

# Local business links to Mary, Queen of Scots



Celebrating Mary, Queen of Scots are (left to right) William Morrison, Linlithgow Heritage Trust; Ellie Hair, Eeek! Escape Rooms; Anne Daly and Emma Chalmers, Mary's Meanders, with the newly-restored Mary, Queen of Scots statue and cupcakes by Truly Scrumptious

**Linlithgow, where Mary, Queen of Scots, was born, has launched a month-long celebration of its connection to the 16th century monarch to mark the latest cinema interpretation of her life.**

Businesses will embrace the Month of MQS with window displays and Mary-themed products.

Visitors and locals will be encouraged by Visit West Lothian and Pride & Passion Linlithgow to use the hashtags #MonthofMQS and #VisitLinlithgow to create a buzz on social media and inspire more people to visit.

Mary Stuart was born in Linlithgow Palace on 8 December 1542 and at six days old was crowned Queen of Scots following the death of her father, James V. Her turbulent life culminated with her death on 8 February 1587 under orders of her cousin, Elizabeth I, Queen of England.

The Scottish monarch's connection to Linlithgow is already recognised by several businesses in the town, including tour operators Mary's Meanders (named after the queen) and most recently the opening of Eeek! Escape Rooms' The Blunt Axe, a game in which participants must save Mary from being beheaded.

Linlithgow Heritage Trust have given a sneak peak of their newly-restored Mary, Queen of Scots statue, a key object in the new Linlithgow Museum set to open in the spring.

The statue was erected in 2002 by the Trust as a memorial to one of the museum's founders, Tom McGowran OBE. It was created by Scottish sculptor Alan Herriot who also carried out the restoration work.

To coincide with the latest film's release, national tourism organisation, VisitScotland, has created an online interactive map featuring historical and on-screen locations linked to Mary Queen of Scots, including Linlithgow Palace.

On the trail of Mary Queen of Scots highlights 19 historical sites linked to Mary Queen of Scots and six filming locations, including nearby Blackness Castle, which saw its courtyard double as the entrance to Holyrood Palace in the Hollywood production.

Filming of Mary Queen of Scots took place across Scotland in 2017.

Tourism Secretary Fiona Hyslop said: "Businesses in Linlithgow, where Mary was born, are to be congratulated for doing their bit to attract visitors to the town.

"The Scottish film industry is going from strength to strength and this film will help enhance Scotland's international reputation."

Neil Christison, Regional Director, VisitScotland, said: "Mary, Queen of Scots is a Scottish icon and an important part

of Scotland's history and culture. Linlithgow played a starring role in her life and we hope this latest big-screen interpretation of the 16th century monarch will further inspire visitors to explore the real historic locations that formed part of her fascinating story."

The new Linlithgow Museum in the Linlithgow Partnership Centre is set to open to the public on Thursday, 18 April.

VisitScotland's Mary, Queen of Scots map will be available online from 18 January at this link [www.visitscotland.com/maryqueenofscots](http://www.visitscotland.com/maryqueenofscots)