTER**

Hello and welcome to the first newsletter of the Haddington Tenants and Residents Association (HCTRA) newsletter. We are the newest and probably the largest TRA in East Lothian and as such are part of the Haddington and Lammermuir Area Partnership. We are composed entirely of volunteers and at previous public meetings we have highlighted persistent and pernicious anti-social behavior, lobbied to get streetlights fixed as well as raising concerns with the planned changes to parking and the town center developments planned by the council. Our aim is to facilitate positive change within the town, as well as to foster an inclusive community spirit. Once the current restrictions have been lifted and its safe to do so we hope to further engage the community with social outreach projects, events and meetings.

As part of our remit, as outlined by our agreed constitution, we are to produce a regular newsletter. Margot McDonald, editor of “The Peeptoon Post” has

*THIS LOCAL GROUP IS THE NEWEST AND THE LARGEST TENANTS & RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION HERE IN EAST LOTHIAN AND IS COMPOSED OF TENANTS, RESIDENTS AND LOCAL BUSINESSES LIVING AND WORKING HERE IN THE HEART OF HADDINGTON. ITS YOUR TOWN, ITS YOUR COMMUNITY SO YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO HAVE YOUR SAY.*

been very helpful in her feedback so special thanks to her and the Elphinstone Community Association. Normally these newsletters are printed for distribution although they are also available upon request from the associations directly or via the East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel (ELTRP) website via download but given the current restrictions normal distribution isn't possible, hence this special edition; I am hoping to raise awareness of this newsletter, our Haddington Association and to garner feedback and submissions so that when we will have ironed out all the kinks (hopefully) and have a great

community newsletter worthy of Haddington. So please check out our Associations links and contact details at the end of this paper.

### HCTRA BUSINESS

Now before I go any further, I should outline the normal business of this Association. Prior to the restrictions, we had regular meetings with our public meetings advertised online, in the local press and via leaflets. The last public meeting was in February and was well attended by members of the public, councilors and officials of the Council. At this meeting we discussed anti-social behaviour and strategies to combat it, CCTV coverage in the town center as well as road safety and parking issues. Concerns about the proposed town center development plans were raised and discussed. Unfortunately, the follow up public meeting regarding these plans, which was arranged at the end of March had to be cancelled due to the current restrictions on public gatherings.

The business minutes of our last public meeting are available on the ELTRP website so please visit [www.eltrp.co.uk](http://www.eltrp.co.uk) although you can also search for us on FACEBOOK and TWITTER for more information or email us at [HaddingtoncentralTRA@gmail.com](mailto:HaddingtoncentralTRA@gmail.com)

We also have a facebook and twitter page and hopefully soon will also have our own website and podcast interviewing interesting characters about town and to help highlight local issues.

### EVENTS

Sadly due to the current restrictions imposed for public safety, there are no events scheduled but I hope to showcase events as and when they are again possible. This should include not only this Tenants & Residents Associations events as well as other Associations events but also Charity fundraisers, social events etc. There are lots of interesting things going on in the town.

Another activity we have all had to put on the back burner but when things are safe to attend and the shops are open again, its going to be especially important that we try and shop locally. Our high street is important and I think the town would be the worse for it, if it were allowed to wither on the vine so when the all clear is sounded, lets all try and support local businesses and shops.

*Ladybugs are back in Haddington - Photo by Hidden Haddington Ltd*



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## MENTAL HEALTH

By kind permission from Neighborhood Watch Scotland

“Brothers In Arms use digital technology as a way to reach out no matter where you are in Scotland so that you can both self-manage and keep your mental fitness through the use of our Free ( NHS approved) App and included is access via text to a mental health coach available Mon to Friday ( excluding Bank Holidays) 8am to 8pm to support you on a one to one basis in both using all aspects of the support platforms and modules within, but also to advise on other ways to help themselves, ( rather like the fitness instructor you have at their Gym showing what equipment to use)

The link is only available on the website [www.brothersinarmsscotland.co.uk](http://www.brothersinarmsscotland.co.uk) and not on any app store to keep it free.



Our Brother-Stay Alive App. Is a suicide prevention resource for Scotland. Full of useful information and tools to help stay safe in crisis.

You can use it if you are having thoughts of suicide or if you are concerned about someone who may be considering suicide. In addition to the resources, the app includes a safety plan, customizable reasons for living, and a LifeBox where you can store photos and memories that are important to you.

You can also read the strategies for staying safe, explore the tips on how to stay grounded when you're feeling overwhelmed, try the guided-breathing exercises and support your own wellness by creating your own interactive Wellness Plan. The app links you directly to local and national crisis resources, it's all stored there within the app. If the resource isn't listed, simply add in your own.

Our strategy is showing that we are reaching out to the Scotland, but that also to the more remote parts of Scotland such as the highlands where there is not always a support infrastructure in place or that the small communities are a barrier to seeking support”

Mark Armstrong (NHWN, Community Support Officer, NW Scotland)

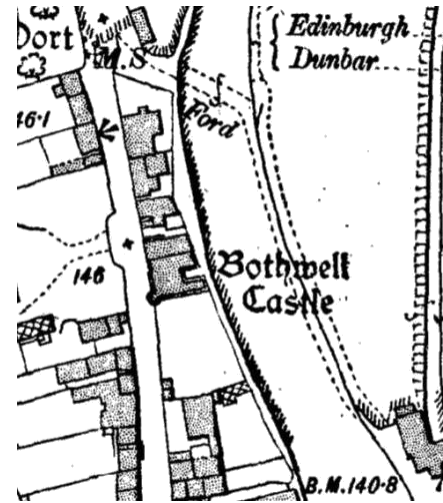


## BOTHWELL BANK

As you come into Haddington from the North you can drive past a non-descript grass verge close to the heart of the town. Few probably think of it as they go past, some might not even notice it and yet

Given the natural scenic natural beauty and historic value of the small park at Bothwell Bank just by the Hardgate; can anything be done to improve this area to the benefit of the local community and tourism?

