

FREE!



WHAT FUTURE FOR MACKAY'S WOOD? p26



COMMUNITY FOR FOOD VISIT, p9

C&B NEWS

CURRIE • BALERNO • JUNIPER GREEN • BABERTON MAINS • COLINTON



Dean Park Primary School teams among local residents raising money for good causes. See p24

FUNDRAISERS!

INSIDE: NEWS p2 LOCAL HISTORY p14 FEATURES p17 VIEWS p29 WHAT'S ON p42

PHOTOS: HAMISH CLARK, DEAN PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL, PAUL FISHER COCKBURN

Launched in 1976, C&B News is a volunteer-led, independent, non-profit-making community magazine written by and for the residents of Currie, Balerno, Juniper Green, Baberton Mains, and Colinton.

We publish 10 monthly issues each calendar year, including two "double-month" editions (December/January and July/August) marking our winter and summer breaks.

Opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the management. We reserve the right to edit or reject submissions.

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DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE

ADVERTISING & LISTINGS: 12 NOVEMBER
EDITORIAL: 17 NOVEMBER
ISSUE DISTRIBUTED: 29 NOVEMBER



2015

ALBINO SQUIRREL

Dear Editor,
This photo was taken from my kitchen window on Sunday 15 November. I thought he had either moved on or been "got at" by the grey squirrels. He's put on quite a bit of weight since last year when he visited my garden and was chased away by a grey squirrel!
Yours etc.
Janet McCracken, Balerno



2012

WHITE SQUIRREL!



During the Christmas holidays we were lucky enough to have a very unusual visitor to our garden in Maloney Ave. in Balerno.

2016

AH'LL-BE-NO TROUBLE!

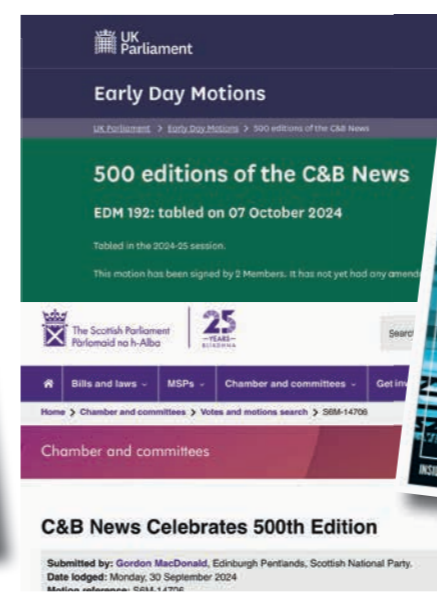


Balerno resident Gail Rankin spotted an albino squirrel in the MacKays' wood last month. See your local issues in publication in the "Views" section by visiting candbnews.com

Since 2012, C&B News has occasionally shared Balerno-based readers' sightings of a white - possibly albino - squirrel in their gardens. Although squirrels can apparently survive up to 12 years in the wild, we've no idea if this particularly distinctive visitor to a quality bird-feeder is the same individual or an equally startling offspring! Photo: Neil Sneddon.



There's been general praise for the quality of CEC's resurfacing work on Bonaly Road between Woodhall Road and Bonaly Avenue but concerns remain about when they'll finish the job by reinstalling the reflective pillars - especially as we head into the darker days of winter. Photo: Paul Fisher Cockburn



C&B News Celebrates 500th Edition

Submitted by: Gordon MacDonald, Edinburgh Pentlands, Scottish National Party.
Date lodged: Monday 30 September 2024
Motion reference: S6M-14706



Elsewhere in local news...
Community news magazine and Scottish Beacon publishing partner, C&B News, publishes 500th monthly issue



Above: Back in 2006, members of Juniper Green Village Association, Greenspace Scotland and relatives of Dr MacKay marked the official opening of Dr MacKay's Wood. The small woodland currently feels a little forlorn, but there are ideas to change that! See page 26.

Below: It's been a few issues since we last checked in with the intrepid coastal walkers from Currie, Balerno & District Round Table. Since our June edition, members have walked the Fife coast, crossed the Tay Bridge and reached Dundee! That's good progress around the full coastline of Scotland - although there's plenty more coastline to come for anyone interested in joining the team!



BRIEFLY... NEWS

- **DAMAGED:** Currently available on Prime Video is the Samuel L Jackson thriller *Damaged*, partly shot in Balerno last year. According to the critics, this isn't sufficient reason to see the film!
- **MUIRWOOD FIELD PATH IMPROVEMENT PROJECT:** Juniper Green & Baberton Mains and Currie Community Councils have selected the company which will work on creating a proper path across Muirwood Field. Expect further news and public consultations to be announced in the next four-to-six weeks.
- **COMMUNAL BIN HUBS:** Following various news-worthy disputes concerning the City of Edinburgh Council's inflexible policy on the siting of communal bin "hubs" - notably in Broomhouse and Colinton, but also Leith and the New Town - we understand a report on changing current site criteria will be discussed at CEC's Transport and Environment Committee (TEC) meeting from 10am on 18 November.
- **BINS APP:** Talking of bins, Edinburgh software developer Paul Fraser has launched an app enabling you to stay on top of the city's bin collection schedule. Currently only available on iOS, an Android version of "Edinburgh Bins" will be available soon, according to *The Edinburgh Minute*.
- **DELL ROAD PATH:** The City of Edinburgh Council has - more than four years after it was closed by a landslide - started work to reopen the Water of Leith Walkway entrance at the end of Dell Road. The proposed work will also hopefully prevent further landslips in Colinton Dell for at least 20 years.
- **GILLESPIE ROAD:** Meantime the track linking Colinton's Gillespie Road with the Water of Leith Walkway remains closed by CEC-installed temporary barriers at either end, although now

>P5

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Gordon Macdonald MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament
for Edinburgh Pentlands Constituency



Monthly Advice Surgeries

Wester Hailes Library	1 st Friday of month, 10am
Carrickvale Comm. Centre	2 nd Friday of month, 10am
Currie Library	3 rd Friday of month, 10am
Oxgangs Library	4 th Friday of month, 10am
Ratho Community Centre	5 th Friday of month, 10am

NB: NO SURGERIES DURING PUBLIC AND BANK HOLIDAYS

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Gordon Macdonald MSP @GMacdonaldMSP

Representing: Baberton, Balerno, Blinkbonny, Bonaly, Broomhouse, Buckstone, Caldors, Colinton, Colinton Mains, Currie, Dregghorn, Fairmilehead, Firrhill, Hermiston, Juniper Green, Kingsknowe, Longstone, Oxgangs, Parkhead, Ratho, Redhall, Saughton Mains, Sighthill, Spylaw, Stenhouse, Swanston, Wester Hailes and Whitson.
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Sue Webber MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament
for Lothian Region



Monthly Advice Surgeries

The first Friday of every month from 10am until 1pm in the constituency office at **546D Lanark Road, Juniper Green, Edinburgh EH14 5EL**. If this time is not possible you can make an appointment by contacting me via the details below.

Contact Sue Webber
@ sue.webber.msp@parliament.scot
0131 202 3005
/SueWebberMSPLohtian/
@SueJWebber

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By-election Dozen for Colinton/Fairmilehead

PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
C&B NEWS

A dozen candidates aim to succeed Councillor and Environment Convenor Dr Scott Arthur MP in the forthcoming Colinton/Fairmilehead Ward by-election on Thursday 14 November.

The Ward – which also includes Bonaly, Dregghorn, Oxgangs and Swanston – has a current electorate of 19,226. The multi-member Ward's other two councillors – Jason Rust and Marco Biagi – remain unaffected.

Polling stations will be open from 7am until 10pm at Charnwood, Fairmilehead Parish Church Hall, St Cuthbert's Episcopal Church Hall in Colinton, Oxgangs Neighbourhood Centre, and the Pentland Community Centre.

The 12 candidates listed on the ballot paper are, in alphabetical order:

- Bonnie Prince Bob (Independent)
- Mev Brown (Independent)
- Mairianna Clyde (Scottish National Party)
- Neil Cuthbert (Scottish Conservative & Unionist)
- Sheila Gilmore (Scottish Labour)
- David Ian Henry (Independent)
- Tam Laird (Scottish Libertarian Party)
- Grant Lidster (Reform UK)
- Richard Crew Lucas (Scottish Family Party)
- Daniel Aleksanteri Milligan (Scottish Greens)
- Louise Spence (Scottish Liberal Democrats)
- Marc Wilkinson (Independent)

This election uses the Single Transferable Vote system where voters can rank as many or as few candidates in order of preference, rather than using a single cross.



Application Time Again for Pentland Community Chest

MIKE ROWE
CURRIE BALERNO ROTARY

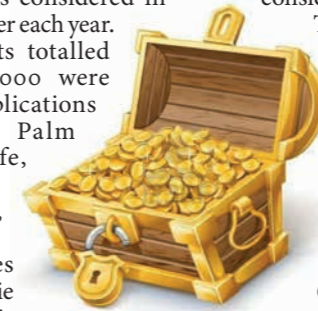
The Pentland Community Chest offers grants up to £600 for projects of value to the local community, with applications considered in June and December each year.

In June grants totalled more than £4,000 were awarded to applications including the Palm Dementia Cafe, Juniper Green Tennis Club, Pentlands Caledonia Pipes and Drums, Currie High School Baking

Club, the Wildfire Explorers, and the Pentland Scouts.

The Community Chest is available to a wide range of local organisations and applications are invited by the end November, for consideration in December.

There's money there if your project meets the criteria!



Information about the Community Chest and application forms are available from links on the Pentland Community Chest website: www.pentlandcc.org.uk



There'll be Fireworks!

HAZEL LUMSDAINE
CURRIE, BALERNO & DISTRICT ROUND TABLE

Your local Round Table are really excited about this year's fireworks display which we are holding on Tuesday 5 November, in the main field at King George V Park, Currie.

Tickets are now available for the main field; last year we did reach capacity there so, if you want to get a front row seat, best get in quick! Bucket shakers will be dotted around the football field and would welcome any donations you are able to give for local good causes. We will also be selling trinkets for the kids in both the main field and the football field.

Currie Community Centre will be open from 6.30pm until 7.30pm, providing toilet facilities and running a cafe for tea, coffee,

hot chocolate and snacks. You can also have access to their lounge if you or your little ones aren't a fan of the noise—you can get a pretty good view of the show.

These fireworks are a highlight of our year. It's always lovely to see the community coming together. As with all of our events, all profits raised will go straight back to good causes in your local community, so we really look forward to seeing you there.

Please remember that the surrounding streets will get parked up quickly so we would urge all those who can to use public transport where possible.

The annual fireworks at King George V Park, Currie, are on Tuesday 5 November. Gates open, 6.30pm; the main display begins at 7.15pm. Tickets (adults £10, accompanied children free) now on sale at: <https://cbrt.com>

BRIEFLY...

well-established routes around both suggest many locals aren't impressed by the scale of the landslide. Determining ownership of the land remains a current issue.

PIPE BRIDGE: As reported in several previous issues, work on the Pipe Bridge in Colinton/Craiglockhart Dell remains unfinished—apparently by now-admitted problems sourcing the bridge. In early October, Colinton Community Council was assured work would be completed by the end of the month. However, at time of going to press... :-)

CURRIEHILL ROAD: CEC have promised to install warning road signs at the major turns on Curriehill Road near the railway station, given that it now forms part of the route for CEC-subsidised Lothian bus service 32. A rural road expected to be discussed at December's TEC meeting will also look to reduce the road's speed limit to 30mph.

BONALY ROAD: While this summer's resurfacing of Bonaly Road (between Woodhall Road and Bonaly Avenue) is generally praised, the condition of the road south of the City Bypass – and, in particular, close to Bonaly Scout Centre and Bobcat Alpacas – is “horrendous”. Repair work, however, remains delayed by questions of ownership of the land.

CHURCH PARKING: In October Colinton Parish Church (now part of Edinburgh Pentlands Parish Church) “sparked a row” (according to *Edinburgh Live* at least) with its application (24/04392/FUL) to create a new car park area (for up to 10 vehicles) across from the Swing Cafe. Curiously, the official list of neighbours informed about the application featured only the Church, the Church Hall, and the Manse—none of which were likely to object!

EDUCATION CUTS: At October's Currie Community Council meeting, serious concerns were raised about prospective drastic cuts >P7

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New Volunteer Strategy from Edinburgh Leisure

PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
 C&B NEWS

Edinburgh Leisure, the largest provider of sports and leisure services across the city, has launched a new Volunteer Strategy for 2024-2027. Their current 187 volunteers, "at the heart" of Edinburgh Leisure's Active Communities programme, deliver more than 160 health and wellbeing classes each week to more than 12,500 residents. During last year, 2023-2024, Edinburgh Leisure saw a 14% increase in referrals to their Active Communities projects – a 41% increase on pre-pandemic levels – demonstrating the growing demand for services.

Local concerns remain about reduced leisure activities at Balerno High School. "Recent disruptions have been primarily due to the need for significant investment in the pool plant equipment, which is ageing and requires difficult-to-source parts," explained an Edinburgh Leisure spokesperson. "In addition, the national shortage of swimming teachers and lifeguards has impacted our ability to run consistent swimming sessions. Despite proactive recruitment efforts over the last 18 months, retaining staff in the area has been a challenge. "To address this, we've taken steps such as engaging with Balerno High School to encourage students to consider swim teacher and life-guard roles, and continuing to advertise for new candidates. We're actively recruiting in Balerno, Currie, and Wester Hailes, and would love to hear from anyone in the community interested in becoming a swim teacher or lifeguard. It could suit a school leaver or indeed a retiree looking for something to keep them busy. "This role is ideal for those who enjoy helping others, are seeking part-time work, and live locally. In return, Edinburgh Leisure offers flexible shifts, free access to our venues, and a generous holiday allowance."

Find out more here: <https://tinyurl.com/baffdhtb>



Visitor Levy Exemption for Bonaly Scout Centre?

PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
 C&B NEWS

There have been calls for Bonaly Scout Centre to be exempt from Edinburgh's impending Visitor Levy, expected to be introduced in 2026. Lothian MSP Sue Webber – the former convener of the Scottish Parliament's Education, Children and Young People Committee – described the idea of the Scouts being responsible for levying the so-called "tourist tax" on anyone staying at the Centre as a "nonsense". "There should be an exemption for young people staying at a location which clearly has an educational and wellbeing purpose, and is operated on a not-for-profit basis," she said. The 24-acre site offers both indoor accommodation and outdoor camping facilities, and attracts hundreds of scouts and other campers from across the city and further afield. "We believe charging a levy for our visitors, who are mostly local and involved in outdoor education, is an unintended consequence of the draft proposals," Peter Casebow, Chair of the Bonaly Scout Centre, told C&B News. "Thanks to Dr Scott Arthur, our local MP, we have already met with The City of Edinburgh Council

to discuss our concerns, and we hope that, as part of the current consultation process, a means will be found to exempt Bonaly Scout Centre from the Visitor Levy. "The discussions with the Council so far have been positive and constructive," he said. Dr Scott Arthur MP told C&B News: "I was really pleased to convene constructive discussions between Bonaly Scout Centre and the Council, and find there was a real willingness to resolve the issue. "In the interim, I would ask that C&B News readers try to find time to support the fantastic Bonaly Scout Centre by completing the Transient Visitor Levy consultation before the 15 December closing date." Sue Webber MSP added: "The very notion that the Scouts should be turned into tax collectors for the City of Edinburgh Council shows just how poorly thought through this plan has been. There is no question that there should be an exemption for the Bonaly Scout Centre, and if there are knock-on effects for other organisations, so be it." • The City of Edinburgh Council's public consultation on the new Visitor Levy remains open until 15 December 2024, and can be accessed here: <https://tinyurl.com/yxydvkxx>



Ross Cowe writes: This year's annual Kitwalk, on Sunday 15 September, saw 21 individuals either complete our "Wee Wander for Christopher" or "The Mighty Stride" – raising more than £5,500 for the Christopher Cowe Memorial Fund through Cardiac Risk in the Young. This has secured the booking of a third heart screening for 200 local young people on the weekend of 28-29 March 2026 – a fitting tribute to Christopher near what would have been – in April 2026 – his 21st birthday. Funds were also boosted by Christopher's friend Struan Cavers, who raised £700 by completing the Scottish 10k run in August. As always, if anyone has any ideas for future events please email me: rosscowe5@gmail.com

BRIEFLY...

ps>>> to CEC support services for pupils with additional learning needs, as part of a CEC bid to save £4m from the education budget. It was highlighted that the current "internal" consultation prevents input by local councillors, let alone affected parents.

