

FREE!



HAILES SWIMMING SUCCESS, p46



FOOTBALL JOINS THE GENERATIONS, p47

C&B NEWS

CURRIE • BALERNO • JUNIPER GREEN • BABERTON MAINS • COLINTON

Winter Snow Comes to South West Edinburgh, p5

Visitor Levy Exemption for Bonaly Scout Centre, p7

A Busy Winter at Malleny Garden, p20

Another Bumper Winter Issue!



BRRRR!

Keeping on top of your winter heating bills, p23

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 (July/August and December/January) marking our summer and winter 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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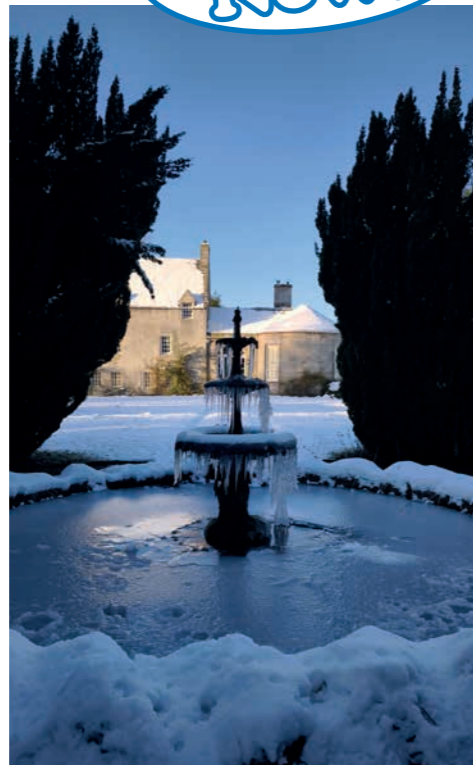
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DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE

ADVERTISING & LISTINGS: 11 FEBRUARY
EDITORIAL: 16 FEBRUARY
ISSUE DISTRIBUTED: 28 FEBRUARY



Above and top left: The difference a few days can make to the temperatures this winter—before and after shots of the Malleny Fountain. Photo: Eoghann Campbell for NTS



Left: The C&B News team would like to thank Nether Currie Primary School pupils from P1, P5 and P7 who did a fabulous job decorating our entry in the 2024 Balerno Christmas Tree Festival. Sadly we didn't win (the public vote went to Kids Insight, with the Beavers and Jigsaw Nursery close behind) but we do hope everyone at the school enjoyed receiving the tree afterwards! On the day, the Tree Festival raised almost £900 for Balerno Children's Gala funds—well done everyone!

Right: Back in December, Santa was seeing driving around in style, courtesy of his many “elves” working for the local Round Table—raising funds for local good causes in the process. See CBDRT's update on page 13.

Below: At the end of 2024, the 51st Pentland Cubs packs achieved the highest level of Silver Chief Scout Awards in the group's history, all at the same time. A huge congratulations to one and all on this amazing achievement and here's to their goal for Gold when they complete Scouts. Photo: Gordon Forrest, Group Leader Volunteer.



Above: snowmen were seen gathering for an invasion in King George V Park, Currie. Photo: Louise Scrivens.



A few months ago Cherrytree (Balerno) resident Sophia won a Pesticide Free Balerno competition to design the next piece of artwork for their garden signs, soon to be added to the shop section on their website. See: www.pesticidefreebalerno.com for more details, email: pesticidefreebalerno@gmail.com or text: 07979 717485



In December, Heriot-Watt University completed an £800,000 renovation of three synthetic pitches at Oriam, ensuring the venue continues to provide world-class facilities for players. Pictured on one of the new surfaces are (left to right): Murray Brown (Oriam Duty Manager), Graeme Stewart (of co-funders Sports Labs), John Lowe (Oriam Head of Operations), Joe Grace (from Sportex, the company which carried out the refurbishment), and Euan Robertson (Oriam Duty Manager).

BRIEFLY...

WHILE WE WERE AWAY...

• **COLINTON MAGAZINE:** Colinton Amenity Association published the final issue of *Colinton Magazine* in December 2024. Originally launched in late 2009 as a full-colour successor to their *Colinton Newsletter*, CAA had found it increasingly challenging in recent years to secure sufficient advertising income and articles for its three – later two – issues a year. CAA will now focus their communications strategy around a bimonthly (email) members' newsletter and an annual print Yearbook. We wish them every success.

• **PENTLAND NEWS:** Pentland Community Centre – located in Oxbgangs and nominally covering Colinton – published the first issue of its new newsletter, *Pentland News*; it's something of a C&B News offspring, produced by former editor Alex Schweitzer-Thompson and put together by the current hired help!

• **CONSULTATION?:** At their December meeting, Colinton Community Council agreed to submit an objection about local Traffic Regulation Orders in the area, on the grounds that The City of Edinburgh Council had failed to effectively advertise their renewal. Also noted, as an example of CEC's unfortunate practices, was the total lack of local consultation regarding the “refurbishment” of the Bridge Road/Lanark Road West junction in Balerno.

• **“BUS STOP TENNIS”:** Following further complaints, a petition and some remarkably speedy and effective (for the Council) public consultation, CEC are expected to once again move the bus stop on Redford Road used by city-bound service 16 vehicles—from adjacent Colinton Bowling Club's car park to outside Old Farm Court.

• **LOCKDOWN:** Following Met Office “Red Warnings” about dangerous winds and high gusts caused by Storm Eowyn on Friday 24 January, all buses, trams and ScotRail services were cancelled; schools, nurseries, universities and

>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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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
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New Councillors for Colinton/Fairmilehead

PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
C&B NEWS

The Scottish Conservative's Neil Cuthbert (pictured right) and Scottish Labour's Conor Savage (left) have joined Councillor Jason Rust as representatives for the Colinton/Fairmilehead Ward on The City of Edinburgh Council. The by-election on Thursday 23 January 2025 – the second to be held in the ward within three months – followed the unexpected resignations of Councillors Marco Biagi and



Louise Spence in November. The count, normally held the day after voting, was brought forward to avoid the worst of the poor weather anticipated with Storm Éowyn on Friday 24 January. Overall turnout on this occasion was under a third at 31.9%, noticeably down on the 37.4% which had participated in the previous by-election on 14 November 2024. The current



electorate in the Ward is 19,907. The result was clearly not good news for either the Scottish National Party or Scottish Liberal Democrats in the city. However, the election of Labour and Conservative Councillors to the Ward will likely strengthen the current Labour-led, Conservative and Liberal Democrat-supported administration in the City Chambers.

Council's Gritting 'S-No Good'

PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
C&B NEWS

Local residents have criticised the City of Edinburgh Council's most recent response to sudden snow falls in Balerno, Currie, Juniper Green, Baberton Mains, and Colinton in early January.

While agreeing that CEC gritting teams generally kept south west Edinburgh's main roads and pavements "open", some have suggested that work on routes designated "Priority One" – which include all bus routes and roads leading to emergency services stations, hospitals and clinics, care homes and schools – was at the expense of most other residential streets across the area.

"Understandable prioritisation of arterial routes did mean that roads and footways in residential areas did not receive adequate timely attention," suggested Colinton & Fairmilehead ward councillor Jason Rust, writing in this issue of C&B News.

C&B News has heard numerous anecdotal reports of the snow on non-gritted side streets melting and then refreezing, creating dangerous conditions for anyone with mobility issues.

"Elderly people were largely housebound for fear of falls or slips which would put them into the Royal Infirmary's besieged A&E unit," pointed out Lothian List MSP Sue Webber, who lives in the Pentland Hills ward. Dr Scott Arthur MP added that he had "raised concerns about the state of many footpaths in the higher parts



A Lothian Service 44 bus warily makes its way towards the Balerno terminus. Photo: Gillian Merchant, taken at 6.32am on Monday 6 January.

of Edinburgh South West" and was "disappointed" there had been little change after a week.

"I have now discussed the matter with the city Transport Convenor (Cllr Stephen Jenkinson) twice and was pleased to learn he agrees there was an issue and will ask Council Officers for a frank assessment of what went wrong."

Criticisms of CEC's response have been heightened by concerns that too much of their obviously finite resources were "spent" on parts of the city "below the snow line" which had not been as seriously affected by the weather. "At the bottom of Lanark Road, although it looked as if there had never been severe weather, gritters and ploughs were still treating completely clear roads and pavements," added Sue Webber.

"I've fed my concerns to our Transport & Environment Convenor with a view to finding out what could be done better going forward, including making sure the grit bins are replenished on a more regular basis because the

snow will fall again and the next time it could be a lot worse," agreed Pentland Hills Cllr Graeme Bruce.

Down the decades, C&B News has frequently reported heavy snowfalls and the subsequent criticisms from local residents about gritting and road-clearing. Some readers have suggested that CEC's current "priority system" fails to fully take the city's basic geography into consideration.

"It's the same every year," pointed out Sue Webber MSP. "The council needs to realise that being higher up means that in cold snaps our communities are held hostage to snow and ice, and every street should be 'Priority One'."

To view an interactive map of CEC's Priority 1 and 2 gritting routes, and also the locations of more than 3,000 grit bins across the city, visit: <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/roads-pavements/gritting/2>

BRIEFLY...

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colleges were closed; shops shut; and houses left without power. Police Scotland told everyone: "Do not travel". Ah, lockdown—how we missed you. Not!

AND NOW WE'RE BACK...

• **CHATTERBOX:** Balerno resident Lubna Kerr will perform her Fringe-acclaimed one-woman show *Chatterbox* – about identity, belonging and life as a young Pakistani girl in 1970s' Glasgow – on Thursday 6 February at Dundee Rep Theatre, as part of this year's Dundee Fringe.

• **SPEND A PENNY:** Pentland Hills Regional Park hopes the previously installed toilets at the Bonaly Road entrance will finally open in early March, following corrective work on the too-steep-to-be-used wheelchair ramp previously installed at the supposedly "accessible" facilities.

• **SERVICE 45:** There are calls for Lothian Buses' Service 45 route to be extended to Hermiston Park and Ride, to provide a connection with buses to St John's Hospital, Livingston and the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary. Currently, users have to either walk to the P&R from Heriot-Watt University or change to Services 25, 34 or 35 for the brief journey—neither ideal for those with health or mobility issues.

• **ARREST:** On 17 January, *Edinburgh Live* reported Police Scotland had charged a 14-year-old boy following a string of thefts from garages and sheds in the Craiglockhart and Colinton areas between 7 - 9 January.

• **LEGO CHURCH:** Fancy playing with some Lego? Balerno Parish Church offers just that at the Ogston Hall on Saturday 8 February, between 10am and noon. What will you build?

• **POTHOLES:** Edinburgh remains Scotland's "pothole capital" with nearly 31,000 potholes recorded so far in 2024/25—almost a quarter of the Scottish total, according to new data obtained by the Scottish Conservatives. >p7



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Fundraising Concert for Local Pipe Band

ANGELA MCLAUCHLAN
 BALERNO & DISTRICT SCHOOLS PIPE BAND

The Balerno & District Schools Pipe Band is hosting a fundraising concert on 27 February, in the concourse at Balerno High School, and we're excited to welcome the local community again. Join us for an evening of Scottish music and entertainment, featuring our talented pipe band alongside other special local performers.

The concert is on Thursday 27 February at 7pm, in the concourse at Balerno High School. Doors will open from 6.30pm.