Currently the site is under used with views of the river blocked by over-growth, no access to the river bank and the historic remains inaccessible and not even signposted.



Which is a shame as it is the location of the remains of “Bothwell Castle” or Sandybank House which is of great historical interest and value. Recent archaeological investigation has shown the bottom floor is still largely extant just below the surface! Perhaps one day this could be properly excavated as the stairs, courtyard and storerooms still exist under the ground. But if some sort of plaque or marking could be made it would help foster interest in the History of this town and help identify this iconic building. Flower

beds marking the layout of the foundations beneath might be a great way of bringing this lost building to life again.

Back at the start of 2019 I was able to meet and talk with David Connolly and Hana Kdolska (CHC Heritage) and about possible community based archaeology and heritage projects there as back in 2013 community excavations of the site revealed the remains of a late 16<sup>th</sup> century town house, known as ‘Bothwell Castle’, as well as some indications of earlier land use along that bank and so further exploration might reveal information about the life of Haddington even further back!

Maybe one day a plaque or some other feature could be erected or the location maintained better so that its safer for families and children to use. The old sunken garden could become a playground or flower beds could outline the ancient buildings below in some way? Until then spare a thought for one of Haddingtons lost gems that may in fact just be hiding below the grass and not lost at all.

## *Letter from the Editor*

Thank you for reading this newsletter but for the next one to be produced we need some feedback from you. If there is anything you would like to see or mentioned on our Tenants and Residents Association newsletter then please tell us. This is a newsletter for all the residents and tenants in this area of Haddington so it should reflect what’s relevant to Haddington and to the community.

As you probably know, as part of our remit for community engagement and outreach, other associations produce newsletters and so I hope to keep to a regular publishing schedule. Normally that months or that quarterly newsletter is available via the website, available at agreed venues and / or hand delivered to residents but with the current restrictions that's not possible – hence this special edition.

One of my big worries is people's mental health as we are all stuck indoors, in a very stressful situation and having to deal with heightened anxiety. I am sure you already have your own coping networks in place but at times like this, I think its important we be even more aware of ours and our loved ones physical, mental and spiritual health. Please don't suffer in silence. You can't help others if you don't look after yourself first.

There is a lot of help and advice out there and I will pop some helpful links and numbers below for your reference. For myself I try and follow the following advice.

- ✚ Keep to a routine –
- ✚ Try to keep positive and don't dwell on the negatives
- ✚ Physical Exercise – I now do those Joe Wicks exercise routines with the family on weekdays
- ✚ Keep in contact with people – I email and skype with friends & family

I would also recommend visiting [www.eastspace.org.uk](http://www.eastspace.org.uk)

Also.

- “What's Up” – a useful app for managing anxiety – very relevant at the moment although there are other anxiety helping apps
- Moodjuice – a self-help and mental health information website at [www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk/](http://www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk/)
- Samaritans - [www.samaritans.org/scotland/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/write-email/](http://www.samaritans.org/scotland/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/write-email/)

So please mention these to people as there is nothing worse than suffering in silence and there is no shame in seeking help and support when you need it.

Anyway, I hope to have the next issue of this newsletter ready for the end of the month and then stick to a regular publishing schedule after that. Although depending on the feedback and any submissions or ideas you send it, we could produce another special edition in the form of an “E-zine” or online magazine. With that in mind please keep sending in your feedback, art / photos and original work for inclusion in the newsletter. At this point it is best to email me at [HCTRAnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:HCTRAnewsletter@gmail.com) and preferably in .doc, docx, rtf, or txt files, or if you are sending it as an email, please make it clear what section of your message you want published. Please do not send me anything as a PDF. As for art or photos: please send images separately from text, not embedded into text files, along with the details about the work etc. Also, please remember copyright as well as the standard rules under which SIG material is published for members. If something is very long then I reserve the right to edit it or spread it over successive newsletters. If you are not sure about what you are writing, you can always contact me about it and I can help. Please also note that I am also learning the ropes at this end so please be patient with me and that it will take me a wee while to get to the stage of regular deadlines and publishing dates. Anyway thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you.

With Regards

*STUART*

## Useful Websites:

Useful one stop shop site with information regarding support within East Lothian and online resources.  
<https://eastspace.org.uk/>

## Telephone helplines:

- NHS 24: Call 111
- Breathing Space: Call 0800 83 85 87 (Weekdays: Mon-Thurs, 18.00 – 02.00; Weekend Friday 18.00 to Monday 06.00)
- Samaritans: Call 116 123 (or email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org).)
- Childline: Call 0800 1111
- Parentline: 0800 028 2233
- Breathing Space: 0800 838587
- Haddington Police: 01620 824101 or 101

### Disclaimer

Haddington Central Tenants & Residents Association Newsletter

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Contributions by other authors, commentators and photographers are eagerly sought so please contact me with your ideas or contributions. So please get in touch via [HCTRAnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:HCTRAnewsletter@gmail.com)

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