• KIRK & PARISH: Last month Currie Kirk and Balerno Parish Church congregations voted in favour of the proposed appointment of an Interim Minister who, for a period of up to two years, will serve the "linked" but still separate churches. This will help prepare the two congregations for a full union within the next two to three years.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

COLINTON: Replace existing velux roof window with slightly larger to match existing window to improve light in new subdivided room; 45 Spylaw Street. (24/04461/FUL) Comments by 8 November.

COLINTON: Single storey flat roof extension to rear with associated internal alterations and external landscaping; 107 Woodhall Road. (24/04988/FUL) Comments by 4 November.

COLINTON: Removal of two sycamore trees due to boundary wall damage; 3rd 6 Woodhall Road. (24/05104/TPO) Comments by 6 November.

COLINTON: Alter garage (in retrospect); 53 Woodhall Road. (24/05053/FUL & 24/05054/LBC) Comments by 15 November.

PLANNING DECISIONS

BALERNO: A Certificate of Lawfulness issued to confirm the lawful use of 36 Main Street, Balerno, as a Class 3 restaurant/cafe. (24/03445/CLE) Granted, 9 October.

DREGHORN: Technical, accommodation and support

>p9

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Currie Primary School Visit Community for Food

MARTHA
P7, CURRIE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hello I'm Martha and I go to Currie Primary School. Each year P7s have the chance to audition for a role as a House Captain. Unfortunately, I did not get the role of being an Otter House Captain, but Ms Hourston, our Head Teacher, loved my idea to support a local food bank.

So all the house captains, Ms Hourston and I decided to visit Community for Food, Currie's local food bank, for a morning to see how they help people in our local community.

The first thing we did when we arrived was learn about how many families they support, how much food they give out each month and so much more.

Next, we got a piece of paper saying what each order needed. Each order has a specific code to know which items it needed. By the end we had filled a whole



room of orders. When we packed them, it made me realise how lucky I am to have all the food and toiletries I need.

We told everyone at school about the work of Community for Food during our Harvest Assembly and we also donated the food from our Harvest Table to Community for Food. We are very proud that Currie Primary School is an official collection point for donations for

Community for Food so please drop off donations if you are passing.

We are so thankful to have had the opportunity to come and help at Community For Food and see all the wonderful work they are doing to support people in our local community, thank you Mrs Reid for letting us come. From all the House captains, Ms Hourston and myself, thank you!



Anne Mackie writes: Join Balerno Theatre Company this December as they present their delicious take on the Roald Dahl classic, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. Packed with all the iconic moments from the beloved films, the musical adaption is also full to the brim with wonderful music (by Hairspray's Marc Shaiman), superb dancing and, of course, a whole lot of "Pure Imagination"! This will be the hottest (golden) ticket around so snap yours up before it's too late by accessing: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/balerno-theatre-company>
• Balerno Theatre Company presents Ronald Dahl's Charlie and the Chocolate Factory; Church Hill Theatre, Morningside; 4 - 7 December 2024, 7:30pm. (Matinees 2.30pm, Friday 6 December and 2pm, Saturday 7 December.)

Fitting Memorial to a Revered Friend

ANDREW MARSDEN
CHAIR, FRIENDS OF THE PENTLANDS

More than 80 members of the Friends of the Pentlands, along with family and friends, gathered on Saturday 14 September at Harlaw House, Pentland Hills Regional Park, to unveil a memorial to the late John Stirling—one of the charity's founder members.

John was a key figure at the time: a volunteer Ranger with the Pentland Hills Regional Park since 1998, he knew how much effort was needed to conserve, protect and enhance his beloved hills and saw the potential value in a body of committed activists.

Thanks to his work as an environmental health officer with The City of Edinburgh Council, John had specialist knowledge and an unrivalled list of local



contacts from councillors and officials to farmers and folk-singers—as he was also a keen member of Balerno Folk Club.

Among much else, he was committed to working with local schools and widening access to the countryside using mobility scooters.

The new memorial takes the

Left to right: Andrew Marsden, Linda Stirling, Lara Stirling, Ewen Stirling, and Susan Falconer. Photo: Bob Douglas.

form of a colour 3D printed relief map of the Pentland Hills mounted on a dry stone pedestal. The production of the map involved innovative techniques in design, printing and illustration.

BRIEFLY...

JUNIPER GREEN: Replacement of existing windows for new upgraded PVCU double glazed units, changing style of opening but designed to match existing mullion design; 545 (Flat 9) Lanark Road. (24/04771/WINPA) Refused, 9 October.
CURRIE: Single storey rear extension and new window opening on south-east side; 4 Muir Wood Grove. (24/04239/FUL) Granted, 7 October.

JUNIPER GREEN: Remove a yew and ash tree; 40 Belmont Road. (24/04867/TCO) Not make a tree preservation order, 18 October.
CURRIE: Change of use from Class 9 House to Sui Generis short-term let; 8 Currievale Farm. (24/04361/FULSTL) Refused, 15 October.

BALERNO: Lanark Road West at Bridge Road, temporary traffic lights during junction upgrade; until 22 November.
BALERNO: Cockburn Crescent at Highlea Circle, temporary traffic lights for Scottish Water valve repairs, 15 October until TBC.

CURRIE: Lanark Road West at Bryce Road, temporary traffic lights for Scottish Power street lighting repairs—originally scheduled 18-31 October, new dates TBC.

PLANNED ROADWORKS & ROAD CLOSURES

Note: Start dates indicate earliest anticipated beginning of work; finish dates represent conclusion of formal notice periods—actual work may finish earlier or be extended due to circumstances.

BALERNO: Lanark Road West at Bridge Road, temporary traffic lights during junction upgrade; until 22 November.

BALERNO: Cockburn Crescent at Highlea Circle, temporary traffic lights for Scottish Water valve repairs, 15 October until TBC.

CURRIE: Lanark Road West at Bryce Road, temporary traffic lights for Scottish Power street lighting repairs—originally scheduled 18-31 October, new dates TBC.

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National Day of Action at Campbell Park

MIKE HARROWER
FRIENDS OF CAMPBELL PARK

Saturday 12 October was the “National Day of Action”, prompting climate awareness events by members of the Climate Coalition and Stop Climate Chaos Scotland. Dozens of groups across the UK organised events and invited their local UK MPs, engaging with them over the importance of the new government's decisions on climate-related issues.

The Friends of Campbell Park (FCP) hosted a “Climate Café” event in the Pavilion, offering free coffee, tea and home-baking to dozens of curious members of the public. Exhibitors from Harlaw Hydro, SW2o and Edinburgh Tool Library set up videos, displays and demonstrations to show the general public the benefits of local community energy schemes, environmentally-friendly transport and reducing waste through repairs and recycling.

Members of Edinburgh Greenpeace joined with FCP volunteers to provide



Scott Arthur MP and Mike Harrower outside the Pavilion in Campbell Park.

environmental information through display boards and by giving one-to-one advice, covering topics from re-wilding and ethical investments to saving energy at home & reducing pollution.

Scott Arthur, our new MP for Edinburgh South West, spoke with almost everyone throughout the afternoon, promoting the benefits

of the new Climate and Nature Bill currently passing through the first stages of Parliament. “Our planet is facing an unprecedented climate and nature crisis,” he told us. “The time for inaction is over. The new UK Government takes seriously its moral obligation to

work with international partners to transition to a sustainable future, powered by renewable energy via GB Energy and fuelled by collective action. The choices we make today will determine the fate of our planet for generations to come.”

At similar events all across the UK, other politicians and business executives reinforced Scott's message. Olly Glover, MP for Didcot and Wantage, said: “Climate change is an existential problem. It's important that the Government focuses on it, and not just on economic growth and public service improvements.” Dr Sue Roberts, Chair of Bioabundance CIC, said: “The catastrophic collapse of nature is perhaps the greatest threat to human existence.” Professor Richard Harding, former Director for Climate Change Research at UKCEH, said: “Climate change is here, now. Government departments should work together, prioritising urgent action for a ‘moonshot’ to halt global warming.”

The FCP would like to thank their catering and home-baking volunteers and Edinburgh Greenpeace for their support in creating a buzzing Climate Café.

• <https://www.facebook.com/FOCPK/>

Shed Sales in the Park—Not to be Missed!

TRUSTEES
COLINTON VILLAGE ENTERPRISE SCIO

If you were in Spylaw Park on Saturday 5 October you would have been lucky to find a wonderful array of household bargains for sale at the Shed, which CVE plans to turn into Colinton's very own Community Heritage Hub.

A year ago CVE was honoured to receive a bequest from Angela Miller, our first secretary, who left us her lovely flat in Spylaw Street to sell, including all the furniture and contents.

At Art in the Park in August, CVE organised a special stall called “Angela's Treasures”, offering a range of her beautiful coats, jackets, scarves and jewellery for purchase. The response was staggering from the start, as customers twirled

in front of the mirror admiring themselves in luxurious splendour at bargain prices.

The October Sale at the Shed, organised by Angela's neighbours and CVE volunteers, focussed on many of her household essentials, including hoovers, kitchen ladders, photo frames, power tools, glassware, pots and pans, crockery, table mats, mirrors, cameras, and office equipment—all displayed under our new domed gazebo in front of the Pit Stop Café, which in turn offered a brew, a bake and a blether to excited bargain hunters.

Such was the success of this sale, we are planning another one on Saturday 16 November—this time featuring the hats, bags and silk wear Angela chose and enjoyed throughout her life, together with a range of bargain items which will make very attractive Christmas presents.

Angela would be so excited to know that her bequest will raise more than half the funds required to transform the present building into a really convivial



Community Hub.

Having very recently received planning permission for the excellent design submitted by local architect David Moore, CVE's excitement around raising the rest of the funds in the next year knows no bounds. Watch out for us coming to you to help!

• *The Shed Sale on Saturday 16 November runs from 11am - 3pm.*

• *Our Christmas in the Park celebration is on Thursday 12 December, from 5.30pm - 7.30pm. Expect fairy-lit stalls leading to a magical Santa's Grotto. You'll be able to partake of excellent mulled wine, hot chocolate, and home baking—and try your hand at our tombola.*

• *To become a member and/or volunteer at one of our events, please email: colintonvillage@gmail.com or message us through our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ColintonVillageEnterprise>*

LOCAL UPDATES • LOCAL UPDATES

Pentland Probus Club Update

DEREK DOUGLAS
PENTLAND PROBUS CLUB

Our Club continues to go from strength to strength with another four members joining us since our first meeting of the season in September. We meet every week on a Wednesday morning at 10am, with alternate weeks being in the Juniper Green Church Hall (now Edinburgh Pentlands Parish Church), where we enjoy coffee and a speaker, with the other weeks being coffee and biscuits in the Kinleith Mill in Juniper Green.

The season got off to a cracking start with Bruce Keith giving us an excellent illustrated talk on "Scotland beneath the surface", in which he highlighted the many caves, man-made tunnels and massive underground spaces hewn out of the rock that had been used for water and even oil storage over the years—and of course the Cold War bunkers!

This was followed up by Eddie Banks, who had served in the Royal Engineers for many years, giving us a very interesting talk on his experiences of mine clearing. He had been posted to most of the world's trouble spots during his many years of service, so I am sure that you could appreciate the range of stories and experiences that he shared with us, not least of all telling us that there were no fewer than 70 countries in the world who still have major land mine problems!

Come along to join us one Wednesday morning, or alternatively email our Secretary, Leslie Hannaford (lesliehannaford@blueyonder.co.uk) for more information. We look forward to welcoming you.

• Our season of talks continues with "The National Museum of Flight" by Thilo Burgel (6 November), "The Commonwealth War Graves Commission" by Elaine Edwards (20 November), and "Bletchley Park Exposed" by Derek Douglas (4 December).



From the Bookshelf

VANESSA FORD
LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT LEADER; CURRIE, COLINTON, BALERNO LIBRARIES

Currie, Colinton and Balerno Libraries would like to thank everyone in the community who continues to engage with our services, events and activities.

We have had a very busy summer, with many wonderful events, including two book launches at Colinton Library. The launch of Hazel Knox's first children's book, *The Night Pixie*, was chaired by the Scottish Book Trust, while Scotways launched the 6th edition of their *Scottish Hill Tracks*—accompanied by a walk from the book and talk by lead editor Tim Simons. Colinton Library became the first public library in Scotland to house the new edition of this book.

At Currie Library, we welcome guest talks from local authors including Stef Lyons (who writes the "Cooking the Books" column in this very publication!) and Jenny Robertson, to our Writing Group. That takes place at 6.30pm every second Monday—check with us for the dates! We are always looking for new members to the group, or for authors and writers who would like to chat with us about their writing experiences, and give us some inspiration. So, please call Currie Library if you are interested!

Currie and Colinton Libraries are also helping to host the Pentlands Book Festival for another year; it's fantastic for us to see so many of you come through our doors. Please do pop in to any of our libraries to see our "What's On" posters, and keep up to date on our social media for added events.

• Balerno Library: 1 Main Street; (0131) 529 5500; balerno.library@edinburgh.gov.uk

• Colinton Library: 14 Thorburn Road; (0131) 529 5603; colinton.library@edinburgh.gov.uk

• Currie Library: 210 Lanark Road West; (0131) 529 5609; currie.library@edinburgh.gov.uk

Currie Kirk Updates

FIONA PIGOTT
CURRIE KIRK

Coffee Stop!

Many thanks to everyone who came along to the Kirk during the summer months and enjoyed refreshments. We raised £1,500, which is an excellent sum (cup of tea at £1!) but it was also a great time to meet old and new friends. We hope to be back next May.

Remembrance 2024

Currie Kirk will have a display of poppies around the War Memorial outside Currie Kirk. Each poppy will be in memory of someone who was killed during the world wars and subsequent conflicts, whose name appears on the War memorial plaques within Currie Kirk.

If you'd like to know more about these names and the people behind them, Currie Kirk will be open for refreshments on Sunday 10 November between 2pm and 4pm, to give you time to read the details and enjoy a cup of tea and some home baking.



• Our Service of Remembrance will be on Sunday 10 November, starting at 10.30am in Currie Kirk.

Christmas Fayre!

Advance notice of the time this year of Currie Kirk's Christmas Fayre on Saturday 30 November, from 1pm - 4pm at the Gibson Craig Halls. Tickets will be £4 (adult) and £2 (child), including refreshments and all the activities for the children in the Craft room. As well as gifts to buy, tombola, and other stalls, we'll have a model railway to enjoy.



Round Table Autumn Update

ALASDAIR GORDON
CURRIE, BALERNO & DISTRICT ROUND TABLE

Autumn is well underway with preparations for both our annual fireworks display (on a 5 November) and Santa's visit in December. Our volunteer rota is filling up and there's lots of work going on behind the scenes.

It's always a pleasure to share

news of awards made with the money raised at our events and in the collection tins at Christmas time. In the past few months we've supported Juniper Green Tennis Club, Currie Chieftains Youths, Currie and Balerno Cricket Club, and the new Colinton Mural.

We are also delighted to sponsor two children to head off on a magical trip to Lapland, orchestrated by the amazing people at FACE (Fighting Against Cancer Edinburgh).

• <https://cbdr.com>

LOCAL UPDATES • LOCAL UPDATES

Balerno Village Trust Updates

VALERIE REID
MARKETING AND EVENTS OFFICER,
BALERNO VILLAGE TRUST

Thank you to everyone who made it along to Apple Day at the Balerno Farmers' Market on Saturday 12 October. Despite the weather – it was a pretty soggy Saturday! – we had a good turn out, with the apple press continuing to run until just 10 minutes before the end of the market. Hopefully everyone who wanted apple juice went home happy.

