

Council to demolish garages

ALMOST 300 lock-up garages across North Lanarkshire are to be demolished by the council, due to lack of demand and deter anti-social behaviour.

Councillors have approved the demolition programme at 25 sites in Motherwell, Bellshill, Wishaw, Shotts and Coatbridge, which will result in annual savings of around £120,000.

None of the garages have any rental demand and many are in poor condition, including some which have been vandalised and others which have storm damage.

Although residents near the lock-ups were sent leaflets in an attempt to stimulate demand, this was unsuccessful. By clearing these buildings the council will instead create additional parking spaces at most of the locations, at a rate of one new space per garage removed, and clear areas where youths have been gathering and causing issues for residents, in addition to the money-saving benefits from no longer having these void properties.

The demolition was unanimously approved by members at a recent meeting of the council's housing committee.

Two cars torched in targeted fire

TWO cars have been torched in a deliberate fire in East Kilbride in the early hours of Sunday morning.

The blaze broke out at around 12.50am this morning in the Greenhills area of East Kilbride.

It is believed to have started on one vehicle before spreading to a second parked nearby.

Firefighters were alerted to the incident on Mulberry Way at around 12.48am on February 21 after a 999 call.

Firefighters spent an hour at the scene, working to bring the flames under control and ensure the area was made safe.

It's believed one of the cars was targeted deliberately, with the fire then spreading unintentionally to the second vehicle.

Police do not believe this has anything to do with Operation Portaledge.

Operation Portaledge is Police Scotland's ongoing investigation into violent incidents linked to organised crime across the east and west of the country.

Glasgow artists selected for national exhibition

A GROUP of emerging artists from Glasgow has been selected to take part in a major national exhibition.

Graduates from the Glasgow School of Art, the Mackintosh School of Architecture and the University of Strathclyde will represent the city at the Royal Scottish Academy's (RSA) New Contemporaries 2026 in Edinburgh.

This exhibition is designed to promote new creative voices in art and architecture.

The RSA New Contemporaries is now in its 17th year and coincides with the academy's 200th anniversary.

It features 64 graduates from across Scotland, chosen from their 2025 degree shows.

Michael Visocchi, exhibition convener, said: "The Royal Scottish Academy's 2026 New Contemporaries exhibition presents an extraordinary breadth of work, capturing a new generation of artists and architects as they begin their

professional journeys.

"The exhibition reveals their concerns for the future and showcases a deep excitement for materials and processes.

"In an increasingly complex and visually oversaturated world, finding a unique perspective is a significant challenge.

"Yet, these practitioners have captured an essence here that makes the complex feel elementary.

"No mean feat."

The RSA said the show includes

a wide range of formats and disciplines.

These include painting, sculpture, film-making, photography, printmaking, installation, performance and architecture.

Works on display are expected to explore themes such as identity, gender, lived experience, politics, care and social change.

The exhibition, held at the Royal Scottish Academy on Princes Street in Edinburgh, will run from March 28 to April 22.

Popular park takes centre stage in novel

Morgan Carmichael

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"THAT'S the bit that gets me going; writing about things people will recognise or have experienced themselves."

This is what author Richard Fenton, 55, tells me as we discuss his new book, *The Veil of Calderglen: Fairy Tales Were Never Harmless*, inspired by Calderglen Country Park in East Kilbride.

The book, which is a young adult modern fantasy novel, was specifically inspired by Richard's walks in the park with his young daughter.