Concert tickets (£10 for adults, free for children & teens) can be bought from pipe band members, on the door, or by emailing: bdsbconcert@gmail.com



Harmeny welcomed Jenny Gilruth MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, on Wednesday 15 January," writes Harmeny's Fundraising & Communications Manager, Alison Acosta. "Ms Gilruth was keen to see how Harmeny - one of seven Grant Aided Special Schools in Scotland - supports young people, who have had some of the most challenging starts in life, to engage with their education and unlock their potential. While touring the school Jenny spoke with staff and pupils and visited our award-winning secondary learning facilities, The Learning Hub."

The minister, seen above with Harmeny's Chief Executive Gavin Calder, said: "It's been a great opportunity to meet with some of Harmeny's young people, talk to the staff and find out a bit more about their really bespoke approach to supporting young people with additional support needs in this environment."

Visitor Levy Exemption for Bonaly Scout Centre

PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
 C&B NEWS

Bonaly Scout Centre will qualify for an exemption from Edinburgh's new Visitor Levy.

As reported in our November 2024 issue, there were fears that the Centre, which currently hosts hundreds of young people every year for a variety of educational and wellbeing purposes, would have to collect the so-called "tourist tax" on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council.

Although the Levy - approved by the full CEC on Friday 24 January - now applies "to all overnight accommodation" within the city's boundaries - including "all paid accommodation on caravan sites and campsites" - exemptions will be granted if the properties are occupied by a charity (or trustee of a charity) and if the accommodation is "wholly or mainly for charitable purposes".

The Chair of Bonaly Scout Centre, Peter Casebow, told C&B News: "We've had correspondence from the Council confirming that they believe the exemption clauses mean that we will be exempt from the Visitor Levy, which we are delighted about."



He added: "I'm very grateful to City of Edinburgh Council for taking such a sensible and pragmatic approach to the issue, without which the levy would have applied to Bonaly Scout Centre. Scott Arthur MP was also of significant help and support in discussing the issue with the Council."

Edinburgh's Visitor Levy will apply to overnight stays in the city from 24 July 2026, booked and paid for (in part or in full) on or after 1 May 2025.

The Levy rate will be 5%, regardless of time of year, payable for a maximum of five consecutive nights. (SNP councillors had argued for 7%; the Scottish Green Party wanted it set at 8%; the Conservatives

suggested 4%.) VAT - of 20% - will also be paid on the Levy.

Regarding distribution of the resulting funds, CEC proposes: 2% on "participatory budgeting" (where the use of funds is decided directly by local residents); £5 million on housing; and the rest split between city operations and infrastructure (55%), culture, heritage and events (35%), and destination and visitor management (10%).

The "participatory budgeting" as proposed includes a fixed allocation of £100,000 a year per council ward across the city, including Pentland Hills and Colinton/Fairmilehead.

"Participatory Budgeting" is coming to South West Edinburgh. See page 9.

SWIMMINGLY: Edinburgh Leisure is expanding its swim programme across the city by creating 750 new swimming lesson spaces for participants from pre-school children to adults. Among the listed clubs are Hailes Swim Club at Balerno High School.

HOUSING: CEC has agreed to pay almost £4 million to the Ministry of Defence to buy an additional 17 homes (making a total of 40) on the Dreghorn estate next to Dreghorn barracks. Remedial work to bring them up to standard for re-letting will cost approximately £20,000 per house.

FIREWORKS: Edinburgh South West MP Dr Scott Arthur spoke, on Friday 17 January, during a House of Commons debate on a new Bill (proposed by Luton North MP Sarah Owen) banning the public sale of the loudest fireworks. As a Private Member's Bill, however, it is unlikely to proceed further during the current Parliamentary session. "It is absolutely clear that eventually there will be action in this area," Dr Arthur said, "and my Honourable Friend will take great credit for that when it happens."

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

You can view plans, forms and other documents connected with individual planning applications on The City of Edinburgh Council's Planning and Building Standards Online Services website: <https://tinyurl.com/dz8atrcd>. Under statutory legislation, comments on recently registered planning applications should relate to "material considerations" connected with the use of land and buildings—such as adherence to City Plan 2030, appearance, residential amenity (eg, noise/over-shadowing) or traffic/parking/access issues.

BALERNO: Extension of Ravelrig quarry to allow further extraction of hard rock; change

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'Participatory Budgeting' Coming to South West Edinburgh

PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
C&B NEWS

Residents in south west Edinburgh will have a more direct say in how some public funds are allocated to local groups and good causes as a consequence of the City of Edinburgh Council's forthcoming Transient Visitor Levy.

Under the newly approved scheme, a fixed allocation of £100,000 a year will be available within each electoral ward across Edinburgh—including Pentland Hills and Colinton/Fairmilehead. This will be given to those groups and specific projects which attract the most local support through face-to-face and online voting.

The annual "Leith Chooses" event is an already established example of how this kind of "participatory budgeting" works in practice. It is focused around a fun and sociable Saturday afternoon event at which anyone who lives, works, volunteers or studies in Leith (and is at least eight-years-old) can meet applicants in person, learn more about each project, and then cast their votes on the day. Additionally, residents can also vote for their favourite(s) online, with polling open for two weeks.

This year's "Leith Chooses" featured 23 projects ranging from local parents wanting to create a new "welcome" mural at a local primary school to the organisation of multi-cultural festivals and regular events bringing together different generations. This year £47,737.57 of CEC's existing Community Grants fund for Leith was up for grabs—though it should be noted that amount was less than half of the £95,647 the 23 projects were asking for, hence the need for the public vote.

• <https://www.leithchooses.net/>



Dressed as characters from a traditional song, a merry band of wassailers playing guitar, bodran, recorder and bagpipes, processed along Campbell Park Crescent before turning into the park and community orchard, where they hung a piece of toast on all 30 orchard trees to attract insects and birds to help with pollination, and ensure a good harvest. (Wassailing is an old English tradition involving dancing around apple trees.)

Edinburgh United junior football teams played on unperturbed, with some of the visiting team supporters asking what was going on!

Apply Now for Louise Duncan Travel Bursary

ROWENA STEWART
BALERNO PARISH CHURCH

Balerno Parish Church's congregation is seeking applications for the 2025 award of its Louise Duncan Bursary for travel.

Commemorating the life and work of former minister Louise Duncan, the eponymous bursary provides £500 to a young adult – aged 17 to 25 (inclusive), living in or near Balerno – to help meet the cost of travelling out of Scotland to take part in voluntary work which has an aim of benefiting disadvantaged communities.

Once returned, the congregation would enjoy an account of the experience the travel bursary has helped provide. In previous years we have heard from successful applicants who travelled to teach young children in Cambodia for two months and who went to Bolivia for a year-long placement with a human rights NGO.

• Applications should be received on or before midnight, Wednesday 26 February 2025.

• Shortlisted applicants will be asked to interview in March 2025, with the successful applicant announced by the end of the month. Travel supported by the Louise Duncan Bursary must take place during the calendar year it is awarded.



• Application forms are available from the church's website: visit <https://tinyurl.com/k63dvh2m>, scan the QR code above or by emailing: bpc-admin@balernochurch.org.uk

BRIEFLY...

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of use from woodland and grassland to quarry; Long Dalmahoy Road. (24/06106/FUL) Comments by 31 January.

• COLINTON: Alter house to provide balcony on rear elevation; 10 Spylaw Park, Hailes. (24/06284/FUL & 24/06285/LBC) Comments by 31 January.

• COLINTON: Replacement of existing windows on a like-for-like basis with new, custom-fitted windows with slimline IGUs, all historical detail to be matched/reinstated; 3 Spylaw House, 25 Spylaw Street. (24/06341/LBC) Comments by 31 January.

• NEWBRIDGE: Extension to Bonnington Mains Quarry, including erection/operation of Materials Recycling Plant, infilling quarry and restoration to agricultural grassland; Cliftonhall Road. (24/05865/FUL) Comments by 9 February.

• COLINTON: Removal of Goat Willow tree at north east corner damaging stone boundary wall; 48 Dreghorn Load. (25/00021/TCO) Registered, 6 January.

• COLINTON: Cut two cypress trees and single holly tree to stump; 3 Bonaly Road. (25/00113/TCO) Registered, 13 January.

• COLINTON: move carport towards side entrance and add garden room at rear; land 50 metres south of 45 Spylaw Bank Road, Pentland Avenue. (25/00101/FUL) Comments by 14 February.

PLANNING DECISIONS

• CURRIE: Minor proposed internal alterations, opening rear external wall for new extension and proposed three traditional dormers to rear roof, window replacement like-for-like, stone repointing, general conservation and renovation repairs; 1 Kirkgate. (24/05268/LBC) Granted, 7 January.

• COLINTON: New opening formed in gable wall to accommodate new garden access, new roof lights added

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Well, better late than never! In December 2024 – after numerous promises during the last year, some reported in *C&B News* – CEC finally installed a new pedestrian bridge at Katesmill on the Water of Leith, meaning that determined walkers along this more natural route on the southern bank (compared to the former railway track bed on the north) no longer have to negotiate muddy slopes or clamber over a large pipe in order to continue on their way through Colinton and Craiglockhart Dells. OK, so, what about that Bavelaw Green Bridge in Balerno...?



Win Tickets to Six... with the 51st Scouts

GORDON FORREST
GROUP LEAD VOLUNTEER, 51ST PENTLAND (BALERNO) SCOUT GROUP

What better way to mark the romantic month of February than to win tickets for the phenomenal sell-out West End show *Six*?

This extraordinary musical, focused on the six women who married Henry VIII, comes to the Edinburgh Playhouse later this year (Tuesday 21 - Saturday 25 October) and – courtesy of the 51st Pentland (Balerno) Scout Group – you and a loved one could be in the audience!

We have two tickets to give away to one lucky winner of our easy-to-enter competition. All you need to do is answer one simple question before 28 February. The lucky winner will be notified within 14 days and will also be posted on our website and in this publication at a later date. Entrants must be over 18 years old to apply.

The winner will be drawn at random after the closing date stated above. So don't hang around and enter today.

Good luck!

• For a chance to win the tickets, please answer the following question: *What year did scouting start in Balerno? (Hint: have a look at our website and Facebook page for clues!)*

• Email your answer to: secretary@balernoscouts.org.uk before 28 February 2025.



Skanska—Helping Blocking out Negativity

MONIQUE MCINTOSH
CURRICULUM LEADER, THE BRIDGE WELLBEING HUB, BALERNO HIGH SCHOOL

Pupils within The Bridge, Balerno High School's Wellbeing Hub, have been reaping the rewards of a very generous donation from multinational construction and development company Skanska.

Building Lego sets has always been a popular activity at the Bridge, something which keeps our pupils focused and engaged on the task at hand and helps keep

low mood and negative feelings at bay. Due to the costs attached, however, we had been limited to only a few sets to build and rebuild—until now.

Thanks to Skanska UK, we are now the owners of 14 brand new and exciting Lego sets. Staff and pupils are over the moon—there was no time wasted in putting their master builder skills to the test.

We know that these sets will provide respite and pleasure to lots of our young people for many years to come.

Be one of the first to explore the iconic Kelpies monument through a new and thrilling rope access and abseil adventure this May, all while helping children and young people at Harmeny thrive, writes Alison Acosta of Harmeny Education Trust. "Harmeny Education Trust has exclusive access to Baron (the Kelpie facing up) on Sunday 11 May. Participants will get the chance to climb up inside the Kelpie via an immersive rope access route and be rewarded with stunning views from the Kelpies mouth! Then, feel the thrill as you descend with a free-hanging abseil or the breath-taking Quick Flight rope drop! All we ask is that participants pledge to raise £250 in sponsorship for Harmeny. All funds raised will help young people to overcome adversity and get the support, skills and opportunities they need to fulfil their potential.