I'd like to thank all the volunteers who helped Apple Day happen—those who helped pick apples on the run-up to the market, those that came along on the day to help with setting up, chopping apples and keeping the press going, and especially Tom Gilfillan for his help and expertise with the press. Congratulations to Charlie Boag, aged 8, (pictured) for winning the Primary School category Apple Pie Competition and Emma Galloway for winning the Adult Category. The next Farmers' Market will be on Saturday 9 November.

November is going to be a busy month for Balerno Village Trust.



As well as the Farmers' Market we have two other events happening.

Our AGM will take place on Wednesday 27 November in the Ogston Hall from 7.30pm. All are welcome to attend: we will be talking about our bid for Balerno Police Station and giving a progress report at the AGM.

Finally, at the end of the month, on Saturday 30 November, at 7.30pm, we have an exciting evening planned in Balerno Community Centre—a Wine and Cheese Tasting evening with Currie Food and Wines and the John Muir Country Store (Arran Cheese), both of whom are

regulars at the Farmers' Market.

Come along and taste four different wines and four cheeses and learn a bit more about both of these suppliers. Over 18s only; tickets must be bought in advance, priced at £15 per person with all profits going to the Pentland Community Chest, who twice yearly give small grants of up to £600 to local groups and organisations. There will also be a prize raffle on the night.

• Tickets can be obtained from Val Reid on 07505 134506 or on sale at the Currie Keystore.

Birthday 'Silent Disco' at Balerno SWI

SHEILA MASON
PRESS SECRETARY, BALERNO SWI

October saw us celebrate Balerno SWI's "birthday"—our 89th! We invited "DJ Sage" to entertain us with a Silent Disco.

None of us knew what to expect as we sat in rows as per normal. She provided each of us with a headset so that we could hear the music – thus no need for a "record player" – then asked those of us who were able to get up from our seats and form a circle, and proceeded to play our musical choices while she led us in all sorts of dance movements.

It was a real fun time and we all very much enjoyed the experience. Of course, those who weren't quite so sprightly were able also to enjoy the experiences

from their seating positions. We all ended the session with huge smiles on our faces! There were three "visitors" on the night who also enjoyed their experience.

Needless to say "tea time" was very welcome. Being a special occasion we enjoyed birthday cake—after the candle had been lit by our Secretary, Angela; fanned out by committee member Edingell; and cut by our President, Catriona, following the singing of the song for the occasion.

POINTS MEAN PRIZES

Party night is also the end of our "year" so the points awarded for competitions during 2023/24 were totted up and the awards went to: Catriona Reid (first); Susan McDonald and Bridgid Moncur (second equal); and Edingell Thomson (third).

Flower of the Month winners during the last 12 months were Aileen Wilson, Diane Johnston,

Donna Pride, Edingell Thomson, Isobel Johnstone, Moira Stewart and Sheila Mason. Congratulations!

Meantime, October's Flower of the Month was jointly won by Edingell Thomson and Aileen Wilson. Decorated Disco Ball: Edingell Thomson (first); Isobel Johnstone (second); Enid Lowe (third).

• The Midlothian Show was held on 4 - 5 October. Several of our members participated in the baking, handicrafts and floral exhibits, and were delighted to have been placed in many of them. Our congratulations to them.

• Our Annual Business Meeting is at 7.30pm on 5 November at the Balerno Community Centre, Main Street. Reports will be made of the year's "doings" and new faces elected to the committee. One of our own members will be bringing her "Therapet" dog to explain what these animals can do for their owners.

Call for Local Businesses to Become Rotary Community Members

MIKE ROWE
CURRIE BALERNO ROTARY

Pharmacists Lindsay & Gilmour recently expressed a commitment to supporting local communities and this led to a meeting between company representatives and Currie Balerno Rotary.

Currie Balerno Rotary is now inviting local businesses and organisations to become Community Members. Lindsay & Gilmour, with their branches in Balerno, Currie and Juniper Green, welcome this as an opportunity to develop their contribution and demonstrate their commitment to their local communities. They propose to join Rotary as a Community Member.

Circle Security were similarly enthusiastic on hearing of the new scheme and agreed to join Lindsay & Gilmour as founder members. The local company has a commitment to supporting their community and they, like Lindsay & Gilmour, see this as an opportunity to contribute.

Both companies will each nominate a representative to become a member of Currie Balerno Rotary, able to participate in proposing, planning and developing community activities and events—and, where appropriate, arranging the company's involvement in joint local activities.

In this way Lindsay & Gilmour and Circle Security will be able to support – and be seen to support – the local communities in which they have a presence. Rotary, in turn, will benefit from such partnerships, gaining new contacts, new ideas and new support for our community activities.

• Currie Balerno Rotary serves the communities of Ratho, Kirknewton, Balerno, Currie, Juniper Green, Colinton, Baberton and Wester Hailes. We welcome as Community Members any businesses or organisations with a presence in those areas. Just get in touch with Mike Rowe at PR@cbrotary.org or call (0131) 449 5701 to learn more.

Snapshots of the Past

Childhood Jobs in the 1950s and 1960s

For those of us of a certain age, the recent 'Mid-Term' school break will always be the "tattie holidays". How many of today's children, now back in class, were employed - other than on their electronic gizmos - as we had been during the 1950s and 1960s?

DOUGLAS LOWE
CURRIE & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

During the 1950s and 1960s we children pursued many jobs. Some of us had regular paper rounds; however, at certain strategic times of the year, many other jobs were available. During the October "tattie holidays" from school, we'd be in the fields - at Upper Deanpark for Mr Fleming, or at Pilmuir farm for Mr Holmes - gathering potatoes, each in our allocated "stent" (our marked area of operation). As the wee tractor with the spinner/digger passed, it demolished your part of the drill scattering potatoes. Then all along the drill you could see fellow workers, usually a lot of your schoolmates, boys and girls, bending to gather tatties into our basket or creel, often having to dig them out of the loosened earth, and then depositing these into the following trailer as it passed.

No sooner had you put your load into the trailer then the tractor with the spinner/digger was coming back towards you! On nice days it was a pleasant job. You just had to keep going and you often had pals in adjacent stents so you could chat. But, remembering that this was in October, you were often dealing with wet, cold, and sometimes frosty soil and often you were bent and sometimes on your knees collecting potatoes. You got a standard wage of, I

think 15/- per day (between £14 - £20 in today's money) and usually got a boiling of potatoes in your haversack to take home.

'THE BEATING'

Earlier in the year, from 12 August - the "glorious 12th" - some of us boys were involved in "the Beating" for grouse from Listonshiels farm. Early in the morning a land rover or trailer would collect between 15-20 boys,

usually all more than 12 years old, some in their mid-teens, and drive up to Listonshiels farm. We were then provided with a stick - with a flag attached - and were led out deeper into the hills and lined out, a hundred or more yards apart. Once the gamekeepers whistle and gunshots sounded we were off. Heading in the direction we had been told, keeping your fellow beaters on adjacent sides equidistant, we formed a large loose net driving the grouse towards their eventual doom at the line of gun butts. We generally did five drives in a day and ended up leg weary as we trundled down the path back to Listonshiels. We were paid daily, I think that were were getting 15/-, but by the time I left - taking on extra responsibilities - I was getting £1. 5/- (around £25). The beating went on every second day from 12 August, excluding Sundays, until school restarted and then it was every Saturday, keeping us going until the "tattie fortnight".

GATHERING

Sometimes we had other country pursuits; if you were lucky, there was strawberry picking in the summer at Pilmuir Farm. Another money-making venture was gathering rosehips, usually run by the primary school. We had to turn up at the school and our collection of rosehips was weighed and we got, I think, 3d a pound! All of this extra money, potentially, went into Christmas presents for later in the year, or for new football boots, fashionable clothes or for the latest LPs from The Beatles or The Rolling Stones. After all we had earned it ourselves!

There were a number of humorous incidents at "the beating" over the years. One incident involved my brother and me. On the approach to the line of gun butts, the whole chain of beaters had to descend a steep slope to cross the infant Bavelaw Burn and ascend the equally steep other side—remembering to wave your flag as you came clear at the top so the shooters could see you. Unfortunately as I came clear, I was hit an almighty wallop on my cheekbone and I crashed down the slope, "stiff like a plank" backwards, head over heels—ultimately landing in the trickle of the Bavelaw Burn. I was rescued and helped up the steep slope. I had been shot.

Unbeknown to me at this point my younger brother James, aged 12, had seen the incident and also the chap who had "killed" his brother. While I was being rescued he had launched his own attack throwing himself over the gunbutts and "leathering" the shooter with his stick. The shepherds and gamekeeper, who restrained him, couldn't stop laughing. They pointed out that I wasn't dead and was now standing, albeit unsteadily, at the top of the slope. I got an apology and double money that day, which I shared with James, while the shooter who had carelessly shot me was sent home in disgrace. Arriving home we explained the whole incident to my father—thankfully my mother was out. After poking around the growing bruise and wound he extracted a pellet which had still been in the wound. His words to us were: "Tell your mother that you have been fighting. If you mention being shot she won't let you go back!"

Meantime, all of the beaters' meals and drinks were held in our haversacks in the back of a landrover. The shooters lunches appeared from a large hamper brought up from the farm—chicken legs, slices of ham and pork pie as befitting the "gentry". They would sit on one side of a wall whilst we employee minions sat hidden on the other side.

As the gamekeeper opened the back of the landrover there was a sudden rush of liquid as tea mixed with juice ran out of the rear of the vehicle. Two of the shooters had earlier thrown their shotguns in the back of the Landrover, smashing flasks, bottles of juice and soaking the haversacks containing our our lunches of jam or banana sandwiches.

They sent word down to Listonshiels and the gamekeeper's and shepherd's wives made up a hamper containing pork pies, chicken legs, crisps and cans of juice for us. We couldn't believe it! Happy day!



Top left: potato planting, 1950s. Top right: potato harvest, 1920. Photos courtesy of CDLHS. Above: Borestan Crags. Right: The road to Listonshiels. Photos: Douglas Lowe

• For more information on Currie and District Local History Society, email: secretary@curriehistory.org or fill in the contact form at https://www.curriehistory.org/contact/



LOCAL HISTORY AS REPORTED BY C&B NEWS. THIS MONTH IN... 2014



PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
C&B NEWS

It seems that, when the clocks go back, our community organisations spring into life, with fireworks displays and Christmas fairs popping up all over the C&B News circulation area in the coming weeks," wrote editor Alex Schweitzer-Thompson, at the start of this autumnal 44-page edition. "It is important to make the most of opportunities on your doorstep," he added, "and to support local volunteers who spend so much of their time - and, often, money - in order to stage events for the benefit of the community." No surprise, then, that many such volunteer-led activities filled this edition's pages: these included a full-page on the official opening of the ecologically-minded garden at the Juniper Green Village Hall, and almost two pages reviewing the recently concluded Balerno Music Festival (the seventh, for those who were counting). This had included a successful "greatest hits" show by local amateur choir the Pentland Singers whose attention, readers were informed, had now switched back towards their traditional Christmas concerts in early December.

Talking of seasonal activities, there was a surprisingly picture-free promotion of the annual Currie fireworks - organised by the Currie, Balerno and District Round Table - due on Wednesday 5 November. The front cover, meantime, featured some of the young stars of Balerno Theatre Company's forthcoming production of the musical *Bugsy Malone*. A remarkable six pages of local sport coverage, meantime, included local athletics success, award-winners and news of good progress on the construction of "a genuine 'state of the art' sports facility" (pictured, above)—namely "the long-awaited all-weather pitch, a facility for which sports groups and schools in this part of Edinburgh have been campaigning for longer than we care to remember"! As with many things, the 3G Pitch would become a semi-regular feature of future editions of C&B News—sadly not always for the best of reasons!

But, among all the news, there were also timely

reminders of how fragile such volunteer-run events could be, with the readers' letters pages (yes, plural) including missives from both the Music Festival's chair and a member of the Balerno Children's Gala Committee, pointing out that new volunteers were needed to help ensure both events' continued survival. Indeed, while the 2014 Gala "will go down as one of the best ever", thanks not least to brilliant weather, a "well-used" beer tent, and "the most popular Gala innovation ever, the truly spectacular gunge tank", there was nevertheless a "growing concern" that 2015's event was under threat if more people didn't step forward to help, be it during the months before the Gala or during Gala week itself.

For the record, both the Gala and the music festival did take place in 2015, but polite pleas for new team members remained very much in place.

On the plus side, C&B News was once again asking readers to nominate a worthy winner for its latest Community Award - the previous year awarded to "local planning expert" Archie Clark (although he preferred "planning correspondent") but its publisher was itself looking for a successor to its volunteer treasurer, Douglas Buchanan, who had held the post for 12 years. Never one to miss an opportunity to successfully round off an editorial, however, Alex suggested that "this may be your chance to join the ranks of our valuable volunteers!"

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Cooking the Books

This old thing? I threw it together five minutes ago!

Isn't it wonderful to be able to say that? To actually mean it is a whole other thing. But when it's genuinely true? That's a real life achievement. On the other hand, there are things that look easy but take years of training to perfect. Importantly, they only appear simple. For example one might watch an instructional film on how to ice that cake, or knit that jumper, and the person demonstrating whizzes through with no problems thanks to years of work and crafty video editing. Surely we can all do the same? Well, not me. Sometimes I am lucky and do get projects to turn out well, but a lot of the time what I am trying to achieve is much more complicated than how it first presents itself.

That's why, when the opposite happens, I am overcome with joy. If we are talking cooking, there is a favourite book of mine which is exactly that: *SIMPLE* by Yotam Ottolenghi. His cooking has a reputation for being complex, with many strange ingredients that you have to go to specialist shops to find. Then, once you have sourced them all, there are 17 separate processes, all involving different gadgets, and some which might even test the sensitivity of your smoke detector—all to create what is essentially a stew, a pasta dish or a salad. With *SIMPLE*, none of that is true and, boy oh boy, does that make me happy. If I have people over, or want to make a special dinner, or even just a nice bite to eat, without too much fuss, this is a book I regularly open.

In this context, *SIMPLE* is actually an acronym. Each recipe is coded with the following: S (Short on time), I (10 or fewer Ingredients), M (Make ahead), P (Pantry), L (Lazy) and E (Easier than you think). It is very much in the Mediterranean area of cuisine, which suits me to a tee. There are chapters on brunch (the best meal of the day, in my humble opinion), things to do with

raw or cooked vegetables, meat and fish, grains, rice, pulses, and even puddings. There are meal suggestions and even ideas for if you need to feed a crowd.

Recently I made a dinner for my family which included a Lamb Bake With Tahini Sauce And Tomatoes (coded M), which was basically a meatloaf but with loads of vegetables packed in and then topped with a delicious sauce. We had that with my absolute favourite dips, Butterbean



Top: Lamb Bake. Middle: Muhammara and butter bean dip. Bottom: Spiced apple cake. Photos: Stef Lyons.

Look out for Cyclists, Pedestrians and Horse-riders

KATY LAVERY
SAFE BUILD SYSTEMS

With winter approaching, road safety is more important than ever. The roads around Currie and Balerno are enjoyed by a wide variety of users, including walkers, cyclists, and equestrians, as well as the occasional deer or chicken. As frequent non-driving road users, we have noticed a significant rise in near misses with cars driving at high speeds without due consideration for vulnerable road users.

In January 2022, the Highway Code was updated to better protect more exposed road users, creating a hierarchy from pedestrians to cyclists and horse riders, whereby those who can cause the most harm have a greater responsibility to reduce the level of danger to others. Updated safe passing distances for drivers overtaking vulnerable road users include the following:

- Leave at least 1.5 metres (5 feet) when overtaking cyclists at speeds of up to 30 mph.
- Pass horse riders and horse-drawn vehicles at speeds under 10 mph and allow at least 2 metres (6.5 feet) of space.
- Allow at least 2 metres of space and maintain a low speed when passing a pedestrian who is walking on the road.

While it may be tempting to drive at speed on national speed limit roads – especially the recently resurfaced Long Dalmahoy Road! – their many blind spots and sharp turns mean you never know who or what you might meet. Please drive on these roads as though it could be a member of your family around the next corner.

For more information about your responsibilities as a road user, visit www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code or read about the British Horse Society's Dead Slow campaign here: www.bhs.org.uk/support-us/our-campaigns/dead-slow



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Community Support for Village Hall Garden

SUSAN PURNELL
SECRETARY, JUNIPER GREEN VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE

Back in 2014 a news article (right) in this very publication heralded the opening of a new garden at the Juniper Green Village Hall, created on the site where there had been a derelict janitor's house.