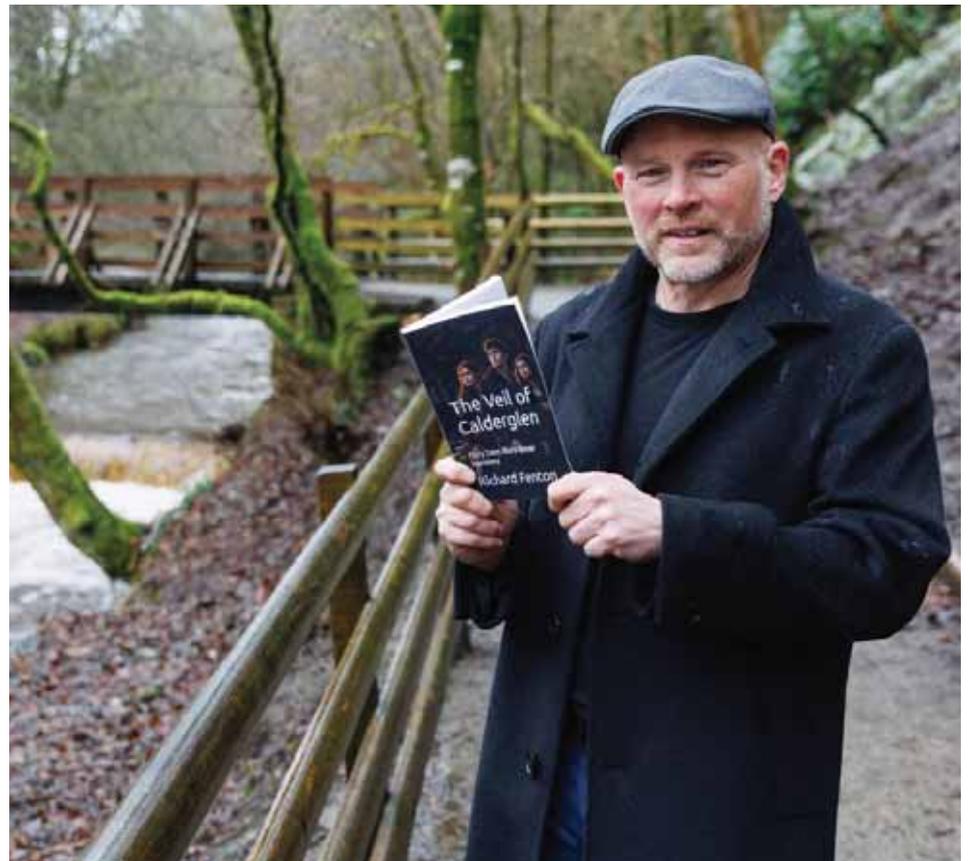
The East Kilbride local told the *Glasgow Times*: "When we were walking around the park, I used to tell my daughter stories about fairies living in the waterfalls, particularly the tiny little waterfalls that were near the path.

"My daughter asked me one day why the waterfall was so small, and without thinking, I said 'because that's where the fairies live, where they take a bath, where they wash and where they come to watch us walk around', and it just grew from there.

"I started taking photographs and superimposing fairies into them, and my daughter loved it. I then started to wonder what it would be like if fairies actually lived among us and looked like ordinary people, living in plain sight. The idea sat in my head for quite some time, and then I just decided to write the story."

The book follows a fictional Calderglen, which lies in an ancient world of hidden clans, dangerous magic and creatures that were never meant to be myths. But when Rowan Calder uncovers the truth, he becomes the spark that could tear two worlds apart.

The book features fairies who have lived unseen among humans – powerful, divided and hidden behind stories designed to make them seem small, gentle and safe. But when goblins begin moving openly through human



Author Richard Fenton in Calderglen Country Park with his new book

Picture: Colin Mearns

systems the balance shatters.

Richard plans to write a follow-up to the story, which he hopes to release before the end of the year.

It comes after the release of Richard's Glasgow-based book, *No Time Like The Present: The Apprentice Time Walkers*, which came out in October and follows 16-year-old Addison Vale, who expects dusty displays and forgotten stories when she visits Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum.

Instead, Addison and her friends board a train carriage

on a Second World War display and get transported back to 1939 Glasgow.

Richard said: "I based the characters on my daughter and her school friends, so they are in the book.

"I like to keep my books tied to local things, and to reference things that people locally would recognise. So, the book mentions the Spitfire plane that hangs on the ceiling of the Kelvingrove Art Gallery.

"When the children go back to 1939, that Spitfire trails the train

all the way down, and they recognise the wing number."

The book was the number one best-selling children's book on Kindle. "Writing is something I've always had a passion for since I was a kid," Richard said.

He added: "I do a lot of writing in my job, but it isn't creative, it's more corporate and to do with banking and finance, which is the industry I am in."

To check out more of his books, visit amazon.co.uk/stores/Richard-Fenton/author/B0FWJWS-DGN