



MyLinlithgow.com

An initiative of Linlithgow Community Development Trust

Background

- This is an initiative of Linlithgow Community Development Trust (LCDT)
- The idea of a central town-wide website has been around for a long time
- There have been various iterations led by different local organisations
- LCDT's community consultation of January 2017 highlighted that there was still an unmet need in the local community
- Concurrently, several key groups approached us in support of developing a town-wide website

What the community told us

- *Interconnecting local groups through one place to let us know what is available – so we can benefit from what we each have to offer*
- *We need help to recruit volunteers to make a difference to the local community*
- *Help locals make best use of all the wonderful facilities and activities on offer in the town*
- *Improve Google searching to promote Linlithgow to tourists – put Linlithgow on the map for more than just the palace!*
- *We need help to promote our activities and events*
- *We need an interactive and engaging portal so groups can share up to date information and events*
- *If we have over 160 community groups why haven't I heard of them?*
- *Local Social Media groups are too busy – we're not being heard!*
- *Increase High St footfall! Encourage tourists to stop and shop not just see the palace and leave*
- *I want to volunteer but can't find where to in Linlithgow... I'll have to go to Edinburgh*
- *We need a forum where we can promote what we do to local people and to other organisations and be able to share and optimise resources and costs*
- *We need a dedicated resource to manage a central portal – to coordinate all the information*
- *Tourists are coming to Scotland for Outlander, Mary Queen of Scots, Outlaw King etc... We need to make the most of this!*

Our research

- Google results were poor
 - 'What's on in Linlithgow' returned results outside of the town, 'volunteering in Linlithgow' returned only one group

- Many Community Groups don't have their own web presence
- Local event listings aren't complete
- There isn't an inclusive list of all Community Groups and Businesses in the town
- Much of the current information available was in need of revision
- We then undertook detailed consultation with several local organisations
 - This included representatives from; Linlithgow Civic Trust, Pride and Passion Linlithgow (Visit Linlithgow), Community Council, Black Bitch Magazine, BID, Linlithgow Facebook, LAMP, Folk Festival, Reed Band, LAG, LUCS and many many more

Our inspiration

- Westcalder.org
- Pitlochry.org
- westendhub.co.uk
- incallander.co.uk

You can't have one without the other

- At our last community consultation (November 2018) the project aim was to focus the site on Community Groups and Volunteering only
- But we soon discovered that won't work!
 - People want to search for a full list of everything available, whether community group or business, for example – baby and toddler groups
 - Community groups and businesses can bolster each other by being listed together
 - Listing them together creates opportunities for referrals and mutual support
- Now, the site includes both businesses and community groups side by side

Key criteria

- Has to be scalable
- Has to be easy to update
- Has to have a method for keeping it up to date
- Has to be inclusive so any business or community group (in the Linlithgow Ward) can be part of it
- Has to be bright, modern and interactive
- Has to be high up on Google rankings

Solution

- Develop a central web platform to promote Linlithgow as a wonderful place to live, work and visit
 - Promote community groups and businesses and their events and activities to local residents and tourists
 - Promote Linlithgow volunteering opportunities and increase the volume of local volunteers
 - Develop connections between local people and groups and encourage sharing of knowledge and resources
- Ensure everyone in the Linlithgow ward can list on the site for free to promote inclusion

Funding received so far

- Funding from Tesco Bags of Help
- Funding from Strengthening Communities Grant for Development worker
- Funding from Pride and Passion Linlithgow
- Build funding so far has totaled only £2000! We've done a lot with a very small amount thanks to the efforts of volunteers, and dedicated staff

Most recent news

- Partnership with BID to combine Linlithgow.info into mylinlithgow.com
- Use of BID office as base for mylinlithgow.com agreed
- Another staff member added to the project team bringing the team to three
- Additional funding found for a 13 week placement with a fourth member of staff
- Applying for continuing funding for fourth member of staff

What's still in progress?

- Adding all local data – currently there's 405 directory listings and 164 events with more being added daily
- Monitoring Google Adwords and Search Engine Optimisation (we are using the Google grant of up to \$10,000 per month for charities)
- Complete refresh of tourism information
- Link website to social media to promote local events under the 'mylinlithgow' banner as they're added to the site
- Ongoing marketing both locally and nationally
- Improving graphics for each directory listing
- Working through the long 'snag' list and 'wish' list

Ideas for the future

- Linking in with the objectives of other local organisations
- 'Shop Linlithgow' – interactive High Street infographic
- Ability for organisations to update their own listings
- 'Virtual towns' additions
- An interactive app to match the website
- Integrated local news

Benefits for local organisations

- Advertise your information and events for free
- Free links back to your website which will increase your own web traffic
- Provides a web presence if you don't have one
- Opportunity to increase participation and local awareness of your organisation
- Easily update your information as required
- Opportunity to be part of something larger which will build traffic/interest for Linlithgow both domestically and internationally

How to make the most of it

- List your events and activities well in advance
- This could include; regular meetings, classes, sales, fundraisers etc.
- Ensure your directory listing is up to date

- Provide 'value add' for your participants/customers by directing them to mylinlithgow.com as a source of local knowledge

Promote, promote, promote!

- To make this a success we need your help!
- Back link from your website – “to find our more about our wonderful town, please visit mylinlithgow.com”
- Put the mylinlithgow.com sticker in your shop or car window
- Hand out mylinlithgow.com business cards to tourists
- Share mylinlithgow.com with friends and family

How you can help

- Promote promote promote (see last slide)
- Constructive feedback!
- Join our working group
- Does your organisation want to partner with us?
- Donate if you can!