Some of you may remember the big wooden "JG" sign on the corner of the plot? Sadly, the wood rotted over time, became unsafe and had to go. Similarly, after 10 years, our sleepers in the raised beds have also collapsed and the beds have been partly dismantled.

In April 2022, the large sycamore tree in the garden had to be felled as it had seriously outgrown its spot and was causing damage to the retaining wall and local drainage. Swift action had to be taken and the tree was taken down by the City of Edinburgh Council. Then followed a protracted saga trying to get the tree roots removed and the damaged wall rebuilt—fast forward 18 months and we eventually achieved that, enabling us to plant a pretty silver birch in the same spot, much better suited in size to the plot and building.

Unfortunately, despite having a few gardeners over the years, we have struggled to retain them and consequently the garden had become overgrown and rather unkempt. Sad at the state of the once pristine site, the Village Hall Committee put out a plea on Facebook for helpers to pitch up, bring some tools and gloves, and help with a tidy up.

Much to our delight, 14 lovely locals turned up on a dreich Friday afternoon in September and there was a buzz of activity and chat as our volunteer team

set to work. We filled two tonne bags with garden rubbish and numerous black bags in addition. During the course of a couple of hours serious improvements were made!

We looked after our volunteers—hot drinks and biscuits at the halfway point, and then we celebrated our works at the end with fizz and nibbles to toast the great community spirit and turn out. New people met, new friendships made and loads of fun banter and chat. It really was a great afternoon.

Now we are turning our minds into how to care longer term for the garden. The Committee would really like it to be a space used and cared for by the community if possible. If this is something that may interest you, we would love to hear your ideas. Would you like to be involved with this initiative or do you know of a group who would like to use and help care for our garden? You could do this independently if you have time or as part of an organised regular community help out.

We are also always on the lookout for people to join our small but fabulous Committee to keep things on track at Juniper Green Village Hall and maintain it as a vibrant resource for the community. CEC is currently reviewing it's support for Village Halls and Community Centres as they can't afford to continue to support them. So it will become more and more important for us as a Committee to get support from the community to keep this vital resource alive and thriving.

If you can help in the garden or would like to join the Committee (or both) please email Kate Dyble: Chair@junipergreenvillagehall.co.uk



Senior Snippets

Looking Out For Our Elderly Neighbours

IN THE FIRST OF A NEW SERIES, ANDREW SENEW OFFERS USEFUL ADVICE FOR OLDER MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITIES.

Winter in Edinburgh can be harsh, especially for older people. It's important to look out for them to ensure their safety and well-being. Cold temperatures and icy conditions can be particularly hazardous, leading to falls, isolation, and health issues. A simple knock on their door or a quick phone call can make a huge difference.

Offer to pick up groceries, run errands, or help with clearing paths of snow and ice. Social isolation can be another challenge, so a friendly chat or an invitation for a cup of tea can brighten their day. Ensuring they have enough warm clothing, blankets, and heating is crucial.

Need help or advice? Age Scotland's Helpline (0800 12 44 222) offers advice on a broad range of topics, including energy efficiency and benefits advice. Another local charity, Care & Repair Edinburgh (0131 337 1111) offers trusted and affordable DIY and home repairs for older and disabled people in Edinburgh.

By coming together and looking out for our elderly neighbours we can build a strong sense of community and ensure everyone stays safe and warm this winter.

Andrew Senew is owner and Director of Home Instead Edinburgh, a provider of bespoke home care services: <https://www.homeinstead.co.uk/edinburgh-west>



Unbelievably, The Meeting Place recently celebrated its third year of helping those in our three villages combat isolation and loneliness, writes Allister McKillop. "We had an amazing party as well as the premiere of our short film covering all the highlights over the years. Kerry baked an amazing cake which was very much appreciated by us all. Pauline, Audrey and I want to thank everyone who have supported us and helped in our success. We regularly have more than 30 people coming on Mondays to the 42nd Pentland Scout Hall, where we host our cafe from 10am till 4pm. We are dementia-friendly and a lovely group. Come and have a cuppa on us!" Pictured are Margaret, Bob and Sharon with a tasty cake!

Malleny Trees



JAMES BELL
HEAD GARDENER, MALLENY GARDEN

We are well into Autumn and our attention naturally turns to trees. As the green pigment fades all the colours hidden behind the green are allowed to shine. The yellows, reds and oranges all come to the fore.

As gardeners, we associate autumn with an appreciation of these colours and the need to clear the fallen leaves. Weeks of work, clearing leaves to keep the garden tidy—and to hopefully collect enough leaves to make some black gold! (Leaf mould is an incredibly useful material for compost mixes and mulching your borders!)

We do this at Malleny Garden. Nine acres of trees, with many paths and roads to keep clear. However, behind the scenes our attention turns to trees in a different way. Autumn is often a good time to survey our trees. We monitor everything year-round, but Autumn usually allows clear view into the canopy and highlights the presence of any interesting fungi. As a garden open to visitors, we take important steps to manage the health of our trees and reduce



any risk they present—both real and perceived. We have around 30 trees (of several hundreds) which we like to monitor annually. The rest are surveyed in intervals of one-to-five years, depending on the use of the area.

The main woodland at Malleny, which has an abundant display of bluebells in May, was likely mostly planted in the 19th century—some parts earlier, some parts later, but mostly 19th century. Many are now mature and some classed as "over-mature". As they age, some parts start to not work as well as they did. We actively manage our trees to reduce risk, which may include removing a branch to reduce weight, introducing cable bracing and occasionally having to remove the tree entirely. In regard to the cable bracing, our very large Beech tree in the carpark has several of its branches tied together. You may assume this is to hold the branches up but it is, in fact, intended to reduce the sway of branches in the wind by a small amount.

We aim to never be surprised by a tree falling over. They are of course natural entities, subject to the weather, and even a healthy tree can be challenged by the wrong weather coming from the wrong direction. With the increasing occurrence and severity of storm events, managing our trees is becoming ever more important.

• *Volunteers make a huge difference to the National Trust for Scotland and there are many benefits to volunteering with the Trust. If you, or someone you know, would like to volunteer with us, please email: mallenygarden@nts.org.uk.*

• <https://www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/malleny-garden>



Wonders of a Wall Scraper

ANNIE MACDONALD
PESTICIDE FREE BALERNO

We hope everyone enjoyed Pesticide Free Balerno's newsletter that was posted out to residences in Balerno. This was our second newsletter and we thank the community for their positive feedback.

We are often asked what garden tools we recommend for manual weeding outside the home on the pavement. Strangely enough the best one we have found is not actually a branded garden tool, but a wallpaper scraper!

Not traditionally considered for weeding, but it's very easy to use and gives very effective, quick results. This was first recommended to us by a Balerno resident who is a keen gardener and has always removed weeds outside his home—even before our community initiative!

Before the autumn leaves fall and winter sets in, why not try the wonders of a wallpaper scraper? You will be surprised how quick and effective this little tool is!

It's funny how sometimes doing things a little bit differently can often lead to far better results.

Thank you for continuing to support our work by:

• *Taking ownership of the small strip in front of your property, manually removing weeds when safe and able to do so.*

• *Helping your less able neighbours to manually remove their weeds.*

• *Reporting "weedy" spots to us: email Pesticidefreebalerno@gmail.com, text 07979 717485, or visit www.pesticidefreebalerno.com*



Wellbeing 'Winter Feet'

ANNETTE WILSON OFFERS MORE ADVICE ON TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF.

After more than 20 years working as a reflexologist, I've collected lots of top tips and ideas for looking after your feet and it's particularly important during winter!

• **Make a warming foot-bath.** Don't underestimate how comforting this feels! It takes five minutes to prepare a foot bath, then 15 minutes to steep your feet. Use warm, not hot, water. Insulate your bowl with some foil to keep the heat for longer. Add warming spices for delicious smells and to boost circulation—anything goes but why not try cinnamon, cloves, ginger, peppercorns and a dash of honey and some oil? Carefully dry your feet afterwards and wrap them up in cosy socks.

• **Deal with dry, hard skin build up.** The start of winter is a great time to set up a new foot-care routine because your feet are probably about to go into hibernation, not to be examined again till your sandals come out again next year! It's worth taking care of areas of hard or dry skin either yourself or by booking an appointment to see a chiropodist, who will do it for you and give you advice about methods and products best suited to your fantastic feet. And then you won't need to feel apologetic about the state of your feet when you come for some reflexology!

• **Take off your socks and shoes and have a little walk outside in your bare feet!** Immerse yourself in the experience and all the sensations, thoughts and feelings as they arise—noticing is being mindful and your brain and body will benefit.

• **Take care of those nails!** I know they are far away and difficult to reach but you will know all about it if they start to cause you pain! Did you know that toenails tend to thicken as we get older? Soak your feet before you try to cut your nails, cut them straight across in line with the top of your toe, clean and check them regularly and seek professional advice from your GP or podiatrist if you have any concerns.

Annette Wilson is a health coach, teacher of mindfulness, complementary therapist and walk leader at Pond Wellness: www.pondwellness.co.uk

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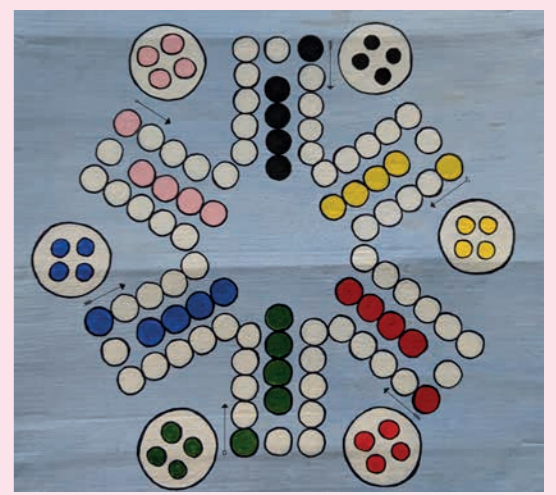
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Upcoming Walks in November

Craft Corner:

Tips for upcycling, art and craft projects by Balerno's Lucie Novoveska



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GAIL COUSINS BALERNO RAMBLERS

New members are always most welcome at Balerno Ramblers. We offer you three "trial" walks as a non-member, hoping that your experience with us would then encourage you to become a member.

Please register with the walk leader to attend and advise if you have a medical condition relevant to your walking.

We regret no dogs are allowed on our walks. Please do not come on the walk if you are feeling unwell.

For more details of our upcoming walks please click the link to access the Balerno Ramblers page on Ramblers Scotland website: <https://www.ramblers.org.uk>

If you are interested in joining us, we have a mailing list which you are more than welcome to join to receive the information on forthcoming walks. Email: balerno-ramblers+subscribe@googlegroups.com



WEDNESDAY 6 NOVEMBER

• HIRENDEAN CASTLE & GLADHOUSE RESERVOIR: 6.5 mile (10.5 km) walk mainly on farm tracks and through woodland, where the path is uneven, with some road walking and across farmland. The walk goes through Moorfoot Farm and heads towards the Moorfoot Hills, stopping at the ruins of 16th century Hirendeand Castle. From here there are views across to the Pentlands and beyond. We retrace our steps back to Moorfoot Farm and the walk takes us on the East side of the reservoir until we cross the dam and arrive at Gladhouse. From there we closely follow the west side of the reservoir through woodland back to the car park.

SUNDAY 17 NOVEMBER

• PENICUIK ESTATE
A 7 mile (11.3 km) circular walk around Penicuik on good paths, through woodlands, beside burns, and in open countryside through the grounds of Penicuik Estate. Walking poles and gaiters, if used, are recommended as well as walking boots for wet and muddy ground.



Top: Which way? Photo: Roger Jonathan.
Middle: By Loch Lubnaig. Photo: Hamish Clark.
Above: Weekend Ramblers. Photo: Erna Humphrey

Bold Board Games

What autumnal weather we are seeing! It is getting colder, days are getting shorter and it feels like the perfect time for board games (preferably by a fireplace). I wanted to play the board game Ludo during our holiday but I didn't buy the game in time, so I found myself in a pickle. To play or not to play? I decided to paint the board game for six players, which was a lot of fun.

As the name suggests, board games are played on a board. In my case, it was a cardboard shipping envelope. The Ludo game pattern is just a series of circles of different colours organised in a loop. I painted the background blue and then I painted the hexagonal loop for six players. There is a very easy and elegant way to draw a hexagon which I ignored. Instead, I estimated the distances, which I now regret. I found a button of the desired size and traced the button around the edges to create all the circles of the same size. I coloured the circles either white or with six different colours, so six players can play. Can you spot my asymmetrical mistakes?

My plan was to get a little helper to decorate the board, perhaps with some animals of the same colour as the home bases of Ludo. I feel like people are more likely to play if they contributed to making the board game.

I bought the dice and playing pieces but you can create your own. In the case of Ludo, sets of four identical objects will do: bottle tops, coins or buttons. My playing pieces came in only four colours and I needed six colours for six players, so I re-coloured several of the pieces. Because I painted them as they were standing, the bottoms of the pieces still show the original colour but only I (and you C&B News readers) know that!

The beauty of board games is that you can recreate most of them yourself. You can start with simple ones making Draughts and Nine Men's Morris or challenge yourself with Snakes & Ladders or Game of the Goose. Just give it a go; it may end up on your coffee table as an eye-catcher.

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Currie P7s

School on Saturday?

CHARLIE AND STAFANIE
P7C, CURRIE PRIMARY SCHOOL

P7s from Currie Primary School did a brilliant bag pack on Saturday 5 October.

Pupils from P7 classes and some P6 pupils went to Tesco at Hermiston Gait to do bag packing to raise money for P7 camp. (The P6s came along to raise money for their camp in two years time.) This went on from 9am to 5pm.

Our camp is in February next year at the Benmore Outdoor Education Centre on the west coast. Our head teacher, Mrs Hourston, came along to help as well as many teachers.

We want to say a big shout

out to the staff at Tesco and to the manager Mrs Potter who welcomed us and were kind.

Once the money was counted, we were thrilled to have raised £1,982.81.

We are very grateful to the people who donated some money. We had a great time helping people pack their bags!

We have added our QR code here in case anyone would like to donate to our camp fund.



Dean Park Primary School

Fundraising at Dean Park Primary School

LYNSEY BINNIE
DEPUTY HEAD TEACHER, DEAN PARK
PRIMARY SCHOOL & NURSERY ANNEXE

Curie in memory of our friend and colleague Clare Thomson.

We are also very proud of four P6 pupils who raised nearly £1,000 for Cancer Research by planning and running a stall after school with a tombola, home baking and lucky dip.

It has been a busy month of fundraising at Dean Park Primary School!

Congratulations to the two Dean Park staff teams who completed the Kilt Walk raising an amazing £3,000 for Marie

Thanks to all in the school and local community for supporting our charitable Dean Park staff and children!



And don't forget this month's Fireworks at King George V Park, Currie, on 5 November!



CBDR

Dr MacKay's Wood Needs Your Help!



PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
C&B NEWS

Dr MacKay's Wood, it's fair to say, is in need of a little care. The small wooded area in Juniper Green, across from the junction of Foulis Crescent with Lanark Road, is for many residents either an overlooked community asset or a treasured part of their daily dog-walking routine, given that it's one of several routes connecting Lanark Road with the Water of Leith Walkway further down the hill.

However, as a group of local residents who met on 24 October pointed out, the Wood is looking somewhat overgrown and forlorn. Ivy is flourishing to the detriment of other undergrowth, while increasing biodiversity – both plant and animal – is possibly being hindered, in part, by the fact that most of the trees are the same age – around 20 years old.

The City of Edinburgh Council, which owns the land, are keen to work with local residents to improve the Wood, although – given their stated goal of Edinburgh becoming “a million tree city” by 2030 – it's understandable that officials see no

immediate requirement to cut or thin Dr MacKay's Wood—as suggested by some residents to restore “the view”.