• To sign up and find out more visit www.harmeny.org.uk/kelpies

BRIEFLY...

p9>>>

to south elevation, chimney removed and internal alterations; 2 Hailes Avenue, Hailes. (24/05893/FUL). Granted, 9 January.

• CURRIE: Proposed single storey extension to rear; 19 Riccarton Grove. (24/05899/FUL) Granted, 14 January.

• BALERNO: Reduce heights of numerous trees; 575 Lanark Road West. (24/05634/TPO) Granted, 13 January.

• CURRIE: Internal and external alterations involving rear extension, dormers, proposed basement and associated landscape works; 1 Kirkgate. (24/05267/FUL) Granted, 14 January.

• COLINTON: Felling/removal to ground level of three sycamores due to fears of landslip; Colinton Parish Church Hall, 6 Dell Road. (24/006165/TCO) *Withdrawn*, 15 January.

• COLINTON: Removal of flat roof over existing side and front extension, construction of new first floor extension (side) with pitched roof fitted with Venus roof lights, new mono-pitched roof over remainder; 21 Redford Avenue. (24/05685/FUL) Granted, 17 January.

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.

• OXGANGS: Colinton Mains Drive at Oxgangs Road North, four-way temporary traffic lights for Scottish Water work; 15 February.

• BALERNO/CURRIE: Lanark Road West between Bridge Road and Curriehill Road, rolling programme with overnight two/three-way temporary traffic lights for BT Morrison fibre installation. Work to be confirmed, between 26 January - 6 February.

LOCAL UPDATES • LOCAL UPDATES

Hiring the Hub@531 in Juniper Green

ANNETTE WILSON
DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, HUB@531

The Hub@531 is a charity-run, local community facility at 531 Lanark Road. We have a busy schedule of groups and activities (see "What's On") but when the Hub is not in use, it is available for hire.

The space is modern, fresh and inviting, and it is perfect for meetings, classes or small social events, with comfortable seating at tables for 20 people, a small kitchen area (kettle/microwave), and WiFi. It is a fully accessible building with ramp access and an accessible toilet.

Current rates are £20 per hour for a one-off hire, with discounts available for weekly hires or charities. All funds raised through hiring the Hub@531 help the charity, Pentlands Community Space (SCO049766), to continue to provide this wonderful community space.

We are actively looking for some new regular users, particularly on Saturday or Sunday mornings, but we have other days and times available too.

• If you are interested in hiring the Hub@531 please email: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

Scout Group Seeks Volunteers

GORDON FORREST
GROUP LEAD VOLUNTEER, 51ST PENTLAND (BALERNO) SCOUT GROUP

For decades we have supported young people in this area to help them develop and grow to who they wish to be and we're proud to have achieved that goal. Now we're asking for your help in achieving even greater success in the future.

We are currently looking for people 18+ years old as team members within our youth sections (6-14 year olds), as well as trustees, a Chair, fundraisers, IT/media and several others.

If you think you would be interested in any of these roles, please get in touch and help support young people in this area.

• Email: gsl@balernoscouts.org.uk

www.candbnews.com



New Help for Campbell Park

SHONA HARROWER
FRIENDS OF CAMPBELL PARK

We were delighted to have a new bunch of DoE volunteers from Kaimes Hight School helping in Campbell Park recently.

They mulched around three of the 30 orchard trees and will

return every week for the next three months to mulch the remaining trees and orchard hedgerows.

• <https://www.facebook.com/FOCPK>

Above: (Left to right): Julia Roberts (FCP Volunteer Coordinator), Kyla, Daniel, Ben, Basher, and John Busby (their teacher from Kaimes High School), with Ally Price (Friends of Campbell Park, Lead Orchard Carer).



Balerno SWI Update

ISOBEL JOHNSTONE
BALERNO SWI

Our December meeting was a "Tramps' Supper" for which members were encouraged to dress up as tramps. There were some weird and wonderful outfits, mostly based on old gardening clothes. Some ladies had gone to the length of applying fake patches and others raided their husband's wardrobes for flat caps and old hats. Orders were taken for fish suppers from the local fish and chip shop in Balerno (highly recommended). There were certainly no issues with making a mess of our clothing

considering our attire!

The competition for December was a piece of work completed during the last year. This was judged by Helen Bissett from Harburn Institute. Helen said that the standard of work was very high and the well-deserved winner, who won the Meiklejohn Trophy, was Enid Lowe. Enid had knitted a beautiful Fair Isle sweater.

The Flower of the month competition was won by Sheila Mason.

Unfortunately our January Meeting was cancelled due to wintry weather conditions.

• Our next meeting, on 4 February, is a craft evening. Our March Meeting is a talk on Bletchley Park. Both will be held at Balerno Community Centre, Main Street, from 7.30pm.

Updates from Dr MacKay's Wood

MICHAEL MOORHEAD
JUNIPER GREEN RESIDENT

We are very fortunate to have Dr Mackay's Wood in Juniper Green as a valuable green space, donated to the local community to enjoy.

A woodland was planted on the land in 2004; however, in recent years, this has become overgrown with ivy. As a result, a number of local residents described the wood as feeling a little dark and unwelcoming.

During the past few months, a group of volunteers – supported by Emily Ronaldson, of Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust – have come together to improve the wood and to make it a more enticing and engaging space.

Most of the work to date has involved removing the ivy that has been covering the trees, bench and signposts – there was a lot of ivy! – as well as clearing away dead vegetation and removing old tree tubes and some dilapidated fencing. This has been a great community effort and, as an added bonus, the sun was shining on each occasion.

The wood is already looking much better and feeling more open and airy. We have also had very helpful discussions with local council officials to discuss the coppicing of the hazel and



crown lifting of the trees (ie, removing some lower limbs of trees) which will allow more light into the wood, and help improve the biological diversity within the wood. The plan is to underplant the trees with a variety of bulbs

to bring colour and interest at different times of the year to the wood.

We are grateful to Juniper Green and Baberton Mains Community Council who have kindly provided funding to enable the purchase of



woodland bulbs and the initial planting of snowdrops, native bluebells and wood anemone will be taking place in the coming weeks—so keep an eye out for these when taking a walk through the wood.

We are planning to create a range of additional wildlife habitats within the wood, such as bird boxes, "dead-hedges" and "bug-hotels" and would like to install a handrail beside the steps at the bottom of the wood, as this is quite a steep gradient.

• Further sessions within the wood are taking place throughout February and March. If you would like to get involved, email Michael Muirhead: michael.muirhead1@gmail.com

A Facelift for the Currie Flowers

MIKE ROWE
CURRIE BALERNO ROTARY

Currie Balerno Rotary set up the Currie flowers display in 2002 and have maintained them ever since. We're all looking a bit older now and the barrel planters began to show their age too, as was noticed by residents.

In December we removed the ageing tubs and installed new ones, purchased with the aid of a grant from The City of Edinburgh Council.

They have been filled with new compost and many of the daffodil bulbs have been transplanted from the old barrels. Rotary members completed the work in better weather than we could have expected but we will delay any further planting until the Spring.



Lindsay & Gilmour and Circle Security, founder members of Currie Balerno Rotary's Community Members initiative, are to be joined now by Dalmahoy Hotel and Country Club, writes Mike Rowe. "In December we welcomed Scott Tennant as a member of Currie Balerno Rotary and of Rotary International, representing Circle Security. Scott (left) is seen here with our President, Ian Campbell. Scott is the first Community Member representative to formally join Currie Balerno Rotary. He will be followed in January by Nicole Misstear of Lindsay & Gilmour, and soon thereafter by the Dalmahoy representative."

Round Table 2024 Round-up

HAZEL LUMSDAINE
CURRIE, BALERNO & DISTRICT ROUND TABLE

2024 was a hugely successful year, as you will have seen from our previous updates and we finished strong in December with another wonderful run of Santa visits. From Bonaly to Balerno and all the bits in between, Santa sang, told jokes (some better than others), high-fived and chatted with loads of kids—all while our troops of volunteer elves collected donations. The sleigh this year, was provided by our new friends at Belmont KGM, I'm sure you will agree that Santa looked quite at home in the back while Rudolph lapped up the heated seats.

As always, we would like to thank everyone who waited out in the cold just to give Santa a wave, and to everyone who donated. Special thanks go to our elves from Currie Chieftains, Harmeny School, Community For Food, RDA and all the others who volunteered to pound the pavements with us.

Our promise with all Santa donations is that every penny is redistributed amongst local charities, organisations and good causes and we are thrilled to say that we have already made a start on this. Donations totalling just under £11,000 have been made to Dean Park PS Girls football team, CHAS, CCHS Dance school, Currie Community Centre, Currie Chieftains, Pentland Scouts, RDA, Harmeny, Community For Food, Wildlife Explorers, Blood Bikes and FACE (Fighting Against Cancer Edinburgh). These are all very deserving causes and, with your help, we are proud to support them.

Our attention turns now to 2025, so, here is your first "Save the Date" reminder. This year's Currie Beer and Curry Festival will be on Friday 6 and Saturday 7 June. Bring it on.

• If you would like to make a request for support, please send all details to: charities@cboardt.com

• For more information about what we do, and how to get involved, email: enquiries@cboardt.com

www.facebook.com/candbnews

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Rotary's Local Contributions

MIKE ROWE
CURRIE BALERNO ROTARY

A major contribution to local good causes by your local Rotary during December was to the food bank run by Holy Trinity Church at Wester Hailes. Not only did we help with the cooking of meals and the preparing of food bags, we also donated 90 Christmas gifts for the children of families supported by the food bank. These were provided by Currie Balerno Rotary members and friends, as well as members of the Pentlands Probus Club, whose support is much appreciated.

Also in December, in partnership with Balerno Village Trust, we made grants through the Community Chest to 14 local organisations. These ranged from the scouts, the girl-guides and the Balerno and District Schools Pipe Band to the Pentlands Book Festival, the Colinton Tunnel and Malleny Garden. The Chest was first set up by Currie Balerno Rotary in 2016 and is now, as the Pentlands Community Chest, administered jointly by ourselves and Balerno Village Trust.

Finally we awarded grants to support pupils at local schools. Currie Balerno Rotary offers grants every year to support young people in response to applications received from local schools. The grants may be to support young achievers in sport or academic study or to help less advantaged students.



Above: Award-winner Hlib Sukhobrus (second from right) with Rotary's Ken Lindsay, Hlib's mother Olena, and Rotary President Ian Campbell.

In the current Rotary year we have received bids totalling nearly £1,600 and we are delighted with this very satisfying response, demonstrating the excellent relationship we have with our local schools. Sadly we are not able to meet all of these applications but we have so far made three individual grants and one group grant.

We made three grants in December to Wester Hailes High School. One was a group grant in response to a request from a Pupil Support Officer to support a drive to improve attendance and reward effort. A second grant was to an individual student to purchase art materials towards a national art qualification and a career in design, and the third was to three 14-year-old students to attend a course in pursuance of a Duke of Edinburgh Award. The most recent award was

to support Hlib Sukhobrus, a Balerno High School student originally from Ukraine, attend a study weekend to prepare for exams, and improve self-esteem and teamwork skills. We were able to make this presentation to Hlib in person on 15 January.

• Currie Balerno Rotary serves the communities of Ratho, Balerno, Currie, Juniper Green, Baberton, Colinton, and Wester Hailes.

• To know more about us, visit: cbrotary.org, follow us on [facebook.com/cbrotary1020](https://www.facebook.com/cbrotary1020) or contact Mike Rowe at PR@cbrotary.org, or on 0131 449 5701

Pentland Ladies Probus Club Update

MARION WALLACE
SECRETARY, PENTLAND LADIES PROBUS CLUB

During the past few months we have enjoyed a selection of interesting speakers. We've learned about: keeping our homes safe from fire; the essential work of the Vine Trust in building homes in Malawi, and also sponsoring a healthcare boat which toured around Lake Victoria; the convoy of goods from the Arctic circle to Scotland during the Second World War; and, last but by no means least, a fascinating insight into the history of our local Fox's/Burton's Company in Sighthill— following which they presented us with an overwhelming selection of their produce which also benefitted our local Food Bank!

Our Autumn talks have left us all looking forward to the first few months of 2025. By the time this is printed we will have learned of the life-saving service which the Blood Bikes give to the community. February's speaker, meantime, will be the ever popular Roy Johnston who will this year be telling us of the role of "Women on the Home Front". We will round our season off with a talk about the Colinton Tunnel from Mike Smith.

• A warm welcome awaits if you would like to join us for one or all of our talks. We meet every fourth Tuesday of the month in the Gibson Craig Halls, 10am - noon.

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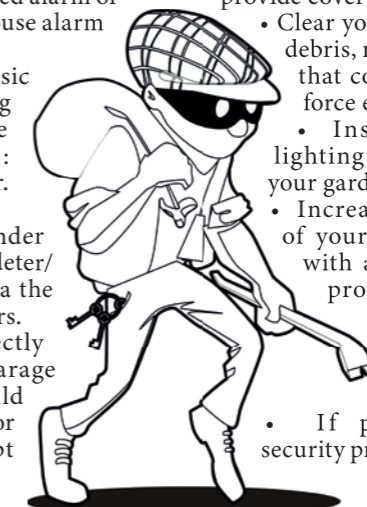
PC SAMANTHA CAMPBELL
POLICE SCOTLAND, E-DIV - EDINBURGH CITY - PREVENTIONS, INTERVENTIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Shed and garages can attract thieves looking for bicycles and motorbikes; please make sure your property is secure:

- Fit good quality locks to doors: a British Standard 3621 mortice or closed shackle padlock, fit using coach bolts or anti tamper screws, can also be used on the

door hinges.

- Fit a grill, adhesive frosting or put a curtain over any windows.
- Fit an audible shed alarm or link into main house alarm system.
- Consider forensic property marking for valuable contents. See: www.bikeregister.com
- A garage defender can be fitted to deter/prevent access via the main garage doors.
- Any door directly connecting a garage and house should be of external door quality and kept



locked/alarmed.

- Surrounding hedges or trees should be cut back so as not to provide cover for thieves.
- Clear your garden all of debris, rubble and tools that could be used to force entry.
- Install security lighting to illuminate your garden/driveway.
- Increase the height of your fence or wall with a trellis, which provides support for climbing plants further deterring thieves.
- If purchasing security products, look for

items certified by "Sold Secure" or "Secured by Design".

- Use ground anchors or shed shackles (fitted as per the manufactures instructions) to secure bikes and equipment via chains and padlocks.

If you are storing cycles or motorbikes, please consider locks, chains and ground anchors that are "Sold Secure" certified for Powered Cycles (formerly Motorcycle) Diamond—these products have been tested against angle grinders.

- Useful websites include: www.soldsecure.com, www.securedbydesign.com, and <https://www.scotland.police.uk/>



Snapshots of the Past

'Co-operative' Balerno

DOUGLAS LOWE
CURRIE & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

I recently received an enquiry about the history of Co-operative stores in Balerno. I had thought that the first Co-op store in Balerno dated from 1866. However, having looked into the British Newspaper Archive, I discovered that a Co-operative store had clearly existed in Balerno from a slightly earlier date, after I found an advert in *The Scotsman* (published Thursday 21 September 1865) for a saleswoman “wanted immediately” for the Balerno Co-operative store. The advertised salary was 13/- per week, “security required”. [According to the Bank of England’s online inflation calculator, that’s the equivalent of £69 today. Not a lot!—Editor]

I also noted an even earlier report about a local 14-year-old orphan – described in *The Renfrewshire Independent* for 7 September 1861 as an “Incorrigible Rogue” – who “had obtained from a co-operative grocery store in Balerno a pound of loaf sugar, falsely representing himself as having been sent for it by a well-known customer, who wished to have it ‘on tick.’” For this and several other crimes – cheekily, at a Currie bakery he had also paid for some biscuits using the proceeds of having just sold the padlock taken from its own front door! – he was jailed for 14 days, following which he was to be confined in Wellington Reformatory for five years”. (This residential “Farm School” had been established two years earlier by the Edinburgh Association for the Reformation of Juvenile Offenders.) I remember playing football against “Wellie Farm” in the 1960s. The anticipation was worse than the actual match.

The first co-operative store in Balerno was on the corner of the street called Society, probably so-named because the co-operative society store had been located there. Only a fragment of this street now remains, it having been mostly

demolished during the construction of the village bypass, Bavelaw Road, in 1973.

According to a further article also found in the British Newspaper Archive, the Balerno Co-operative Society was dissolved in 1873.

More than 70 years later, in 1946, Hillwood Co-operative opened a store on Balerno’s Main Street, where the Chemist is now located.

In 1956, St Cuthbert’s Co-op opened two self-service stores, one in the then-recently constructed building that is now Balerno Community Centre (then opposite Hillwood Co-op), the other on Pentland View, Currie. These self-service stores were very modern, for the time. You have to remember that Balerno was very different in the 1950s and early 1960s. During the week the village was alive with “wifies” shopping. Daily shopping at butchers, bakers and even candlestickmakers, for all we know. Few folk had fridges; even fewer had freezers—such technological marvels were all still to come.

My brother and I were usually sent with a list for the shopping on Saturdays and we had to remember the Co-op numbers for both my mother and my granny—112541 and 50617, respectively. (Not bad after 60-plus years!) Purchases went towards building your dividend, which was collected, I think, once a year at the large St Cuthbert’s store on Bread Street (in Edinburgh) and then used, in our case, to buy school shoes, trousers and occasionally a blazer—unless one was passed down to you. Some first years were given blazers of a size that would



Main: A photo from our CDLHS archive looking up Balerno Main Street, 1960-ish. The St Cuthbert’s Co-op (white) is on the left (now the Community Centre) while a Hillwood Co-op van is parked on the right. Above: An advert for the Co-operative stores, scanned from the 1965 Currie & Balerno Residents Association Handbook.

last them until they were 6ft and 14 stone. Hillwood Co-operative appears to have merged into St Cuthbert’s Co-op by the mid 1960s, although the name is retained in the company’s head office, Hillwood House, in Newbridge. In turn, the whole St Cuthbert’s “family” merged with Dalziel Society of Motherwell, in the process renaming itself the Scottish Midland Co-op Society—AKA, Scotmid. During the early 1970s the larger St Cuthbert’s Co-op in Balerno moved to its present position, first becoming a plaza with a few other small shops and then expanding a few years later to what it is now.

• 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/>



Blast from the Past:
Baldy—the Jackdaw of Juniper Green

PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
C&B NEWS

Back in the 1930s, the City and Royal Burgh of Edinburgh Transport Department had the time, money and energy to publish a quarterly in-house magazine called *Speed*. Its Spring 1934 edition featured a photograph of one of the city’s motor bus drivers “with Baldy the jackdaw confidently perched on his shoulder”.

The photo caption continued: “We show the house because it is Baldy’s home where he retires to rest each night. One of his friends is anxious to know why Baldy has been called from the trees.”

The “house” in question is clearly named The Kinleith Inn—aka “the Kinleith” or “Kinleith Mill” public bar. We are not, for a moment, suggesting that either Baldy or the anonymous driver “enjoyed a tippie or two” there. But then again... perhaps they did!?

Remember 1975?

In our forthcoming May edition we’re hoping to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Currie and Balerno – previously neighbouring villages in the County of Midlothian – “suddenly” finding themselves within Edinburgh’s extended western boundary, thanks to Scotland-wide reorganisation of local government.

Do you remember the change? Do you believe falling under the care of the newly-created City of Edinburgh District Council (as well as the wider-stretching Lothian Regional Council) changed life in the villages for the better? Or not?

• Please send us your thoughts: email Paul at editor@candbnews.com or leave your thoughts on our Facebook page.

THIS MONTH IN... 1998 LOCAL HISTORY AS REPORTED BY C&B NEWS.



STUART KAY
JUNIPER GREEN RESIDENT

Teenage violence in Balerno” was the eye-catching headline topping the lead story in the February 1998 edition of *Currie & Balerno News*. The story reported fears in the area “that teenage violence is now commonplace in Balerno”, and “brought worried questions from outsiders who sometimes visit”.

The reported statistics were indeed concerning. In 1997, there had been 31 minor assaults and three serious assaults in Balerno, and 23 minor assaults and one serious assault in Currie.

However, Inspector Adam Conn of Lothian & Borders Police sought to reassure readers, pointing to figures that showed that violent crime in Lothian as a whole had fallen by 13% in the previous year, continuing a six-year trend. “Currie and Balerno are good places to live—you can tell that by the number of police officers who choose to raise their families there,” he said. The numbers, he continued, “remain small compared to other parts of the city”.

In clear contrast, “Choir Ladies Looking for Men!” was the other front page headline. The author, enthused by the “world wide praise” (sic) for the Pentland Singers’ Christmas concert – “Well at least as far afield as Clackmannan, Corstorphine and Cramond” – lamented being under great pressure from the women’s section of the choir. “They keep saying to me—‘We need more men.’” It appeared that the choir already had 24 men; how this compared to the number of women members was not recorded.

The theme of male diffidence continued in an unfortunate incident at the Balerno High School junior disco. Although this was considered “a roaring success”, the paper



Left: the front cover of *C&B News* in February 1998. Above: Juniper Green Rural Ladies celebrated their institute’s 70th Birthday at Baberton Golf Club. Left to right: Irene Byers, Amy Stewart, Peggy Fisher, Sheila Wilson, Margaret Mackay, Lady Orr, and Gladys Watt.

added: “Many of the young males present were shocked at the idea of dancing with female company, and hid in the toilets.”

Among the letters published this month was one that encouraged the signing of a petition proposing the rejection of the development of a “valuable Green Belt site” in the area and of the council’s preference for the “land as Edinburgh’s second permanent site for travelling people”. Another letter was entitled: “What’s wrong with Travellers?” The first stressed “the protection of this area of Outstanding Landscape Quality”; the writer of the second saw “no problem with ‘travelling people’ ... I would see them as being a significant minority, enhancing our lives by their alternative lifestyle, and lack of materialism. Think what benefits ‘travelling people’ could bring to the community, if they were given a properly planned site.”

Almost a full page was given over to the unveiling and dedication of the Willie Shanks memorial stone in Balerno. “Auld Willie” had been a stalwart of Balerno Burns Club—according to the club’s website, his membership had been proposed in 1932! His dedication to the club was rewarded by a British Empire Medal in 1991.

The website also reported that, when Willie took over the club’s secretarial duties in the early 1970s, his “ejected” predecessor in the role had asked: “Willie Shanks, what does he know about being a secretary? He’s just a bloody ploughman.” This was perhaps not a notably insightful point. The stone was unveiled by “Willie’s old friend and fellow Burnsian”, Councillor Hugh Fraser.

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Cooking the Books

with Balerno Resident STEF LYONS



In the late 1990s packaging started to talk back. Your orange juice told you to “Keep me in the fridge!” and your crisps said, “I am baked in the oven!” This was the beginning of Wackaging. You know the stuff, the products that like to remind you that you are Having Fun While Consuming. This trend then moved from food packaging to other lifestyle brands. Chefs such as Jamie Oliver told us our food was “wicked” and “gnarly” (whatever that is), and more and more goods took off from there.