Also at the meeting was Emily Ronaldson, a Greenspace & Health Project Officer at Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust, an organisation which works with local communities and other partners to develop and manage greenspaces and ensure they're being used as much as possible. In principle, ELGT could take care of tools, risk assessments and insurance issues around any planned project to revitalise the Wood.

Several residents attending the meeting were quite determined that no decisions about the future of the Wood should be made without significant consultation with the local community. This, in itself, will require a concerted effort by those willing to volunteer their time and energy to getting feedback from local schools, groups and residents.

Would you be willing to get involved?

• *An on-site meeting has been organised between 10am and noon on Wednesday 20 November. Any interested residents are welcome to attend.*



THE WOOD

What might surprise newer Juniper Green residents most about Dr MacKay's Wood is that it's only about 20 years old!

The Wood is named after local resident Dr Reggie MacKay, who bought the land back in 1927—partly to house a pony, partly to preserve the view south to the Pentland Hills which he enjoyed from his family home on the north side of Lanark Road. (He lived in Muir House, long-since split into three flats and renamed Baberton Court.)

In 1939, he donated the land to Edinburgh Corporation, on condition that it be “kept as an open space and laid out as an ornamental pleasure ground... and that no buildings other than a small shelter shall be erected”.

The land is now owned, as successor local authority, by the City of Edinburgh Council but, for many years, responsibility for its maintenance had been shared with the local community. For example, it was the Juniper Green Village Association who, in 2004, took on the task and decided to create a woodland for the local community to enjoy.

With an eye on conservation and encouraging biodiversity, a wide variety of native trees were planted in the field, including rowan, gean, bird cherry, field maple, birch and (of course) juniper. At the time, the creation of the new woodland was supported by The Edinburgh Green Belt Trust (with grant funding from the City of Edinburgh Council), the Scottish Executive (now Scottish Government) and Greenspace Scotland.

It was always the intention that, as the Wood matured, maintenance work carried out by local volunteers – such as weeding, grass-cutting, and tree-thinning – would ensure the trees didn't entirely block the views south which Dr MacKay had so loved. Unfortunately, that volunteer support has long-since fallen away, leaving the Wood to grow uncontrolled.

As the 90th anniversary of the land being gifted to the city approaches (in 2029), a small group of interested locals are keen to ensure that Dr MacKay's Wood remains a valuable local asset—not just now but for decades to come. Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust are willing to provide help, with at least some initial coordination by members of the Juniper Green & Baberton Mains Community Council.

However, there remains a need for more local people to take a genuine interest in the Wood and to help bring it back to pristine condition. Interested?

Left: Flashback—the recently planted Dr MacKay's Wood, circa 2004. Photo: Juniper Green 300, with thanks to Cliff Beavers.



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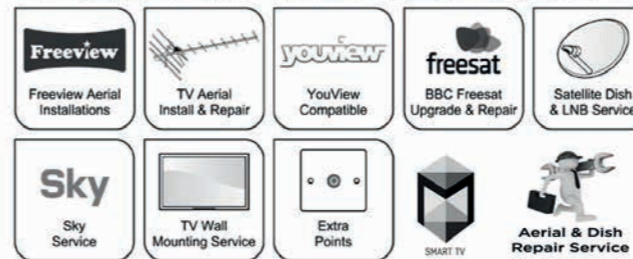


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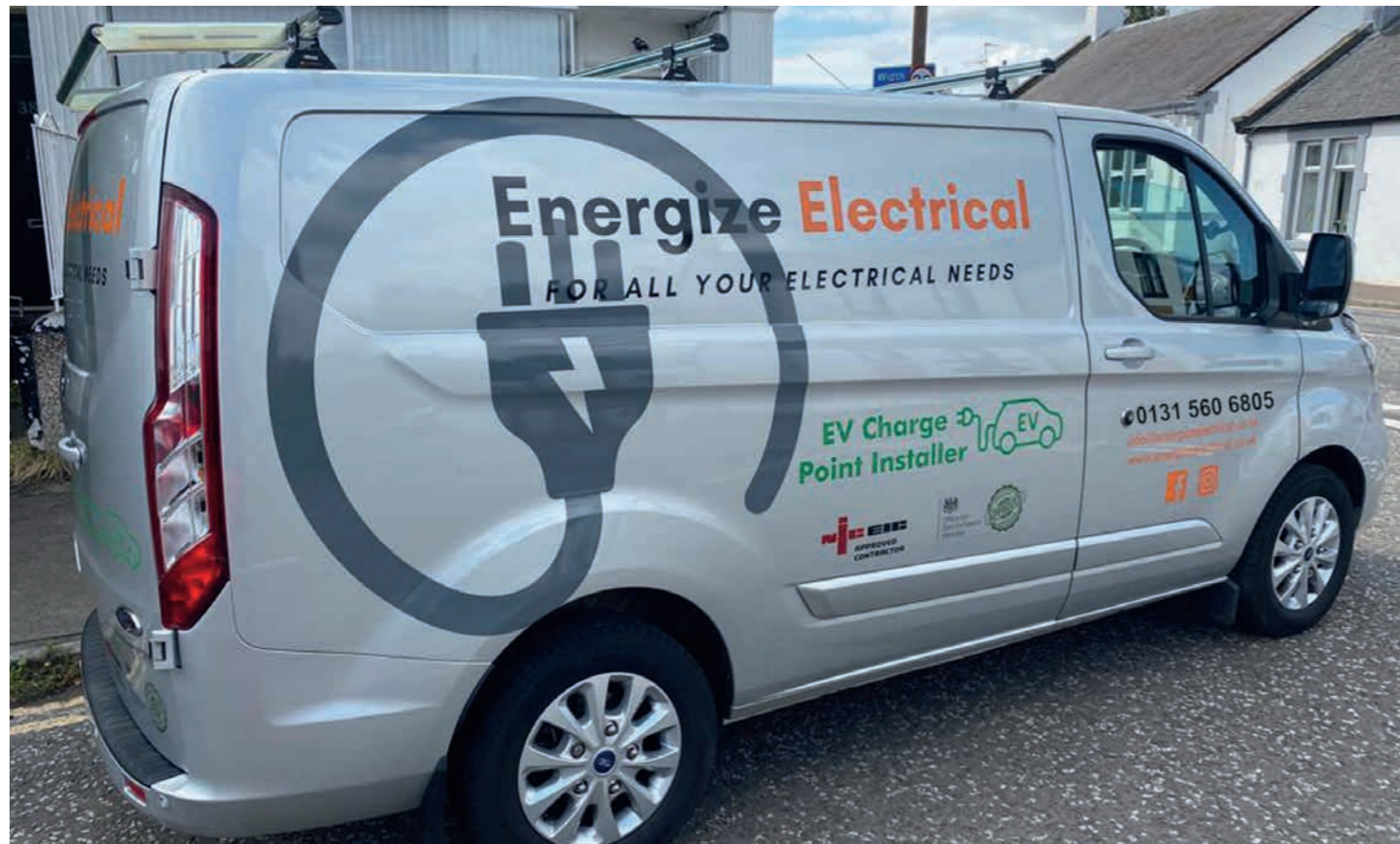
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PLANNING BY ARCHIE CLARK

City Plan 2030

The City's voluminous 2030 Plan, appraised by Scottish Reporters and approved by the Council, may shortly be adopted following tweaks suggested by the Scottish Government's Local Government and Housing Directorate. The SG's advice looks to "support" the housing emergency "and the action outlined in CEC's Housing Emergency Action Plan 2024-2029 (March 2024) to

review current housing policies and strategies to maximise availability of housing across Edinburgh".

This Plan, begun in 2018 (pre-Covid-19), was scheduled to go to the Planning Committee late in October, then be confirmed at Full Council for adoption early this month. It appears to be self-propelling, working to program.

The 216-page City Plan Written Statement provides maps and policies across the City including Riccarton University Campus and Business Park, Curriemurend, Redford Barracks and the

Green Belt. It is supported by a glossary, numerous documents and detailed plans.

Edinburgh has 17 Wards and 46 Community Councils (not all of them active and none, so far as I know, in permanent premises), staffed by volunteers. This City Plan (covering 102 square miles) would have been more useful had it been structured to relate to Wards. The daunting inflexible format hardly encourages busy people to develop their own Local Place Plans. If the next (2040) Plan "localised" its approach, Ward plans could be adapted more rapidly.

Reusing Empty Houses

Shelter say that record-breaking homelessness statistics recently published by the government show that homelessness in Scotland is worse than ever, adding that "not enough social housing is being built" and that "every 16 minutes a household becomes homeless".

Among the various petitions doing the rounds is one from Change.org seeking to "Make Unoccupied Buildings Suitable for Residential Purposes after Six Months".

Superficially, that idea seems worth investigating, though many buildings would not lend themselves to recycling for a purpose different to their designed use. But to meet today's increasingly stringent Building Regulations, older but quite serviceable houses may require considerable time and sums to bring them

up to current standards, unless some compromises are accepted. Legal niceties add complexities.

According to one source, there are over 114,000 empty homes, second homes and "unoccupied exemptions" in Scotland. If Local Authorities took on vacant properties, improved them and rented them out as "affordable" accommodation, that could address the alarming need for lower cost housing. CEC state in their forthcoming 2030 Local Plan that "[new] Developments including conversions, consisting of 12 or more units should normally provide affordable housing amounting to 35% of the total number of units proposed", on site. Put another way, that is one in every four houses—a huge and ever increasing figure.

Last November I wondered if some of Historic Scotland's ruined castles could be revamped for affordable accommodation. Given the amount of land they occupy, is that such a daft idea?

Window Replacement in Conservation Area

Application 24/04771/WINPA—Replacement of Existing Windows for PVCU Double Glazed Units at 545 Lanark Road, Juniper Green has been refused. The site is the top floor of a brick block of flats. The reason: "The proposed windows on the principal elevation are not the same or substantially the same as the existing windows in respect of the manner in which the windows are opened and closed, and the dimensions of the frame. It is recommended that the prior approval of the planning authority for the installation of the windows is refused."

The UK population is around 69.2 million. The number of people on the globe is about 8.18 billion. With never-ending wars and climate change producing an increasingly unpredictable variety of conditions, it is unsurprising that we are witnessing large population movements. Mankind is a nomadic species—most of us probably don't live near where we were born but benefit from the knowledge of our fellow travellers. The UK is a nation of migrants.

While current population growth appears to stem from immigration, we should reflect wisely before reacting thoughtfully to Climatic Changes.

The seas are rising. Back in 1995, National Planning Policy Guideline NPPG7 estimated that sea levels could rise by up to 4 mm a year, or about 300 mm (1 foot) in 75 years. Scotland would be less affected as it is elevating slightly as the south of England sinks.

We are unlikely to notice the change, but our island is shrinking along its perimeter—sea erosion has resulted in land loss and buildings – including lighthouses – collapsing into the sea.

The forthcoming CityPlan 2030 states: "Edinburgh must become more resilient and adaptive to future climate shocks including managing the environmental impacts of climate change, particularly from more extreme weather events, sea level rise, flood risk and erosion". It then states: "City Plan 2030 ...will require all proposals to take a precautionary approach to locating development and designing layouts to consider and address any potential risk of flooding". How effectively that would be managed is unclear.

Perhaps we need to improve our ship-building abilities, construct houseboats, and not depend on foreign shipbuilders to build and maintain sea-going vessels? The higher the seas rise, the more our islands will become uninhabitable.

Why No Local Museum?

You might think that – having discovered a Bronze Age razor at Kinleith, several stone cists (graves) from c2,000 BC in Juniper Green and Currie, the Kaimies Hill Fort by Balerno, coupled with religious activity from around 1,000 AD – there would be a local museum where the extensive history and artefacts of our ridge villages could be described and displayed. Important records are stored at Heriot-Watt University and books have appeared about the Water of Leith—but there is no easily accessible museum.

The Water of Leith has provided water, power, and disposal facilities for hundreds of years, and our river valley has a rich history with Bronze Age remains and Neolithic sites. During the medieval era there were manor houses, castles and mill sites dating back to the 12th Century. The river served many mills, grinding grain, spices and snuff, powered saw mills, factories for paper making, washing and waulking (fulling) cloth, tanning hides, and cutting stones. Weirs and mill lades brought water for the mills and reservoirs were constructed to bring clean water to Edinburgh.

When I travel to unfamiliar places, I like to visit their museums to see what preceded their developed towns. Even little Strathaven (pop 8,000) near Hamilton, dating from c1450, has a pretty characterful town centre and has retained a small space to display a lot of history – including photographs of its hot air balloon festival.

We frequently hear that there is no money to build works that do not generate income. But must our villages remain dormitories to Edinburgh? For example, could space be found in the new Currie Community High School or elsewhere in our villages to present our history in an accessible location?

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SCOTT ARTHUR MP
EDINBURGH SOUTH WEST

MAKE 2NDS COUNT

As part of October's Breast Cancer Awareness Month, I was very pleased to attend a Make 2nds Count reception hosted by the Secretary of State for Scotland, Ian Murray MP.

Make 2nds Count is a Scottish charity dedicated to supporting individuals with secondary breast cancer. They provide information, advice, and emotional support to patients and their families, as well as funding research into secondary breast cancer treatments and improving quality of life.

Secondary breast cancer, also known as metastatic breast cancer, occurs when breast cancer cells spread to other parts of the body. This can happen when cancer cells break away from the original tumour and travel through the bloodstream or lymphatic system. Common places for breast cancer to spread include the bones, lungs, liver, brain, and skin. While secondary breast cancer is not curable, treatment focuses on managing symptoms, improving quality of life, and slowing the progression of the disease.

The Make 2nds Count reception ended with a moving testimony from Tansy Main OBE. She is a young mum who had breast cancer a decade ago and thought she had moved on from the disease following surgery and chemotherapy. During the pandemic she attended A&E with suspected appendicitis, and was quickly diagnosed with secondary breast cancer. Not only did she face this awful diagnosis alone due to Covid-19 restrictions, she then had to return home to tell her husband and children.

Recent research tells us that one in three people in the UK don't know what secondary breast cancer is—I was one of them. Although the condition kills 1,000 people a month, 72% of breast cancer survivors don't know where in the body secondary breast cancer is most likely to appear.

If you do nothing else today, please share Tansy's story: <https://tinyurl.com/TansyMainOBE>



GORDON MACDONALD MSP
EDINBURGH PENTLANDS

TRANSPORT LINKS

Good news with the latest figures showing that young people across Scotland have now made over 150 million journeys using the Free Bus Travel Scheme since it was introduced by the Scottish Government in 2022.

There is no doubt that free bus travel for under 22s, over 60s and disabled people is helping tackle poverty across the local area and the wider city. Good, affordable public transport enables people to access jobs, education and training which can raise household income and protect people from being swept into poverty or pulled in deeper.

Scotland has the most generous concessionary fare scheme in the UK, with more than 2.3 million people eligible for free bus travel, with 235 thousand across Edinburgh alone. The Scottish Government's commitment to bus travel continues with almost £430 million in funding for concessionary travel planned for 2024-25.

Several constituents have contacted my office regarding the future for the Princess Alexandra Eye Pavilion, following reports the building would need to be vacated for approximately six months to allow for necessary extensive works to be carried out. I attended a briefing session with NHS Lothian on their plans to update the building and details on how services would be delivered throughout this period of closure.

All appointments scheduled to take place from 28 October are being moved to other NHS Lothian facilities including St John's Hospital, Livingston, the Royal Hospital for Children and Young People, Department of Clinical Neurosciences, East Lothian Community Hospital and the Lauriston Building. Inpatient services and day surgery appointments will be located at St John's, while referrals for emergency ophthalmology cases will be treated at the Lauriston Building, a major outpatient centre which will also serve as temporary home to many of the Eye Pavilion's clinics.



SUE WEBBER MSP
LOTHIAN REGION

TRANSPORT MATTERS

My new role as shadow cabinet secretary for transport gives me an ideal opportunity to highlight the many local travel issues people raise with me. So often all you want from government locally and nationally is just a bit of common sense.

I have had plenty of practice leading the opposition to the controversial schemes The City of Edinburgh Council introduced, from floating bus stops to unsightly cycle lanes, most of which still scar the city.

You may not be aware that the comments window is open again for residents to respond with their views on CEC's "Travelling Safely" projects in our part of the city.