I don’t know if the tone of this article is reaching you but let me say it plainly: that style really isn’t for me. Don’t get me wrong, I like a friendly tone and I love it when food writers cherish the food they eat and want to tell you about it. When it comes to cookbooks, for me there is a line somewhere between “The recipes are very good.” and “Why must they try to be my best friend and be so flipping enthusiastic about this? It’s tomato soup. Calm down.”

Why does any of this matter? Well, I’ve got a couple of books produced by the food chain, Leon, which might fit into this category and I’m here to tell you all about them. If you don’t know it, Leon is a sort of fast-food-but-healthy chain. I can’t guarantee any of their health claims but that is their niche. They make pretty delicious food including gorgeous curries and different wraps, tonnes of it being vegan (if you care about that sort of thing), all of which is packaged up in recyclable boxes and designed to make you feel good about your life choices. As lots of people want that nowadays, that’s no bad thing. There are four branches in Scotland, including a coffee outlet down the road in Livingston.

When I saw they had books out, I bought a couple to recreate the joy at



home: *Leon, Naturally Fast Food* and *Leon, Family And Friends*. Both are hefty tomes and, unfortunately for boring cynics like me, are chocked full of super-friendly wording. Begrudgingly, it’s actually sort of nice; it comes across like they really enjoy what they are selling. Lots of recipes seem to be the chefs’ own favourites, like Kim’s Spanish-style Chicken which is an easy and extremely tasty chicken and chorizo stew.

Both books are divided into sections such as Breakfast and Brunch, Weekday Suppers, Birthdays, Kids Cooking, Pot Roasts, Puddings, Party Food. I could go on. They are an encyclopedia of hearty, often simple dishes, packed with vegetables, from all around the world. The Easy Pad Thai is a favourite here, and we are big fans of their Happy Cakes which by any other name are blueberry pancakes.

The dish I indulged in the other day was Chicken With 100 Cloves Of Garlic. You read that right. One Hundred. Hailing from Provence, this recipe would have originally been roasted with 100 bulbs of garlic but has been toned down. Which was good because I made it the day before we all went back to school and work. It’s so easy to do and the garlic roasting at the bottom of the casserole dish under the chicken goes soft and caramelised, perfect for spreading on fresh bread in the moment or even the next day for lunch.

So yes, these books are a little over-friendly, and rather preachy at times about good or bad food (which I don’t really hold to), but the recipes are delicious and worth every single eye-roll. Bon appétit.



Senior Snippets

with ANDREW SENEW

Welcome to our latest Senior Snippet - an advisory column with the older members of our communities in mind. Please send any ideas for future topics to andrew.senew@homeinstead.co.uk

Healthy, Hearty Winter Meals for Older Adults

Winter is the perfect season to enjoy comforting meals that are both nutritious and satisfying, especially for older adults. A hearty soup or stew loaded with vegetables, lean proteins like chicken or beans, and whole grains such as barley or quinoa can provide warmth and essential nutrients. Roasted root vegetables, rich in vitamins and fibre, make a colourful side dish that’s easy to prepare and delicious. Consider making shepherd’s pie with a sweet potato topping for extra fibre. For dessert, baked apples or pears with a sprinkle of cinnamon and a dollop of yogurt can satisfy a sweet tooth while providing calcium and antioxidants.

Be mindful of portion sizes, salt levels, and added sugars to ensure meals are heart-healthy and manageable for smaller appetites.

Shopping and cooking with older relatives can transform meal preparation into a bonding activity. Trips to the grocery store provide a chance to share favourite recipes or reminisce about family traditions, while cooking together offers an opportunity to create new memories. It’s also a great way to introduce healthy ingredients and ensure meals meet dietary needs. Whether it’s peeling carrots or stirring a pot of soup, there’s a task for every ability level.

Sharing these meals together not only nourishes the body but also the spirit, combating isolation and fostering connection during the chilly months. So, gather in the kitchen, warm your home, and savour the season’s best together.

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

Craft Corner:

Exciting Earrings



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

Like many of us, I am starting the New Year with a disappointing admission: I did not complete the hand knitting project as promised in the December/January issue of *C&B News*. Of course, it is not my fault: the Christmas break is just way too short and full of distractions. So instead of a jumbo cardigan, we are kicking off this year with hand-made, upcycled, bold, quirky and exciting earrings. Earrings that Prue Leith of *The Great British Bake Off* would proudly wear.

I recently purchased an earring making kit which contains hooks, posts, screw eye pins, studs and anything you need to make your own earrings. These kits are £5 to £10 and contain hundreds of pieces, so they are worth it. I also use superglue, small pliers and lots of patience. All the pieces are obviously very small and fiddly, so brace yourself.

You can start simply by gluing a button onto a stud. This is surprisingly satisfying as you can get buttons of different colours and shapes. Similarly, you can crochet or felt earrings in any colour. My mum made me the red earrings and I felted the pink ones. Yes, I could have been more imaginative and explore different shapes, but I settled for a pink ball. On the plus side, these pink earrings contain a bead from my wedding

dress and the colour matches a couple of my outfits.

The vial earrings are very versatile and can be filled with beads, bright powder or spices (turmeric or paprika), glitter, dried flowers, screws, seeds or anything you fancy – as long as the content is relatively light. In my case, I used a natural blue pigment from Spirulina. My good friend from the University created these moon earrings in her pottery class and I still cherish them two decades later. I call the blue earrings “wifi” earrings because they resemble the wifi symbol. I made them from a leftover blue gasket that I cut, sewed and decorated with some wedding beads.

There are so many more options, materials and designs to explore. If you can attach your piece to a hook or stud or make a hole in it, you are on your way. Let's upcycle what we can and create exciting earrings.

GAIL COUSINS
BALERNO RAMBLERS



For most of us the thaw was a welcome relief from the freezing temperatures, snow, and ice. But, for some walkers, the snow-covered Pentland Hills were a draw to enjoy the winter wonderland, unspoilt scenery, and the challenge to wear Yaktrax-pros and practise winter skills.

There are now signs of spring, winter aconites, and green bulb shoots. We look forward to finding the first snowdrops, but will winter return?

Balerno Ramblers are hosting the Lothian and Borders Members' day. Some 60 ramblers will be participating on one of three local walks reced by our volunteer walk leaders. After lunch, there will be a talk by Andrew Marsden, Chair of Friends of the Pentlands.

UPCOMING WALKS

Our Spring programme is still being finalised; however, Balerno Ramblers will be offering an Introductory walk on the first Saturday of the month. February's walk will be in Beecraigs Country Park.

So far, our Midweek group has one walk planned for Wednesday 5 February, a “City to Beach loop” of 6.5 miles (10.5 km). Using our bus passes, the walk will start from Abbeyhill bus stop, past Hibernian's Easter Road stadium to Lochend Park, then along the Restalrig Railway path to Seafield and Portobello. Following lunch and a comfort break on the promenade, the walk will go on to Figgate Park, along the Figgate Burn, to finally catch a Service 44 bus back west from Willowbrae Road.

On Saturday 22 February there will be a 7 mile (11.3 km) circular walk from Culross West Car Park, heading east along the coastal path beside the Forth, including a lovely walk through the Valleyfield Estate to (hopefully) admire the snowdrops, returning to the car park via inland paths past the ruins of West Kirk, Downhill to Blair Mains Farm and



"We love to go a-wandering". Photo: Roger Jonathan

along the coastal path back to Culross.

The Glenkinchie Distillery 8.5 mile (13.7 km) circular walk on Saturday 15 March starts from Glenkinchie Distillery, East Lothian, where walkers will initially take a detour to the delightful Saltoun Wood before following the Birns Water to Pencaitland. A disused railway line will be used to return to the distillery and visit the cafe for tea/coffee/refreshments.

Finally there's a 10 mile (16.1 km) Pentland circular walk on Saturday 22 March. Starting at the Bus Terminus on Cockburn Crescent, Balerno, the route enters the Pentland Hills Regional Park via Harlaw Car Park, follows Maiden's Cleugh to Harbour Hill, passes by three reservoirs (Bonaly, Torduff and Clubbiedean), returning to the bus terminus via Poet's Glen and Lymphoy.

• More details can be found on Balerno Rambler's Facebook page (www.facebook.com/Balerno-Ramblers) or our page on the Rambler's website: www.balerno.org.uk/Ramblers

• Please register with the walk leader to attend and advise if you have a medical condition relevant to your walking. For more details and contact numbers, please email: enquiries@balernoramblers.org.uk

• All our walks are open to all members and non-members. We regret dogs are not permitted on our walks.

• To sign up for our mailing list, email: balerno-ramblers@googlegroups.com

Wellbeing



'Wintering'

ANNETTE WILSON CONTINUES HER COLUMN ON TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF.

I recently read a book, *Wintering - the power of rest and retreat in difficult times* by Katherine May. The author uses the term “wintering” to mean any challenging or difficult time in life when we feel the need to retreat, and likens it to the way nature survives the harsh, cold season of winter. She implores: “in our relentlessly busy contemporary world, we are forever trying to defer the onset of winter [...] we must stop believing that these times in our lives are somehow silly or a lack of willpower [...] we must learn to invite winter in”.

It's a powerful message for this time of year, when there is often pressure to start the year with energy, resolutions, and goals. Yet it's still winter outside – often the coldest months – and we might rightly need to take things a little more gradually, mindful of our physical and mental needs for good sleep and rest, recovery after illness, and eating nourishing warm food.

There's a balance to be had, isn't there? We need to look forward into the year that's unfolding, and it can feel positive to set intentions and make plans. The key I think is to really “listen” to how we feel and respond with gentleness if we find we're not quite feeling up to it all. And that can be a challenge, to spend time tuning in, when we tend to live busy, filled up lives.

So if I encourage you to do anything this month, it would be to find little moments to stop in your day, close your eyes and notice how you feel. Take a deep breath or two, look out the window, do what you can to pause the endless train of thinking, and pay attention to your deepest needs.

If you feel energetic and motivated, go for it! But if you feel a little more fragile, take your time.

Why are we rushing? Find your own balance between “wintering” and “springing” into action!

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

www.facebook.com/candbnews

Winter Comes to Malleny Garden



JAMES BELL
HEAD GARDENER, MALLENY GARDEN

Into 2025 the garden has already seen a big swing in the weather. In early January, the garden was feeling the cold with minus double-digit temperatures, then within a few days it saw plus double-digit temperatures. Our fountain went from a magical winter icy wonder to its usual watery pond in just a couple of days, as the photos (on page 2) show.

The weather hasn't stopped our first “big” flower of the year: the cheerful yellow flowers of winter aconites sprung up across the garden (see right).

Overall, we fared well with the bitter cold of early January. Most of the plants have reacted as we would expect, with little to no damage. Unfortunately, the large greenhouse did suffer a bit of damage: the weight of snow and

ice caused the guttering to fail. The brackets holding it bent under the weight. Some glass was broken and a bit of the cast iron guttering cracked. All fixable though. Some Winter damage to a glass structure is not particularly unexpected, though certainly not desirable.

The thaw in mid-January allowed us to get started on the first job of the year. As you come into the garden, the croquet lawn



– perhaps even once a curling pond? – had a bit of renovation work. It is a lawn which was dug down below the surrounding ground level and would have been surrounded on all four sides with grass banks. The bank opposite the entrance gate has, over time, disappeared through being cut, walked on and general wear and tear. We have taken this opportunity to reinstate the bank we believe should be



there and, once again, enclose the lawn with four grass banks. (See below.) Once the grass seed comes up, it should look quite smart!

Later in the year we will be welcoming an Easter Egg Trail on Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 April. Further details can be found on the NTS website. Please do come along.

We will also be holding our Plant Fair at the end of June, details still to be confirmed.