These schemes were installed under the guise of Covid-19 emergency measures – "Spaces for People" – including the cycle lanes on Lanark Road, around Fountainbridge and on Longstone Road.

When these measures were first installed, lots of concerns were shared with me due to the lack of consultation, and then the way the Council ignored the first consultation response.

CEC is beginning the process to retain all current schemes across the city permanently, so it is vital residents share their views. What has and hasn't worked? Could the schemes be adjusted? Do you share my view that they should be removed?

The bus lane on approach to Gillespie Crossroads is also part of this review. Questions posed by my colleague Cllr Jason Rust led to the discovery that the enforcement power had expired on the bus lanes from 20 May until 17 June.

As a result, the Council issued over 1,000 drivers with inappropriate penalty notices, which beggars belief.

Please go to: www.edinburgh.gov.uk/travellingsafely to give your feedback by 16 December. And don't hesitate to get in touch with me either as I value hearing residents' views.



CLLR GRAEME BRUCE
PENTLAND HILLS

TRANSPORT CONCERNS

Another month goes by and more issues raise their head. As a number of you will be aware Balerno Swimming pool has been out of action for several weeks. This was due to complex works being undertaken with specialised parts and chemical management preparation. The target date for reopening would have been in the week commencing 21 October. As I have had no further updates I will make the assumption that the pool is now operational.

Staying in Balerno I have had a number of issues reported to me about the state of pavements on Harlaw Road, but especially the junction of Harlaw Road and Harlaw March. I have made the appropriate department aware of these concerns and await their feedback.

Every few months I raise the issue of the X44 to Lothian Buses. I have done so again and have received a similar response to the one before in that they are still limited in the progress they can make and are prioritising routes which are currently at capacity. Suffice to say they still have no firm date for the reintroduction of this service.

Staying with buses, the 32 service appears to be proving a success, although it now goes through Heriot Watt and travels up to Currie via Curriehill Road. I asked if warning signs could be implemented where this service enters and exits the University because of the concerns over speeding traffic.

In Juniper Green I have been informed that the path leading from Lanark Road down to the Millbrae estate is over grown with foliage and have asked our team in the council to take action on this.

Lastly, as some people might be aware I raised the issue of inaction about the Sheriffhall Roundabout on the city bypass. Six years have gone by and not a spade in the ground since money was set aside as part of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland Region deal for a flyover. Very disappointing.

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CLLR FIONA GLASGOW
PENTLAND HILLS

NOVEMBER UPDATE

October was a very busy month with a lot of interesting events to attend.

As a board member of Lothian Joint Valuation Board I attended their staff award ceremony at their offices in the Gyle. This is the organisation that handles the electoral register and ensuring that the voters roll is kept up to date; they did an amazing job earlier in the year to make sure that the UK general election went smoothly, despite the extremely short notice. They also have responsibility for ensuring that non-domestic rate values are maintained and updated along with council tax.

I had the opportunity to attend the "Healthy Ageing Showcase" at Heriot-Watt University and find out about research going on into the growing demographic that is older people—a growing population! Great to see local groups represented too. It was great chance to be reminded of what a lovely resource we have in our local area.

Talking of which, I heard about a workshop called "Reflect and Reset" and I decided to attend; it took place in The Craws Nest Collective, a lovely hidden gem in the heart of Currie, a space devoted to well-being and another great community space and resource. I am amazed at what a small group of committed individuals achieve when they have a common goal!

For those who would like to know what our local police are up to, I had the chance to spend a Saturday evening alongside our local officers. It was both exciting and a bit scary as we blue-lighted all the way from Sighthill to the city centre to deal with a disturbance. The incredible skills of diplomacy, tact, teamwork and exceptional communication were all on display. I would like to thank them for giving me the chance to see this first hand, and to let you all know what a fantastic job they do!



CLLR JASON RUST
COLINTON/FAIRMILEHEAD

PATHWAYS

Further to my council motion referred to in last month's article we had a site meeting at Dell Road in connection with the Water of Leith footpath access. I am pleased to advise that a three stage process has been agreed. Firstly in terms of a water management solution, drainage will be dealt with by an off road catchment at the foot of Dell Road. There will be a buried pipeline from the catchment, down the embankment to the Water of Leith. SEPA are understood to be happy with this. Vehicles will be able to park above the catchment. The alternative was a completely new drainage system, which would involve closing Dell Road and digging it up. That is cost prohibitive for now, but may become an option.

The second stage is remediation and stabilisation of the path. The footpath will be rerouted slightly closer to the wall, away from the failed area. It will be in similar form to the current and the large area of erosion will be dealt with and authorised access will then be allowed to the stabilised path. Other options have been ruled out. "Bridging" would place too much pressure on the foundations either side and the bank is too steep and high and the slope too severe for other models. "Rock and anchor" (with pins and mesh) is too expensive, but may be revisited if required.

It is anticipated that 50% of budget would be used for the drainage and 50% on the path. Work was due to begin on Tuesday 22 October 2024 and take place between 8am and 5pm approximately. Work should be completed by 1 November. So hopefully, by the time of reading this, we will again have access to Colinton Dell from Dell Road—and indeed to the village.



RICHARD M HENDERSON
BALERNO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

AGENTS OF CHANGE

Back when Balerno was within Midlothian County's area, Currie District Council maintained an office alongside the then Registry Office on Lanark Road West. Its closure after May 1975 marked a change in access to council services and, since then, we have become used to the loss of "across the counter" services as banks, the post office and the police station have closed their doors. We are unlikely to see a reversal in that trend: alone, it seems, our local library remains an outpost of local government's presence.

The City of Edinburgh Council are currently consulting on a Future Libraries Strategy. Before one jumps to conclusions about possible outcomes, it does seem as though they are seriously considering developing the Library service into a gateway to accessing other services. If that is correct, then it is a welcome move away from centralisation, towards regeneration of communities.

There is a distance between government and people, and there probably always will be. But, at root, trust between the two is in short supply. If CEC are serious on developing a gateway for access to services then there will have to be processes which give ordinary people the sense that their voices are listened to. Rebuilding trust is a long-term project. It takes communication, respect, transparency, sharing, engaging and more. Maintaining a presence through a library in each community could be a useful start.

I mentioned Fireworks Control Zones last month. We shall shortly see how those play out. But the process towards their designation was not impressive. If CEC is serious about improving relationships with residents, then ensuring availability of information about the Zones and the risks from fireworks, including risks of conviction from igniting a Catherine Wheel, could have been a start. Public libraries could play a significant role.



DR KEITH JAMES SYMINGTON
CURRIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

EVOLVING LANDSCAPES

Currie Community Council was pleased to host Stephen MacGregor from "Living Landscapes", who gave an introduction to the initiative which is aimed at enhancing biodiversity. Launched in 2014, it seeks to promote wildflower growth and support pollinators by reducing the frequency of grass cutting across 100 hectares of land across the city—11% of the total. Contrary to popular belief, the project is not a cost-saving strategy; rather it's a change to investment in wildflower bulbs, plugs and seeds to enhance uncut areas.

However, the initiative has raised concerns among some residents. A community petition was discussed which calls for more regular grass-cutting schedules and community members brought up problems with different areas. One member expressed support for the project's goals but noted that the grass in Currie had not been cut since August. In response, Stephen acknowledged that maintenance is ongoing and assured residents that adjustments would be made based on feedback. He also agreed to investigate specific concerns such as this, and to ensure maintenance is carried out every four-to-six weeks.

A community member questioned whether there was a formal maintenance plan and how best to communicate it to residents. Stephen committed to addressing these issues and suggested bringing printed maps to our next meeting so problem areas could be identified for further action. In addition, the community could designate areas for different uses, such as play areas and dog walking, while maintaining other sections for biodiversity.

I would like to thank Stephen for taking the time out of his evening to reassure residents that he would address concerns and develop a plan that considers both enhancing biodiversity and community needs. In fact, he'll be at our next meeting. Please do join us if you have suggestions!



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TOM McDONALD
COLINTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

'PACHYDERMS IN THE PARLOUR'

The City of Edinburgh Council leader, Cammy Day, has written to community councils following the recent "consultation" reviewing the current scheme. Financial assistance is being considered to provide technical hardware for CCs to enable hybrid meetings, to try to encourage wider public participation.

Well-meaning maybe, but "groupthink" as it reflects CEC's thinking, not community councils' needs or experience. My co-chair and I are concerned that a much more important point raised in the consultation was entirely ignored in the summary of responses. We will be making a strong representation that the technology will be a waste of money, without funding or providing the administrative support that CCs actually need to manage and respond to the flood of emails and web-based information emanating from CEC departments.

Another fundamental flaw is that not all CCs can access suitable premises to run hybrid meetings. In Colinton, we addressed participation issues during Covid-19 and continue to hold alternate online and face-to-face meetings. Our experience is that it does not make a large impact on attendance.

Although the figure is woefully insufficient for a "healthy" community council system, a more effective use of the £1,400 estimated hardware cost per CC would be to make it directly available in cash to expend as each CC sees fit. To put it into perspective, we currently receive annual funding less than the cost of eight parking fines—and CEC issues around 500 of those every day!

We are aware that Parish Councils in England which perform much the same functions as CCs receive considerably more cash directly from local taxes, with a very considerable effect on their ability to act on behalf of their communities, with much more positive outcomes.



IN PRAISE OF COMMUNITY

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY KATIE

When I first moved to the area, the local magazines helped me discover what a special community it is. Browsing the local news and events became a favourite thing to do over my morning cuppa.

This was how I found myself one evening, in shorts and t-shirt, heading down to my local church hall. I had never played badminton before, but had heard it was fun and fancied giving it a go. I fell in love! With the game, but also with how, sitting on the sidelines in a row, awaiting our turn, there were so many interesting people to chat to about all sorts of things. What a wonderful way it was to get to know neighbours and feel a part of the neighbourhood.

Since becoming ill I've not been able to return to play or even sit on the sidelines, but the connections have not been lost. In fact, the reason I am regularly contributing to this magazine is thanks to the kind support and encouragement shown by one of the couples I met there.

With fluctuating physical and mental abilities, some months are harder than others. With practice I'm hoping to learn to pace my limited energy around my article contributions better and that they will offer a sense of achievement which can otherwise be lacking in my necessarily basic days.

Those years ago picking up my first local magazine I couldn't have imagined the turns

that would lead to being published in it! Community is a precious thing to be celebrated. Each smile, contribution or kindness ripples far. I'm very grateful for all the care I've found here in this community.

Life Lines

SMALL ADS: NOVEMBER

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Children's Book Event at Hub @531

ANNETTE WILSON
DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, HUB@531

Come along to our Children's Book Event at Hub@531 in Juniper Green on Sunday 17 November. We'll be open from 10.30am to 5pm with some fun sessions for children aged eight and under, plus their families, throughout the day.

We'll have various themed sessions to appeal to different age-groups. Local author and illustrator duo Ian Hammond Brown and Julie Diver will be hosting a live storytelling and draw-along event, recommended for ages four to eight. (Signed copies of their book *McShoogles an' the Woogles Save the Haggis!* will be available to purchase on the day as a souvenir at a special offer price of £10.)

We'll also have a lovely Bookbug session for under fives, with songs, rhymes and stories. Plus, a storytelling afternoon for young readers and families where you can bring along a story to read out loud—a lovely way to share the stories you love and discover something new from others in the group!

Tickets for all sessions are FREE. However, spaces are limited so we do ask you to book your free tickets online in advance.

What's more, our book swap will be open between sessions. There is no ticket required for this, just drop in. Join us for tea, coffee, juice and biscuits, meet with other families, and bring a storybook to swap.

We can't wait to see you there!

• Visit hub531.appointedd.com to see the full programme and reserve your tickets today.



Special Screening Celebrates a Decade of Community Cinema

JONATHAN WILSON
CHAIRPERSON, BALERNO VILLAGE SCREEN

Fans of British independent cinema will be excited to hear that established screenwriter and friend of BVS, Paul Laverty, is back in the Village on Saturday 16 November to introduce and discuss his screenplay in the latest Ken Loach-directed award-winning movie *The Old Oak*.

Village Screen regulars will recall classic Balerno presentations of *I, Daniel Blake*, and *The Angel's Share*, previously generously supported by Paul whose movies always tackle injustice with amazing humanity and great humour. (Who can forget the

gasp as the bottle of whisky smashed to the ground in *The Angel's Share*?).

This new film tackles the isolation of conflict refugees from the Middle East, so the ticket price – £20 – includes delicious food from Edinburgh's Cafe Beirut. Funds raised at this event will support the Scotland-based charity Positive Action in Housing. So, for your money you get a Q&A with the film's writer, a light supper, and a screening of the latest release from the UK's finest independent film production team!

• More details: visit <https://balernovillagescreen.com/contact-us/>

NEW DECADE, NEW BVS?

As BVS settles into its second decade, we will of course ensure that we screen the classic "It's a Wonderful Life" just before Christmas, with mulled wine and mince pies. It's a tradition we are delighted to bring back to Balerno post-lockdown.

But expect change in the coming year. We were founded by busy but enthusiastic film lovers and BVS taught our young families about volunteering and about community. We have always worked with Dean Park School and Balerno High School to maintain engagement.

But following the pandemic, lives have moved on—and our connection with the younger community has changed as our children and willing "extra hands" are now all grown ups. We realise that, to keep the

treasured Saturday matinées, we need new crew who can choose films for a different and changing audience. BVS is a great hub for young families in our community—could you be a part of the matinée crew?

We want to form a BVS 2.0. We will train you and support you to deliver the Saturday matinées and the original team will still pop up with great movies to fund-raise for great causes but, in this ideal world, let's get a new team together to prepare BVS for its glittering future. So if you think you can coordinate a new generation of BVS cinema volunteers get in touch, and let's get on with the sequel. It is, of course, a "wonderful life".

• To contact us about "BVS 2.0", visit: <https://balernovillagescreen.com/contact-us/>



NATALIE KLOCEK
FORTH VALLEY CHORUS

This time last year, Edinburgh-based Forth Valley Chorus – a 100-strong women's a cappella chorus, with quite a few local ladies in its ranks! – was making history.

The choir finished sixth in the annual Sweet Adelines International Barbershop competition held in Louisville, Kentucky, the highest placing ever for a UK chorus competing against choruses from the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Sweden, which has gained them an international following.

In May 2024 they won Gold at a regional competition in Sheffield and are now looking ahead to the next big challenge—their ninth visit to an

international competition – in Columbus, Ohio – in October 2025.

To help raise funds for the trip, the chorus are preparing to share their joyful sound and sparkling performance with their home crowd!

Forth Valley Chorus will host two concerts in Edinburgh city centre this month, showcasing their varied repertoire—including their medal-winning competition sets. Expect a captivating mix of barbershop, pop, soul and jazz—there is something for everyone!



• The two shows – at 2.30pm and 7.30pm – are on Saturday 9 November at St Cuthbert's Parish Church, Lothian Road, Edinburgh.

• Tickets available now on Eventbrite or by scanning the QR code (left) for tickets.



Charity Crafters' Christmas Sale

SHONA MOYES
CHARITY CRAFTERS

Charity Crafters are having a Christmas Sale again this year in Currie Library. All our craft is hand made and we have a selection of Christmas items—as well as lots of gift ideas. So come along and get your Christmas shopping off to a flying start!

All our profits go to local good causes so you are also helping the community when you buy from us.

Please come along to get your handmade craft, gifts and Christmas decorations.

• The Charity Crafters Christmas Sale is on Saturday 23 November, from 10.30am to 2pm, in Currie Library.

Christmas Concert

MARGARET KIERAN
COLINTON & MERCHISTON COMMUNITY CHOIR

The Colinton & Merchiston Community Choir warmly invites you to join us for our Christmas Concert.

We will be singing the delightful "A Light in the Stable" by Alan Bullard, which tells the Christmas story through a blend of original settings and well known carols, along with some audience participation.

We thank Merchiston Castle School for the use of the Memorial Hall and the school's music library.

• Doors open, 7.30pm, Monday 9 December; Memorial Hall, Merchiston Castle School, Colinton Road. Details: www.colintonchoir.org and on our Facebook page.



£25 PRIZE CROSSWORD

**PRIZE CROSSWORD
BY PUZZLECHOICE.COM**

To enter, please scan or photograph the completed puzzle and email it to: editor@candbnews.com before noon, Friday 15 November 2024.

The winner is picked at random from all correct entries received.

Good luck everyone!

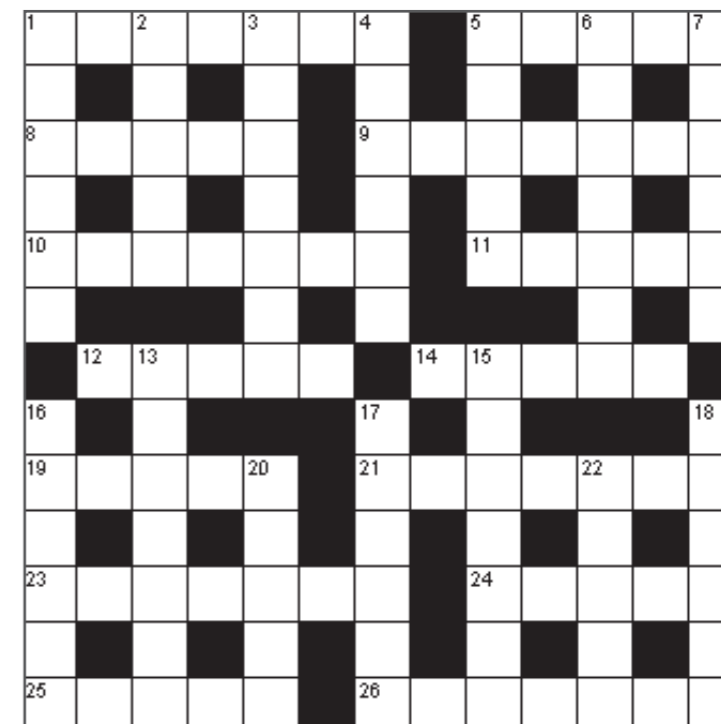
ACROSS

1. Buccaneers. (7)
5. African equine. (5)
8. Serious. (5)
9. Disregarded. (7)
10. Abhorrent. (7)
11. Beer mug. (5)
12. Intense. (5)
14. Thicket. (5)
19. Regular hexahedrons. (5)
21. Residence. (7)
23. Greed. (7)
24. Deportation. (5)
25. Choose. (5)
26. Journeyman. (7)

DOWN

1. Rector. (6)
2. Kind of puzzle. (5)
3. Deluge. (7)
4. Grabbed. (6)
5. Regions. (5)
6. Edges. (7)
7. Fervent. (6)
13. Vegetable. (7)
15. Remnant. (7)
16. Abrasion. (6)
17. Photographic equipment. (6)
18. Aft. (6)
20. Change position. (5)
22. Ways out. (5)

NOTES



NAME

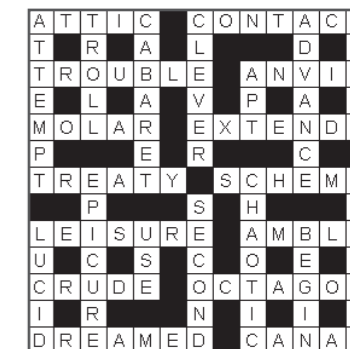
ADDRESS

POST CODE PHONE

Please tick here if - on being selected as the winner - you would be happy to be contacted to arrange a bank transfer instead of receiving a cheque.

**OCTOBER 2024
WINNER!**

Our congratulations go to Claire Gourlay from Currie, randomly selected from all correct entries to receive last issue's £25 prize.



EASY

		5		7	8	
8			3	7		
5	2		9		4	6
	3					
	8	1		5		
	6		7	8		2
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MEDIUM

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	6	9				7
4	3		8		1	
	9	5	1			2
7			2	6	3	

HARD

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	1	6				
8	9				3	
		3			5	
2	7			1	9	

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Community and not-for-profit listings are free of charge. Email whatson@candbnews.com, including: Day/Date, Event Title, Venue, Time, brief details, and contact phone/email details.

WEEKLY

MONDAYS

- **ST CUTHBERT'S CHURCH PLAYGROUPE:** St. Cuthbert's Church Hall, Westgarth Avenue, Colinton; 10am - 11.30am. (Every Monday during School Term.) Play, craft, refreshments, singing. All Welcome. Contact: stcuthbertscomms@gmail.com for more information.
- **MONDAY MORNING POP IN CAFÉ:** the hub@531 Lanark Road,

Juniper Green; 10.30am - noon. Find a warm welcome at the Hub every Monday morning for a cuppa, cake and a chat. Donations welcomed but not required.

• **THE MEETING PLACE:** Currie Scout Hall, Forthview Crescent; 10am - 4pm. A community cafe for those 65 and over, all carers and anyone looking for good company. Free exercise class, refreshments and games. For further information email: themeetingplacejcb@outlook.com

• **LUNCHTIME RELAXATION:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 12.15pm - 1pm. Join Raymond at lunchtime to enjoy a guided relaxation to calm the mind and ease stress. No booking required - all welcome to come along and give it a go.

• **BALERNO BRIDGE CLUB:** Gibson Craig Hall, Currie; 1.20pm for 1.30pm start. Contact 07504 306062 if interested.

• **BOOKBUG AND BABY GROUP:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 1.30pm - 2.45pm. Meet other parents / carers

for friendship and peer support, regular Book-bug sessions to learn and share nursery rhymes, songs and stories.

• **BABERTON SCOUTS GROUP:** Juniper Green Church Hall; 7pm - 9pm. If you want some more information or would like to join, please email: cubs@babertonscouts.org

• **MONTHLY BOOK GROUP:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 7pm - 9pm. We have a waitlist in place for this popular group, and we'd love to start a new social book group to meet monthly, later in the week or at the weekend, but we need a small group of friends to perhaps kick this off. If this is of interest to you please get in touch: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

TUESDAYS

• **KNITTING GROUP:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 10.30am - noon. A very popular, welcoming group for novice and experienced knitters alike. Email: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

• **COMMUNITY YOGA CLASS:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 1pm - 2pm. Spaces are available for this popular lunchtime class with Monica from Karma Tree yoga. Cost £6. Please email to enquire: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

• **PENTLAND JUNIOR SINGERS:** Balerno Parish Church; 6pm - 7pm. Fun, friendship and singing for ages 8-14. New members welcome! More information, email: Pentlandjuniors@gmail.com

• **PENTLAND SINGERS COMMUNITY CHOIR:** Balerno Parish Church; 7.30pm - 9.30pm. Come and share the joy of singing! New members welcome. For further information, email: pentland_singers@yahoo.co.uk

WEDNESDAYS

• **BALERNO RAMBLERS MIDWEEK GROUP:** Meet for walks in the Lothians, Fife, the Borders and further afield. For walk details contact M Timmins on 07917878955. Follow Balerno Ramblers on Facebook.

• **PENTLANDS SPORTING MEMORIES CLUB:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 1.30pm - 3pm. Pentland Sporting Memories—sports blether with a group of enthusiasts who enjoy a great sports story both old and new, questions and laughs (usually at each others expense) in a very relaxed and friendly environment.

• **THE OCTAGON CLUB for Adults with learning disabilities:** Gibson Craig Hall, Lanark Rd West; 7pm - 9pm. Contact Claire Maloney: 07999 410721.

THURSDAYS

• **NEW ACCESSIBLE YOGA COMMUNITY CLASS:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green, 2.45pm-3.45pm. Accessible Yoga community class (free / donation welcome) Join experienced yoga teacher Bijam who offers a fully accessible class, suitable to anyone including wheelchair users or those with chronic health conditions who may find benefit from gentle exercise, breathwork and meditation.

• **65th EDINBURGH COMPANY, BOYS' BRIGADE Anchor Boys (P2 & P3) and Junior Section (P4-P6):** Gibson Craig Halls, 158 Lanark Rd West, Currie; 6pm - 7.30pm. For more details, contact Bill Brown: bill.brown53@yahoo.com

• **PENTLAND ART CLUB:** Balerno High School; 7pm - 9pm. Join us and allow your creative juices to flow. We practise a variety of skills in a range of media with occasional demos from guest artists. Plenty chat and a friendly

atmosphere. New members welcome. Contact: ros.salton@outlook.com

• **PENTLAND BRIDGE CLUB:** St Margaret's Court, Juniper Green; 7pm. We play competitive bridge in a friendly atmosphere. Less experienced players welcome. For further information visit: www.bridgewebs.com/pentland/ or email: mthkjb@gmail.com

FRIDAYS

• **THE MEN'S SHED at the Scout Hall:** 99 Forthview Crescent, Currie; from 9.30am. We offer various activities and a chat over a cuppa with new and old friends. Come on down! <https://pentlandsmensshed.org>

• **COFFEE & CONVERSATION:** Currie Library, Lanark Road West; 11am.

SATURDAYS

• **BALERNO RAMBLERS WEEKEND WALKING GROUP:** a busy walking group with a programme of interesting walks in a variety of locations. Some walks may be more challenging than the mid-week programme. Visit: www.ramblers.org.uk/balerno, www.facebook.com/Balerno-Ramblers, email: enquiries@balenoramblers.org.uk

SATURDAYS/SUNDAYS

BALERNO RAMBLERS WEEKEND WALKING GROUP: a busy walking group with a programme of interesting walks in a variety of locations. Some walks may be more challenging than the mid-week programme. Visit: www.ramblers.org.uk/balerno, www.facebook.com/Balerno-Ramblers, email: enquiries@balenoramblers.org.uk

SUNDAYS

65th EDINBURGH COMPANY, BOYS' BRIGADE Company Section (P7 - 18 years old): Gibson Craig Halls, 158 Lanark Rd West, Currie; 6pm - 8.30pm. Contact Bill Brown: bill.brown53@yahoo.com

FORTNIGHTLY

MONDAYS 4 & 18 NOVEMBER

• **FORGET ME NOTES GROUP:** St. Cuthbert's Church Hall, Westgarth Avenue, Colinton, 2pm-4pm. Sing and socialise with old friends and new. Followed by refreshments. For more details, contact: stcuthbertscomms@gmail.com

THURSDAYS 7 & 21 NOVEMBER

• **COLINTON SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB:** St Cuthbert's Episcopal Church Hall, Westgarth Avenue; 7.45pm - 9.15pm. Come and enjoy Scottish country dancing with us. We have an excellent, very patient teacher, live music and lots of fun. £5 per evening, pay on arrival. Come on your own or with a partner, you'll be made very welcome. Tel: 07751 186359 or 07483 814099.

FRIDAYS 1, 15 & 29 NOVEMBER

TABLETOP GAMING IN JUNIPER GREEN / BABERTON / CURRIE: Edinburgh Pentlands Parish Church Hall (Juniper Green); 6pm - 9pm. Play board-games, card games and wargames. Everyone welcome, adults, children and their families. For more information contact Eric Ducreux Juniper Green Board-Gamers @ boardjg-www.boardjg.co.uk

SATURDAYS 2, 16 & 30 NOVEMBER

FREE ART & CHAT: Currie Library, 210 Lanark Road West; 10.30am - 11.30am. An opportunity to practise your art, and enjoy a free cuppa too! PS: Bring your own art materials. Questions? Call: (0131) 529 5609, email: currie.library@edinburgh.gov.uk, or just come along on the day.

DAY BY DAY

FRIDAY 1 NOVEMBER

• **GARDENING GROUP:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 10.30am - noon. First Friday of each month. Friday 1st November is our gardening quiz, but we need you to come along with 5 questions to contribute! All very welcome, just a bit of fun with like minded garden enthusiasts. Tea, coffee, biscuits and prizes!

• **HALLOWEEN CRAFT:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 2-4pm. Family Halloween Craft - our monthly multi-generational afternoon crafting will be Halloween themed. All materials will be provided as well as tea, coffee, juice and biscuits. Under 12s must be accompanied by an adult. This crafting event is free of charge but we welcome your optional donation. Booking essential. Visit <https://hub531.appointedd.com/> or email: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

MONDAY 4 NOVEMBER

• **CURRIE & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY:** Gibson Craig Hall, Currie, (back hall); 7.30 pm prompt. "Line, Lamp and Snowdrops" (The Crimean War 1853 -1856). The speaker is James Waugh. <https://www.curriehistory.org/>

• **COLINTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY:** Dreghorn Loan Hall, Colinton; 8pm. Tonight Honoured by Edinburgh "Beneficiaries of the Freedom of Edinburgh since 1459", by Barclay Price. <https://colintonhistory.org.uk>

TUESDAY 5 NOVEMBER

• **FIREWORKS DISPLAY:** George V Park, Lanark Road, Currie; 7.15pm. Presented by Currie, Balerno & District Round Table, raising funds for local charities and good causes. Further details and ticket sales at: www.cbdrt.com/ and www.facebook.com/cbdrt/

• **BALERNO SWI:** Balerno Community Centre; 7.30pm. AGM followed by Therapets with Moira Stewart.

>p45

Mental Health and Wellbeing



Monday 21st October 7pm - Small steps talk about mental health led by Paul, mental health nurse specialist (outside Lothian)

Monday 4th November 7pm - The science behind our brains and how we can influence our ways of thinking about things led by Lloyd Robinson, local hypnotherapist

Monday 11th November 7pm - Offering his own lived experience of mental health issues and things he has found supportive, led by Raymond Collins, who leads mindfulness sessions at the hub and his workplace

Monday 2nd December 7pm - details to be confirmed

Monday 9th December 7pm - Interactive session on ways in which writing can improve mental health and wellbeing, led by David Ford, local author

Relaxed social events with informative and engaging short talks with a mental health and wellbeing focus, and opportunity to ask questions, discuss with others and socialise.

Tea, coffee, juice, biscuits and fruit will be available.

Book here
www.hub531.appointedd.com

or just turn up on the day

COMMUNITY CAFES

• **COMMUNITY CAFE:** Currie Community Centre, 280 Lanark Road West; Saturdays, 9am - noon. Barista coffee and delicious home baking.

• **THE MILL CAFE:** 2 Main Street, Balerno; Tuesdays - Fridays, 9am - 2pm. (Also, the second Saturday of the month when the Farmers' Market is on.) Balerno Parish Church Community Cafe provides a sociable warm space with home-made baking, Fairtrade barista-style coffee and a light breakfast and lunch menu.

• **THE SWING CAFE:** Colinton Parish Church, Dell Road, Colinton; Tuesdays - Saturdays, 10am - 2pm. Nestling in a quiet corner by the Water of Leith is a lovely setting to enjoy hot drinks and home-baking with friends, or our breakfast and lunch menus. Last hot food orders: 1.40pm.

COMMUNITY COUNCILS

- **BALERNO:** Community Centre, Main Street; 7pm, Thursday 7 November.
- **COLINTON:** Colinton Bowling Club, Redford Road; 7.30pm, Tuesday 12 November.
- **CURRIE:** Gibson Craig Halls (rear), Lanark Road West; 7.30pm, Wednesday 13 November.
- **JUNIPER GREEN & BABERTON MAINS:** the hub@531 Lanark Road; 7.30pm, Wednesday 27 November.

Hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green, EH14 5DE

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WEDNESDAY 6 NOVEMBER

• **PENTLAND PROBUS CLUB:** Edinburgh Pentlands Parish Church (Juniper Green); 10am. "The National Museum of Flight" an illustrated talk by Thilo Burgel. New members welcome. Further enquiries to Club Secretary Leslie Hannaford on (0131) 453 3012 or email lesliehannaford@blueyonder.co.uk

• **'THE LIT' (COLINTON LITERARY SOCIETY):** Dreghorn Loan Hall, Colinton; 7.30pm for 8pm start. Tonight: Sir Alexander McCall Smith talks about the influence that location has on the writing of his books. Expect this meeting to be busy! Membership £15 for full programme, £3 per meeting. Card payments accepted, cash or cheque preferred.

• **BALERNO PARISH CHURCH GUILD:** Ogston Hall, Balerno Parish Church; 7.30pm. "The Vine Trust in Tanzania" with Neil and Anne Johnstone.