During 2025 we expect the garden to grow well.

• 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 get in touch at mallenygarden@nts.org.uk.

• <https://www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/mallenygarden>

Keeping on Top of Your Winter Heating Bills



Photo: Edinburgh Pentlands MSP Gordon Macdonald (centre) recently attended a drop-in session at the Scottish Parliament, with Scottish Gas engineers Julie Dickson (left) and Simon Wilson (right).

• **Bleed your radiators:** Air can enter the system and form bubbles at the top of your radiators, which stops them from working efficiently. If you notice cold spots at the top of your radiators, switch them off and after they cool, turn a radiator key in the valve at the top to let the air out.

• **Tender Loving Care for your boiler:** People often don't give much thought to their boiler until something goes wrong, but regular servicing can prevent problems from arising at all. British Gas's Homecare products mean customers can protect their boiler and have an annual service. It's essential for keeping the household going, so it's well worth looking after.

• **Shut out the cold:** You wouldn't leave the back door open when the heating's on, but warm air could still be escaping without you realising—and cold air sneaking in. Draught-proofing around your windows and doors can save around £60 per year. Self-adhesive foam strips are easy to fit on windows to prevent draughts, while draught excluders are perfect if there's a gap between your door and the floor. Your keyhole and letterbox can allow cold air into your home too. Keyhole covers and letterbox brush strips are cheap to buy, quick and easy to fit and will stop those draughts.

• **Furnish for warmth:** Think about where your heat sources are, and make sure your radiators can do their job properly. Putting your sofa in front of a radiator may keep the best spot in the house extra toasty, but it will absorb heat that could be warming the rest of the room. Curtains and rugs have an important part to play as well, because thick material (the thicker the better) prevents heat from being lost through windows and doors—just don't forget to open your curtains during the day so that the sun can do some of the work!

• **Turn off radiators in rooms not in use:** It's important not to spend money heating spare rooms or other rooms not in use during the winter, so if you know a room isn't going to be used, make sure you turn the radiator off and close the door to stop cold air circulating through the rest of the house. When you do need to use the room, just turn it back on ahead of time to heat it up.

• **Wrap your pipes up warm:** We often come across frozen condensate pipes – which can burst or crack when the water inside turns to ice. The best solution is to stop the water inside your pipes from freezing in the first place. Insulating materials are an easy, cost-effective solution, available from most DIY

There are many changes you can make around the house to improve energy efficiency and save costs, writes Scottish Gas engineer Julie Dickson

stores – it will ensure the pipes don't lose heat saving an average of £15 on your bills and preventing any costly repairs.

• **Heat your home, not your walls:** Cover a thin sheet of card with tinfoil and place it behind your radiators (if you're feeling particularly crafty you can make it T-shaped so it sits on your radiator brackets). It'll reflect the heat back into your rooms, meaning they warm up faster and retain more heat. If DIY isn't your thing, you can also buy ready-made foil insulation. Households can save around £25 a year doing this depending on the insulation in their home.

• **Check your thermostat settings:** It's easy to turn the thermostat all the way up when it's freezing cold but what temperature should your house be? Aim to set your main room thermostat somewhere between 18°C and 21°C and you can save around 10% on

your heating bills – an average of £115 a year – by turning it down by 1 degree. It's also a good idea to set your thermostat to one temperature and then use a timer to turn it on and off when you need the heating most. That way you won't waste excess energy from leaving the heating on too high, for too long.

• **Get your heating right for bedtime:** Set your heating to start 15 minutes before you wake up and turn off 30 minutes before bed. This can save money and even help you get a better night's sleep. You can also turn down the heat in any rooms not in use.

• **Be energy smart:** Unsurprisingly, winter is peak season for energy usage. Making the most of smart tech like thermostats means you can control your heating on the go and avoid wasting money on energy you're not using. For example, if you're stuck at work or delayed on the way home, you can use your smartphone to stop the heating from coming on too early and warming up an empty house. Also, if you have a smart meter installed, you can see how much energy you're using in pounds and pence, helping you to identify where you can make savings.

• **Get the help you're entitled to:** It's always worth finding out if you're eligible for extra assistance with your energy bills, especially before the cold weather sets in. Face-to-face advice, financial support and grants up to £1,700 are available from the British Gas Energy Trust (even if you're not a British Gas customer). Most suppliers also offer assistance funds to provide grants towards energy costs.

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Community Councils

Community Councils across Edinburgh are coming up for re-election during February—here's what you need to know.

PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
C&B NEWS

What are Community Councils?

Community Councils are voluntary organisations run by local residents, who act on behalf of their local areas. CCs can play an important role in grass-roots local democracy, acting as a way for local residents to have their views represented to the City of Edinburgh Council. There are currently 46 (see map, right) across the city.

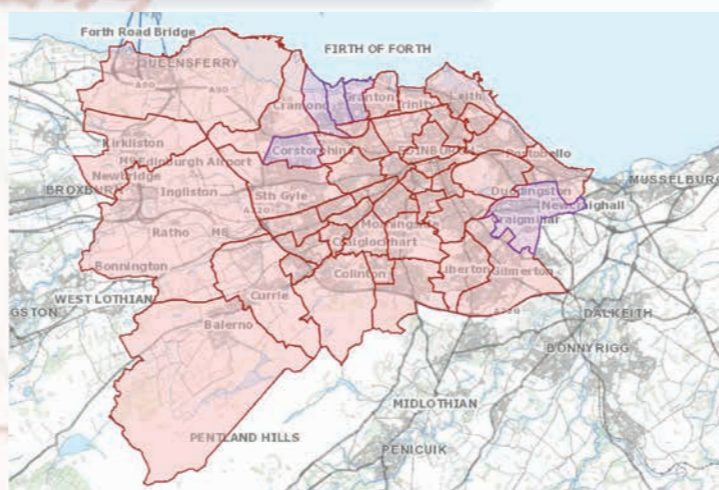
Additionally, CCs can undertake a wide range of activities designed to enhance the well-being of the areas they represent, from campaigning on local issues to organising community events—some CCs across Scotland even publish their own local community newsletters and magazines!

C&B News is officially distributed within the geographical boundaries of four neighbouring community councils: Balerno (BCC), Currie (CCC), Juniper Green & Baberton Mains (JGBMCC), and Colinton (ColCC).

Why are CCs important?

Unlike local resident associations or neighbourhood watch schemes, CCs are officially a part (albeit the lowest part) of local government, originally outlined in the *Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973*, which came into force in May 1975.

This means CCs have a statutory right to be consulted on local planning applications, and are considered “competent” objectors to all licence applications received by CEC, be they for public houses, restaurants,



How do I get involved?

Well, you can simply turn up to your local community council's public meetings as an interested resident, and contribute what you can to proceedings—if and when invited to do so.

If you want to do more – to be able to vote on CC decisions, raise motions or suggest amendments, or even hold an official role (such as chair, secretary or treasurer) to help run your local CC – then you must become an actual

CC member—AKA, become a community councillor.

How do I become a community councillor?

Willing to be nominated? Resident within the CC's geographical boundaries? At least 16 years old? Named on the electoral roll for the area? If you tick all those boxes, you qualify to be a community councillor.

You will need to find a proposer and a seconder—two local residents who also must be 16+ years old, on the local electoral roll, etc, etc. You and they must fill in an application form, which will be available from: www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils

Nominations open on Thursday 6 February and close on Thursday 27 February. Remember: you can not nominate yourself.

Will I have to do any electioneering?

Not necessarily. Each CC has an imposed limit on its membership. For example: Balerno, Juniper Green & Baberton Mains, and Colinton CCs can consist of up to 18 councillors, of whom up to 12 can be “elected” and up to six can be “nominated”. In contrast, Currie CC has a maximum of just 15 councillors, of whom up to 10 can be “elected” and up to five can be “nominated”.

Now—
Hold on... “Elected”? “Nominated”? What's the difference?

Elected members are “elected” on their

fast-food outlets or houses in multiple occupancy.

Plus, they can get things done. Colinton CC played a major role in ensuring the public toilets on Colinton Road stayed open, despite CEC's plans to the contrary.

Why all this talk of elections? Haven't we already had too many of those—especially in Colinton?!

Just like the City of Edinburgh Council, the capital's community council scheme runs on set terms, usually lasting four-to-five years—although the current scheme was extended somewhat “thanks to Covid” and also CEC's own extended public consultation on the future of community councils.

The latter recommended a range of changes to some CC boundaries and names, to better reflect shifted population patterns and local neighbourhoods across the capital. New community councils will commence on Friday 28 March 2025, but the preparations start now!

Why should I get involved?

Community Councils are the strongest way of having a say in what's going on in your local neighbourhood. Plus, you'll get a better understanding of how local government actually works (or doesn't!) in your neighbourhood, across the city, and nationally.

THUMBS DOWN

Two weeks ago the Edinburgh District Council unveiled its draft scheme for Community Councils which will go to the Secretary of State for Scotland for approval. Quite simply the proposal is not to have any councils. The public have

Turn of year sees council reflect and embrace the future

RICHARD WATT
JUNIPER GREEN & BABERTON MAINS COMMUNITY COUNCIL
The turn of the year lends itself to looking, like the Roman God Janus, both ways, so this report attempts that feat. Looking back no further than on their pins, and wheelchair users will greatly appreciate the novelty of use of access to, and across, the park. Then on January 28, we are looking forward to meet the balance of the Edinburgh City Council. Perhaps you are looking for a way of getting things in the community life. They are models of good behaviour nominated for election. Whatever your motivation, if you would like to know more, please come to some of our monthly meetings on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7pm in Juniper Green Village Hall. They are models of good behaviour

own merits to the community council. Nominated members are selected by other local groups and organisations – such as local churches, school PTAs, community trusts, etc – to represent them on the community council. So, for example: Colinton Village Enterprise has a nominated member on ColCC; Balerno Village Trust has a nominated member on BCC.

Just to add to the fun, community councils also can include “associate representatives” (anyone “brought onto” the CC because they have particular skills or knowledge thought useful to the CCs' work) and “ex-officio” members (local CEC ward councillors, and relevant members of the Scottish, Scottish Youth and UK Parliaments). Neither associate nor ex officio members have any voting rights.

OK, Will I have to do any electioneering?

An actual election involving ballot papers and ballot boxes only takes place if there's a greater number of candidates than available “elected” places. So, for example, if 13 or more candidates stand for BCC, electors will have to come out and choose the dozen candidates they prefer. That may well have you hitting the campaign trail if you really want to be selected.

In practice, it's more likely that the final number of candidates will be between half and the total number of “elected” places—in the case of CCC, that's between five and 10 candidates. All will be automatically assumed to be elected and so no ballot will need to be held.

Note: if the number of confirmed candidates is below half of the total number of elected places – say five or fewer candidates coming forward for JGBMCC – then a new community council will not be formed at this time.

Are community councils worth the trouble?

Back in the 1980s, many residents in both Balerno and Currie certainly thought so—in fact, they spent almost five years campaigning for the then newly created City of Edinburgh District Council (predecessor to the current unitary authority) to carry out its statutory duty and establish the requested community councils for the two villages. (Let's just say the new management in the City Chambers were far from keen

to do so.) It took even longer before similar CCs finally launched in Juniper Green and Colinton—although, in case of the latter, much of the role of a community council had been previously undertaken by the Colinton Amenity Association.

During the last few years, C&B News has run several stories and columns highlighting failings in communications between CEC and local community councils—most recently, the failure of CEC to notify anyone about the recent “refurbishment” of the Bridge Road/Lanark Road West junction in Balerno. Local CCs in south west Edinburgh have also on occasions boomed the amount of work expected of their volunteers, and perceived shortcomings in the resources – financial and administrative – available to them.