SATURDAY 9 NOVEMBER

• **BALERNO FARMERS' MARKET:** Main Street; 9am - 1pm. More details, including stall-holders: <https://balernovt.org.uk/farmers-market/> Email: farmersmarket@balernovt.org.uk

• **HERIOT-WATT CHOIR AND ORCHESTRA:** Greyfriar's Kirk; 7.30pm. Featuring a variety of music for the Autumn season including Danse Macabre, Copland's Promise of Living and Faure's sublime Requiem. Tickets available from: www.ticketsource.co.uk/heriot-watt-university

SUNDAY 10 NOVEMBER

• **SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE:** Currie Kirk; 10.30am.

• **REMEMBRANCE AT CURRIE KIRK:** Currie Kirk, Kirkgate; 2pm - 4pm. A chance to read details of those who died during the world wars and subsequent conflicts, and those whose names are on the war memorial boards within Currie Kirk. Coffee/tea available.

• **INDIAN HEAD MASSAGE WORKSHOP:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 3pm - 5pm. In support of local charity Breast Friends and Family. Join Annette who will teach some simple and fun seated massage

techniques that you can try out on your friends and family. You can bring along a massage partner or come on your own. Booking essential. Please email: annette@pondwellness.co.uk

MONDAY 11 NOVEMBER

• **MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 7pm - 9pm. Offering his own lived experience of mental health issues and things he has found supportive, Raymond Collins leads mindfulness sessions at the hub and his workplace. Relaxed social events with informative and engaging short talks with a mental health and wellbeing focus, with opportunity to ask questions, discuss with others and socialise. Tea, coffee, juice, biscuits and fruit will be available. Online booking is available: <https://hub531.appointedd.com/> or by email: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

WEDNESDAY 13 NOVEMBER

• **THE 'LIT', COLINTON LITERARY SOCIETY:** Dreghorn Loan Hall, Colinton; 7.30pm for 8pm start. Tonight: "The Scottish Parliament—What next?" Sir Paul Grice considers the impact and future of devolution. Membership £15 for full programme, £3 per meeting. Card payments accepted, cash or cheque preferred.

SATURDAY 16 NOVEMBER

• **BALERNO VILLAGE SCREEN—KEN LOACH'S THE OLD OAK;** St Joseph's Hall, Balerno; 6.15pm. Multi-award-winning film writer Paul Laverty presents Ken Loach's final film and will discuss Loach's work and life. Ticket (£20) includes film, talk, food (gifted by Beruit Restaurant, Nicholson Square), and donation to Positive Action in Housing. www.balernovillagescreen.com

SUNDAY 17 NOVEMBER

• **CHILDREN'S BOOK EVENT:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 10.30-4pm. This exciting Children's book event includes bookable sessions with McShoogle & the Woogles creators, Book Bug and Share a Story. Full details are on the Hub@531 booking site <https://hub531.appointedd.com/> and Facebook page.

MONDAY 18 NOVEMBER

• **CURRIE & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY,** Gibson Craig Hall, Currie, (back hall); 7.30pm. "Robert Braid - Edwardian Photographer", presented by Bruce Jamieson. For further details see <https://www.curriehistory.org/>

• **COLINTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY:** Dreghorn Loan Hall, EH13 0DE; 8pm. "The legacy of James Braidwood, founder of the Scottish fireservice." The speaker is Dave Farries. For more information visit: <http://www.colinton-parish.com/colinton-literary-society.html>

WEDNESDAY 20 NOVEMBER

• **PENTLAND PROBUS CLUB:** Edinburgh Pentlands Parish Church Hall, Juniper Green; 10am. "The Commonwealth War Graves Commission", an illustrated talk by Alistair Ridland. New members welcome. Further enquiries to Club Secretary Leslie Hannaford on 0131 453 3012 or email: lesliehannaford@blueyonder.co.uk

• **SEASONAL CRAFTING:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 7.30pm - 9.30pm. Our monthly social craft evening. All materials will be provided as well as tea, coffee and nibbles, and as we like to provide a chance to enjoy a child free evening, please feel free to bring your own tippie to enjoy! This crafting event is free of charge but we welcome your optional donation. Booking essential. Online booking is available at <https://hub531.appointedd.com/> or by email hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

• **BALERNO PARISH CHURCH GUILD:** Ogston Hall, Balerno Parish Church; 7.30pm. "The Story of the Colinton Tunnel."

• **'THE LIT' (COLINTON LITERARY SOCIETY):** Dreghorn Loan Hall, EH13 0DE; 7.30pm. "Edinburgh: Our Storied Town." Donald Smith reviews 900 years of Edinburgh's literary history. For more information visit <http://www.colinton-parish.com/colinton-literary-society.html>

SATURDAY 23 NOVEMBER

• **CHARITY CRAFTERS CHRISTMAS SALE:** Currie library; 10.30am - 2pm. Please

come along to get your handmade craft, gifts and Christmas decorations.

MONDAY 25 NOVEMBER

• **COLINTON GARDEN CLUB MEMBERS' MEETING:** Dreghorn Loan Hall; 8pm - 9.30pm. "The Rise of Rhubarb" presented by Kath Hay. For more details, email: info@colintongardens.org.uk

TUESDAY 26 NOVEMBER

• **BALERNO FOLK CLUB:** Balerno Bowling Club, 5 Ladycroft, Balerno, EH14 7AG. Doors open 7.30pm for an 8.15pm start. Making a welcome return this month are the very popular Stephen and Pernille Quigg. A fine evening of traditional and contemporary songs. "Members and Guests" welcome.

WEDNESDAY 27 NOVEMBER

• **THE 'LIT', (COLINTON LITERARY SOCIETY):** Dreghorn Loan Hall, Colinton; 7.30pm for 8pm start. Tonight: "Edinburgh's Theatres" Rev David Todd delves deep into the history of the city's theatres. Membership £15 for full programme, £3 per meeting. Card payments accepted, cash or cheque preferred.

FRIDAY 29 NOVEMBER

• **LET'S TALK CARE:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 12.30pm - 1.30pm. We are once again partnering with Andrew Senew, from Home Instead, to offer a short series of lunchtime information sessions for anyone who has an interest or need to chat about care. Tea / coffee and biscuits will be available. Online booking is available at <https://hub531.appointedd.com/> or by email hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

• **FAMILY CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAYRE:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 2pm - 4pm. Our monthly multi-generational afternoon crafting will include making gift boxes and cards. All materials will be provided as well as tea, coffee, juice and biscuits. Under 12s must be accompanied by an adult. This crafting event is free of charge but we welcome your optional donation. Booking essential. Online booking is

>P45

available at <https://hub531.appointedd.com/> or by email hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

SATURDAY 30 NOVEMBER

• **CHRISTMAS FAYRE:** Gibson Craig Halls, 156 Lanark Road West; 1pm - 4pm. A fantastic fun afternoon with stalls for craft, gifts, etc and also the very important children's activities and the Tinsel Tearoom. Fun for all the family. All welcome. Tickets: £4 (adult) and £2 (child) to include refreshments and all the activities for the children in the Craft room.

• **CHRISTMAS FAYRE!:** St Cuthbert's Colinton, Westgarth Avenue; 2pm - 5pm. Gifts, cards, handicrafts and more... Browse the stalls, buy for Christmas, enjoy a cup of tea and a mince pie. Admission free.

DECEMBER

MONDAY 2 DECEMBER

• **COLINTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY:** via Zoom; 7.30pm. Tonight: "Robert Braid, Photographer" by Bruce Jamieson. Annual membership: £20 (£30 household). More details: <https://colintonhistory.org.uk>

• **CURRIE & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY,** Gibson Craig Hall, Currie, (back hall); 7.30 pm. "Railways in East Lothian," by Kenneth Williamson. For further details see <https://www.curriehistory.org/>

WEDNESDAY 4 DECEMBER

• **PENTLAND PROBUS CLUB:** Edinburgh Pentlands Parish Church Hall, Juniper Green; 10am. "Bletchley Park Exposed," an illustrated talk by Derek Douglas. New members welcome. Further enquiries from Club Secretary Leslie Hannaford on 0131 453 3012 or email: lesliehannaford@blueyonder.co.uk

• **THE 'LIT', COLINTON LITERARY SOCIETY:** Dreghorn Loan Hall, Colinton; 7.30pm for 8pm start. Tonight: Buffet Supper, with musical entertainment provided by the Glencairn Ensemble. Membership £15 for full programme, £3 per meeting. Card payments accepted, cash or cheque preferred.

Currie Angler Claims Silver Medal

NIGEL DUNCAN
NIGEL DUNCAN MEDIA

Currie-based angler James Dornom won a silver medal as Scotland claimed Gold in the Celtic Cup coarse fishing team event against Wales and Ireland, held last month at Strathclyde Park. His Annan-based teammate, Barry Young, took the bronze.

James hooked into 6 kg on Day One for first place in his section and 8.425 kg on Day Two for four points, the same as Barry but with a better weight across the two days.

Gus Brindle, Scotland's team manager, said everybody in the team contributed to what is a significant result for Scotland and one which has put Strathclyde Park firmly on the map as an international venue.

The Gold medal continues a remarkable run for Scottish teams in angling events during the last year. The Stillwater Bank team took gold at Largs in their event, then the fly fishermen struck gold in the Spring and Autumn Competitions—and now this!

Scotland finished on 21 points in the Celtic Cup competition, which aims to develop fresh talent for European and world teams.

Second were Wales with one point more, while Ireland was third on 29 points. (The lower the score, the better!)

Highly-talented Welsh angler, Matthew Powell



James Dornom. Photo: Christopher Paton

won an individual gold with what Gus described as a "blinding total" of 18.775kg and three points. James finished in second place with four points and 14.525kg. Barry secured the bronze medal spot with four points and 10.775kg.

After the first session on Saturday, Wales and Scotland both had eight points but the men from the Principality had a bigger weight. Ireland were third.

On Sunday, Ireland Seniors won with nine points with Scotland Blue in second place on 13 points and Scotland White also on 13 points, but Mather's finish made the difference after a complex countback.

Gus, who is chairman of the Scottish Federation for Coarse Angling and an international angler in his own right, said it was 40 years since Scotland last hosted an international coarse

fishing event on Strathclyde Loch. In the interim, only one day competitions had been held.

The Dunfermline-based fishing boss added: "Strathclyde Park has proved itself perfectly capable of hosting international matches and could be a world-class venue.

"The water received favourable comments throughout the weekend from rival teams, but it would need support from the Scottish Government and Lanarkshire Council to improve infrastructure to make European and world events possible here."

Tough but Good Fishing

ALEX ROSE
SECRETARY, MALLENY ANGLING

It has been tough going for anglers at Harlaw and Threipmuir reservoirs in recent weeks, but fishermen have still been catching.

Damsel, buzzer and daddy long legs patterns have been the most popular flies selected by anglers from their boxes.

Slow intermediate and sink tip lines have proved the most effective with fish being caught all over the extensive water.

However, anglers report that The Narrows, up towards Threipmuir, and Ricky's Point, have been best.

The unpredictable and rapidly changing weather, with pressure variations, has undoubtedly affected catches but anglers were still keen to get in as many hours as they could at the water before the season ended on 31 October.



On another issue, many day ticket, season ticket and members missed the regular reports about the weather and catches, plus helpful videos on fly tying and casting, which were display on the Malleny Angling social media portal prior to it closing in early August.

After a gap of two months, the portal should be back in operation. Ed Gallagher, one of the bailiffs, is currently working on a fresh social media page.

It will include all necessary information about the water and how to fish it, up-to-date weather

and catch returns and relevant information.

We look forward to that coming on stream soon and we will alert readers to that when we have more information to hand.

The portal will operate throughout the winter with and remember, if you want to join Malleny Angling then please get in touch with a committee member.

• Information on office bearers is available at The Bothy behind Harlaw House or from the head bailiff.



The Balerno/Boroughmuir/Gillespies Senior Boys hockey season is well up and running, writes Mark Coull: "In what will be many of the boys' final season playing together, we started off with a pre-season training camp up in sunny Aberdeen. (Left) It was an early rise for the drive north for the first match against Robert Gordon's, a competitive 1-1 draw. We moved on to play Aberdeen Grammar in the afternoon: a strange game where we were actually the better team but found ourselves 4-0 down at half time! The boys showed no signs of giving up, though, and brought it back only to lose 5-3. The final match against a North District Select was another 5-3 defeat but another excellent performance. A great weekend."



Chieftains Face a Challenging Period

Rhys Davies driving for the try line in the Musselburgh match

PHIL THOMAS
CURRIE CHIEFTAINS

The 2024-25 Arnold Clark Premiership season was always going to be challenging. Withdrawal of the SRU's Super 6 competition after five years of experimentation, required the re-assimilation of released players into the Premiership league and the introduction of a plan for a 12-team Premiership in 2024-25, with a return to a 10 team Premiership for 2025-26.

Currie Chieftains season opened with an away match against Ayr RFC on 31 August. This pitted the Chieftains – 2023-24 Championship winners – against a team which had recruited almost all the former Ayrshire Bulls players—2024 winners of the Spring Super 6 league. The match was a contrast of styles, the large Ayr pack focusing on a rolling-maul strategy, while the Chieftains played their characteristic open style of rugby. The half-time score was 12-10 to the home side but, in the second half, they surged ahead to win 34-17.

Then, against Melrose RFC at Malleny on 5 September, the Chieftains dominated for large parts of the game but had some lapses in handling, defence and goal kicking. These allowed Melrose to snatch a narrow 27-28 victory in a match that should never have escaped the Chieftains' grasp.

Moreover, there was more to come when, on 14 September away to Edinburgh Accies, the Chieftains held their own territorially, but again were characterised by unforced errors, allowing Accies to seize the loose ball and score a series of breakaway tries, for a resounding 47-27 points victory.

Thus, with three games played, the Chieftains were in the unfamiliar position of being at the bottom of the Premiership table, causing their stalwart supporters significant dismay. But, as always, the coaches and the players were already focusing on the problems.

Thereafter followed: a sound 36-31 points win against Hawick at Malleny (21 September); a heavy 33-7 points defeat against Heriot's at Goldenacre (28 September); a resounding 55-14 points win against Marr RFC at Malleny (5 October); a close 16-13 points win against Watsonian FC, at Malleny (11 October); and a 26-69 points dismissal of Musselburgh at Stoney Park (19 October). These results have moved the Chieftains into fifth position in the table, leaving their supporters much happier, notwithstanding the challenges ahead.

As a footnote, Currie Chieftains A, who play in the Arnold Clark Inter City Reserve League, are unbeaten this season, and top the East group of that competition—to everyone's congratulations.

Game On for Memorial Football Match for Christopher Cowe

ROSS COWE
CRY FUNDRAISER & CHRISTOPHER'S DAD

The third annual football match in memory of teenager Christopher Cowe will take place on Sunday 10 November from 11am between the Balerno High School class of 2023 and Currie High School class of 2023 at the Oriam in Riccarton.

Christopher's pals from both schools have been working hard to make arrangements and are currently in the process of putting together their squads.

After the first two games in 2022 and 2023 each team has one win apiece (3 - 2 to Currie in 2022, 4 - 2 to Balerno in 2023) so this third game will provide bragging rights for the victors and either a retention for Balerno or a recovery for Currie of the coveted Christopher Cowe Memorial Shield (below).

If the first two matches are anything to go by the contest will be keenly contested, but of most importance to the teams is the opportunity for them to pay their tribute to their mate Christopher, so they would appreciate your support.

Please come along and support if you can. There will a prize raffle to win a signed John Robertson Hearts top and signed print on the day also. Please note we will be observing the Remembrance Sunday silence at 11am, with kick-off at 11.15am.

• Entry is free but if anyone would like to make a donation there will be charity buckets and our faithful sum-up card machine available on the day and as always any money donated goes to the Christopher Cowe Memorial Fund to fund further heart screenings in the local area.



FREE!

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MIXED FORTUNES FOR CHIEFTAINS, p47



FOOTBALL RAFFLE FOR CHRISTOPHER, p47

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CURRIE • BALERNO • JUNIPER CROFT • BERTON MAINS • COLINTON



SILVER FOR CURRIE ANGLER

...while Scotland claims Gold in Celtic Cup Coarse Fishing Team Event at Strathclyde Park, p46.

PHOTOS: CHRISTOPHER PATON; CURRIE CHIEFTAINS; ROSS COME

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