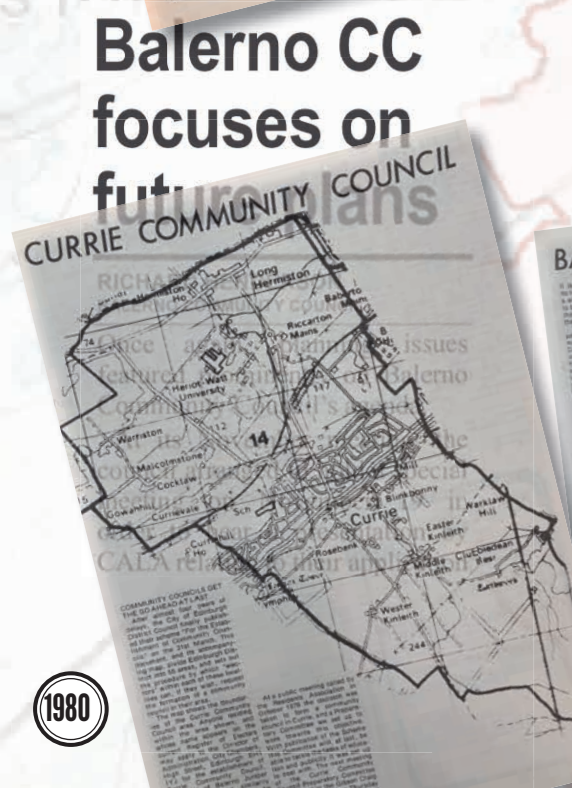
But, ultimately, the effectiveness of any community councils is down to three factors: the abilities of the local residents who commit their free time and energy to run them, the levels of interest and support from the local community for what they do, and the strength (or weakness) of the relationship between the CCs and the City of Edinburgh Council's officials. If all these are strong, then CCs can make a real difference to life within their communities.

Where can I find out more?

The City of Edinburgh Council has organised a series of events across Edinburgh in the run-up to the nomination period. Sadly the nearest event to most of our readers, at Heriot-Watt University, was on Monday 20 January, just after our editorial deadline for this issue!

However, two events are scheduled during February: at the Central Library, George IV Bridge, on Monday 3 February (4.30pm - 7pm), and in the Sighthill Campus Foyer of Edinburgh Napier University on Monday 10 February (11am - 3pm).

Alternatively, you can email: community.councils@edinburgh.gov.uk or call the team on (0131) 529 4494.





Local Fairtrade Diary Date

LESLEY HENDERSON
BALERNO FAIRTRADE VILLAGE GROUP

Water of Leithers' concern for our world has never stopped at our own river banks. 2005, for instance, saw the first big FT community event in Balerno, and they're still going strong now. How best celebrate these first 20 years, and maybe help the flow go on?

First, by marking Saturday 15 March 2025 in your calendars or diaries, from 10am, to visit this year's Fairtrade Morning, in Balerno Parish Church Halls.

Balerno Schools' latest generation of young artists are working right now to show us, via their Fairtrade "Be the Change!" poster competition entries, some practical ways to help us be fair with each other wherever in the world we are. Soon winning entries will be chosen, proud families informed, Scotmid scoured for their kindly sponsored FT prize edibles, and the Lord Provost's presentation readied, along with boards displaying the posters.

Stallholders are also gathering lovely FT world foods, crafts and information for local customers, to help us all support FT farming and craft production everywhere. Look out for a seed swap, and the much-loved Bike Cooperative Smoothie Bike—with a chance to pedal a FT banana/juice smoothie! FT raffle prizes are rolling in too, including a great "Mill Cafe" cake. Plans for children's activities are also afoot.

Meantime, in the Ogston Hall, the mighty Guild are planning refreshments, a Big Brew with their famous home baking—all for donation, with all profits heading to Transform Trade.

• Note the date—Fairtrade Morning this year is on Saturday 15 March. Everyone will be most welcome.



Rotary's Fundraising for Charity



MIKE ROWE
CURRIE BALERNO ROTARY

We had a wonderful response from the public in raising funds over the Christmas period.

Our lighting up of the Tree of Life was a great success. The Balerno and District Schools Pipe Band opened the occasion in style, Santa was on form and, after initial donations (including from our new Community Members, Lindsay & Gilmour and Circle Security) local people gave over £2,000 for the Marie Curie appeal.

The gift wrapping at the Gyle was also a success and, as can be seen here, we're ready for any challenge. Alongside the wrapping, we offered hand-made wooden snowmen and Christmas trees and these, together with donations, brought in £4,000. We enjoyed it



and the opportunity to meet and talk with the people who supported us.

Our gift-wrappers were mainly Currie Balerno Rotary members with families and friends but we were joined by other volunteer helpers, including expert wrappers from Community Member Circle Security and from Edinburgh company Diligenta.

The Magic of Santa

JOHN MACAULAY MBE
FIGHTING AGAINST CANCER EDINBURGH

Very early on a windy Saturday morning in December, a party of 52 travellers checked in at Edinburgh Airport for the 30th annual day-trip to Lapland organised by Fighting Against Cancer Edinburgh (FACE).

All were from families who had experienced the loss of a close family member to cancer.

Following check-in and then security, the party were soon being welcomed aboard their Jet 2 flight by the wonderful cabin crew.

Following take-off, breakfast was served, followed by the traditional FACE carol singing, bringing many children up front to sing their favourite Christmas songs.

Soon enough, the plane descended through the clouds on approach to Enontekio Airport. We were issued with thermal suits, hats and gloves, and balaclava and crash helmet before boarding a motorised sledge which took us through the snowy forest and across a frozen lake. We were fortunate on the day—the temperature was only minus 6 degrees, but with the wind chill it really felt cold.



We arrived in Santa's village, where families could experience a Reindeer and Husky sleigh ride. We then visited an Ice Palace and prepared for a personal "meet and greet" with Santa Claus in his forest cabin, with each child receiving a special gift.

And then, we headed back to the airport to board our flight back to Edinburgh and home, with many children asleep dreaming of the memories they had experienced in the winter snow after a very difficult year.

• A big thank you, once again, to Currie, Balerno and District Round Table for their kind donation in supporting this magical adventure.

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Arthur Hilton: 'A Life of Kindness, Courage, and Community'

CLARE HILTON
DAUGHTER

The community of Currie mourns the loss of one of its most enduring and well known personalities—Arthur Charles Hilton, a kind and caring gentleman who loved to chat and actively campaigned to keep Currie, in its entirety, a clean and tidy place in which to live.

Arthur was born in Colinton, alongside his twin brother Robert (Bob). They grew up in Hailes Park, attending Colinton Primary before moving on to George Watson's College in 1943. Their close bond and identical appearances made for plenty of entertaining stories over the years, often involving mistaken identities.

In 1949, at 16 years old, Arthur joined the British Linen Bank in Edinburgh. He had two years before he and his brother were called up for National Service in Wilmslow and Market Drayton. Arthur would speak fondly of the friendships they made during their time of "square bashing" and training in the RAF.

After completing National Service, Arthur continued his career in banking. By the late 1950s, he had moved to Lovedale Road in Balerno before moving to Currie. It was there he met Dorothy, a local Currie girl. The couple married on 18 July 1959 at St Mungo's Episcopal Church in Balerno—their wedding making headlines due to a mishap with the bride's veil.

Their first marital house was on Riccarton Mains Road; in 1968, they moved to Riccarton Crescent where he lived until his passing, aged 91, in December 2024.

On 5 October 1981, the Edinburgh Evening News published an article, titled "High Noon for Capital Bank Man", which highlighted Arthur's bravery in foiling three robbery

attempts during his banking career. The most notable incident occurred in 1975 when two men attempted to rob the Bank of Scotland's Abbeyhill branch using stolen travellers cheques. Arthur, along with another bank officer cleverly distracted the robbers, leading to their apprehension.

The article also described other incidents where Arthur's quick thinking and courage had prevented crime, earning him recognition at a national reception in Edinburgh celebrating individuals who supported law enforcement and public safety. His efforts were commended as part of a crime prevention campaign, demonstrating his commitment to protecting the community.

In the mid 1980s Arthur was presented with a certificate of outstanding assistance, given by the then-Secretary of State for Scotland, George Younger.

In 2011, Arthur was nominated for a C&B News Community Award for his efforts in collecting and disposing of litter and keeping the City Council's telephone helpline "Clarence" informed of any remedial work needed on Currie's roads.

In March 2015, he became a lifelong member of Baberton Golf Club; Arthur's passion for golf spanned more than five decades. He was social convener at the club for many years, successfully organising a wide variety of entertainment, enjoyment and fun for all the members. Beyond golf



Arthur's sense of humour – highlighted by his penchant for terrible jokes and his friendly chats with neighbours – made him a beloved figure in the community.

He continued to support the local community by discussing concerns with local councillors, always tidying the school playgrounds, weeding gutters and picking up litter in the streets. One time, he ended up in the

hospital after clearing rubbish from behind the Co-op shops, but still continued to help out where he could, even in his nineties!

In November 2015 he opened the newly refurbished Co-Op supermarket (as reported, of course, in C&B News) and was proud to be asked.

Arthur was a beloved and respected member of the community. I know his neighbours sent some lovely messages of support and love, which were shared with him before his passing, bringing a wee tear to his eye.

A family member said: "We thought it would be nice to acknowledge the love he invested in everyone he met, was always kind, helpful, enquiring and heavily invested in the Currie Community."

Arthur's life was defined by kindness, courage and a selfless dedication to others. He leaves behind a legacy of love, laughter and service to his community, showing us all the enduring power of a life lived with purpose and heart.

Hamish Coghill: Historian, Journalist and Honorary President of CDLHS

DOUGLAS LOWE
SECRETARY, CURRIE & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Many tributes have been paid in respect of Hamish Coghill, the much loved and respected Honorary President of the Currie & District Local History Society, who passed away on New Year's Day at the age of 88.

Hamish had been a member of the society since the 1970s and had taken on many rolls within the organisation, as Chairman then President and Honorary President following its reorganisation. Indeed he provided the first talk of our current session in October 2024, "The Water of Life"—an illustrated historical trip along the Water of Leith "from source to sea" which involved him in a fair amount of walking and photographic research. Hamish had also attended our final pre-Christmas meeting on 16 December.

The Society had been doubly lucky in that Hamish's late wife Mary, who passed away in 2020, was also heavily involved as Secretary of the Society, carrying out research, writing

and giving talks.

Many will know of Hamish Coghill from his many books on Edinburgh's history, the most recent being *Lost Edinburgh*.

Hamish had been a newspaper man, working for the *Edinburgh Evening News* for more than 40 years, ultimately becoming Assistant Editor. He had started as a copyboy in 1953, which, he said, mostly required him nipping out to purchase cigarettes for reporters. He retired from "the News" in 1996.

Subsequently, for more than 20 years, Hamish had run classes on the city's history as part of the City of Edinburgh Council's

adult education programmes. He was also a member of the Society of High Constables of Edinburgh.

At CDLHS we will remember Hamish as someone who provided interesting, detailed, entertaining talks for the society on many varied aspects of Edinburgh's history. Hamish was friendly, approachable and supportive to members, happy to give advice to those of us researching and preparing to give future talks. Or just to answer questions from members uncertain on some point of Edinburgh history. Hamish had an encyclopaedic knowledge of the city's history and buildings.

I must admit, as secretary, I always managed to fit a talk from Hamish into our annual syllabus as he was a popular speaker. People would come and be captivated by his detailed talks, which he laced with humorous photos or "asides".





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Illustration: Marjorie Beaumont

VIEWS LETTERS etc!

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

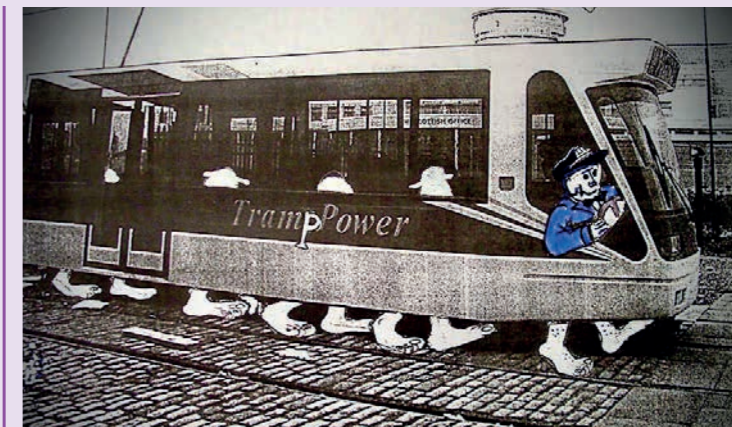
Roads

Through a Freedom of Information request I recently obtained copies of roads inspection reports for the last year for Lanark Road West (between Bryce Road and Muirwood Road) and Riccarton Mains Road (between Bryce Road and Hermiston Park and Ride). What I received were 13 pages listing reports of potholes, cracked and damaged surfaces and other defects. What is clear is that a full resurface of these two roads is long overdue.

Looking through back issues at what our four local Councillors have to say in their columns there's plenty about attending this or that group they were at, or minor works they have requested the City of Edinburgh Council to do. What I see is a failure to collectively address something that affects nearly all of us locally.

I discovered that the Council's work programme currently contains no plans for either of these roads during 2024/25. Now is the time for our elected representatives to stand up and push for something that will make a difference in the 2025/26 roads budget.

Name Withheld



Trams

It has been suggested that future extensions to Edinburgh Trams' network will do away with overhead power supply paraphernalia, in order to be more aesthetically pleasing. All political parties recently signed up to this latest aspiration at a secret meeting, following wide-ranging but unrecorded consultations. Some French cities have already and successfully achieved such a technically sophisticated system.

In a New Year spirit of optimism and helpfulness, I herewith attach my own proposal, which will be self-financing and which will in addition comply with CEC's "active travel" policies. Let us hope that CEC read *C&B News*.

Ding-ding!

Ron Pritchard
 Balerno

It's a bit early for an April Fool's story, but this put a smile on the Hired Help's face, and hopefully it might do the same for some of our readers—Editor

Burials

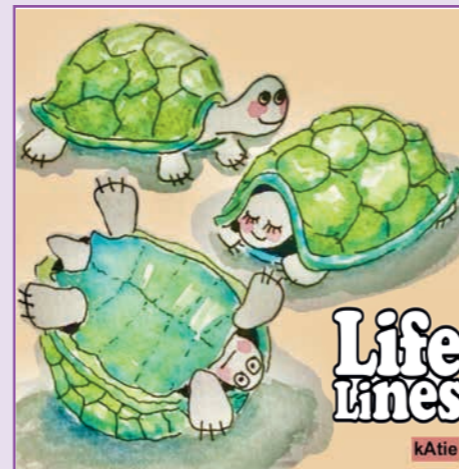
I would like to bring to the attention of *C&B News* readers something that may not yet be widely known in the community.

For many years now, after the end of our days, we have expected to be buried in the local graveyard at Currie Kirk. There was a bereavement in my family a few weeks ago. It was a great shock and disappointment to us when we heard the news that this graveyard is not taking any new burials, either for full burials or for the burial of ashes. The next-nearest graveyards offered were Saughton, Corstorphine Hill or Morningside. Not nearly as convenient as Currie.

I would like to make people aware of this so that they don't get the disappointment we did at such a difficult time.

I also would like to ask the local Councillors, through the pages of *C&B News*, what provision is going to be made for the residents of the Water of Leith Valley villages for the future, as the current options are not very convenient at all for them. A local option is much to be preferred.

Name Withheld



LEARNING TO TORTOISE

Living life as a Hare, as so many of us do, it was a shock when chronic illness turned me into a Tortoise! Attempting to continue Hare'ing in a Tortoise's body quickly taught me the folly of this approach. It's proving tricky to Tortoise well, but here's a little of what I'm learning.

Tortoises are slow, so they have to take care to consider their direction, and be single-minded in it. Making sure you're on your own path for your own reasons is key.

Steadiness, combined with good direction, pays off, as small efforts consistently made over time can build up in big ways.

Tortoises carry their homes wherever they go, and a regular practice of retreating inwards can help sustain strength as well as create space for the clarity of mind required to choose direction, to know when course readjustments are needed and the confidence

to make them.

Getting flipped over can be disastrous and happens all too easily, often due to things outside your control. While trying to manoeuvre upright it is important to lavish yourself with kindly patience as panic or desperation for things to be different than they are only exacerbates things. Support networks nurtured in better times can be particularly valuable in upside down moments, helping either to right you or to make you feel supported while you find your own feet again.

In a world that encourages and rewards Hare'ing it can be hard to practice these Tortoise skills. But finally I'm beginning to understand and apply the wisdom in the old fable and am managing better for it.

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY kAtie

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PLANNING BY ARCHIE CLARK

More housing on former Green Belt land at Gogar?

Planning application 24/05847/FUL has been lodged to widen a stretch of Gogar Station Road from the A8 Glasgow Road

to south of the traffic-light controlled bridge over the Murray Burn, beside the Royal Bank Headquarters. A “construction compound” south of the widened bridge is located where application 15/04318/PPP (reported in *C&B News* 411, November 2015) showed an entrance to a 1,350-house proposal at land east of the B-listed Millburn Tower. That land retained its green belt status in the 2016 Local Plan. However the area, now called

Redheughs, was subsequently approved for development by Scottish Ministers in April 2022.

Application 24/05846/FUL has been lodged for a narrow single-lane bus carriageway and a footway to access Redheughs from the east, through a 32m long tunnel below the A720 City Bypass. The applicants are Murray Estates Ltd and Places for People Developments Ltd. The last date for comments is 3 February 2025.

Proposed Extension to Bridge Inn at Ratho

Application 24/06264/LBC has been lodged to erect a two-storey bedroom wing to the south side of the Bridge Inn, Ratho, with car park alterations (27 Baird Road). The building is listed Category C and dates from about 1820. It was originally a farm building, then converted into a pub to service the navvies building the Forth and Clyde canal between 1818 and 1822. The car park entrance would shift to the south side and be operated by a barrier, though how that would work for non-residents and large delivery trucks and coaches, is not described. The proposal would see a reduction of car parking from about 62 to 47 spaces.

The proposals look quite attractive, with the two storey rendered and slate-roofed extension following a similar profile to a previous building that once abutted the Inn, and more in keeping with the Ratho Conservation Area Character Appraisal than a previous proposal (19/04984/FUL) that was granted despite considerable opposition.

The plans show the difficulties that arise when working on a site where there have been many changes over the years. The last date for comments was 31st January.

Joining the queue of planning applications lodged with CEC is 24/05960/AMC, which provides additional information for three new three-storey dwellings alongside Brooklea Cottage off Blinkbonny Road, adjacent to Mutters (or East Mills) Bridge in Currie. It is intended to lodge a separate application for the existing house.

A previous application (20/01337/PPP) was granted in March 2022: however this one, by Dawn Developments Ltd, illustrates how the buildings would look. The Design and Access Statement (DAS) refers to this brownfield site as historically interesting and ecologically diverse. The site has historical significance, and currently includes remnants of the old mills active in the 18th and 19th centuries. The mill lade adds a layer of heritage to the development. Environmentally, the site is rich

Brooklea House Proposal

in biodiversity, with mature trees, a small watercourse (the mill lade), and wildlife.

The DAS reminds us that the site was part of the East Mills complex, which included a grain mill and a snuff mill. The latter, reputed to be the first on the Water of Leith, was established in 1749 by Abraham Ferrier and James Thomson. Remnants exist of the mills, including parts of the lade and stone mill buildings.

The mills processed barley and other grains, providing flour and other products to the local community. This activity was crucial for the local agricultural economy. The site was also notable as being the location of the first snuff mill on the Water of Leith.

Snuff, a powdered tobacco product, was popular in the 18th and 19th centuries. The production of snuff involved grinding tobacco leaves into a fine powder, which was then packaged and sold. The mills also processed lint, a fibre obtained from flax plants used in the production of linen. The process involved separating the fibres from the plant stalks and preparing them for weaving.

By the mid-19th century, East Mills had expanded to include multiple mill wheels. The 1853 OS map shows the lade, parallel to where the Balerno Line was to be built, and mill buildings. While the site has since seen other uses, the historical remains are still evident.

The location of the houses, away from the Water of Leith, like the Kinleith Mill development upstream, has had to take account of a flood risk assessment. The last date for comments was 31st January.

A Tale of Two Quarries

At the tail end of last year, I noted that Breedon Trading Ltd had lodged an appeal (ref PPA-230-2541) with DPEA following rejection by CEC of its proposal to relax noise and vibration levels at Bonnington Mains Quarry. That appeal is ongoing with a target date for a decision of 24 February 2025. Now they have lodged application 24/05865/FUL with CEC for a “Lateral extension to the quarry, erection

and operation of Materials Recycling Plant (MRP), infilling of the quarry and restoration to the agricultural grassland at Bonnington Mains Quarry”. Completion of the works is given as 2052. Comments are due to CEC by 9 February 2025.

By coincidence, application 24/06106/FUL has been submitted by Tarmac for an “Extension of Ravelrig quarry to allow further extraction of hard rock; change of use of from woodland and grassland to quarry at Ravelrig Quarry, Dalmahoy, Kirknewton”. The duration of the works is given as 25 years (ie, to 2050). In this case, a gas main crossing the site would need to be diverted closer

to Lanark Road.

At the same time, Tarmac have applied to CEC under application 24/06100/FUL to operate “not in compliance with” a number of Conditions relating to the 2008 approval (08/00140/FUL). These cover referral to the Scottish Ministers, hours of blasting, location of monitoring equipment, “air overpressure” arising from blasting, discharge of polluted water, archaeological investigation, working, restoration and aftercare of the site and landscaping works. Comments were to be lodged by 31 January.

These large planning applications come at a time when output is depressed

and there is little building activity. When building materials are being recycled, it is unclear why these two quarry operators wish to extend their area of operations now. Ratho Community Council’s presentation to CEC that preceded appeal PPA-230-2541 showed how much technical know-how is needed to respond to such detailed applications. Yet affected CCs (such as Balerno, in the case of the Ravelrig quarry) are not provided with the funds to engage consultants.

As the dates for responding to CEC are so short, our local ward councillors may find people writing to them instead.



SCOTT ARTHUR MP
EDINBURGH SOUTH WEST

WALKING AHEAD

Walking is a fundamental human activity with far-reaching benefits. It's a simple yet effective way to improve physical health, boost mental well-being, and connect with the world around us. Whether it's a brisk walk around the block or a leisurely stroll through nature, walking offers a wealth of advantages for people of all ages and abilities. I do believe that Government at all levels has a duty to make everyday walking easier and safer.

That point brings me to the snow we experienced at the start of January. I raised concerns about the state of many footpaths in the higher parts of Edinburgh South West with the Council on 2 January—many residents were telling me they were too afraid to venture out. Indeed, I do hope the situation did not add to the pressures on A&E.

I was disappointed, therefore, that when I left for Parliament on 7 January, there had been little change, and was not surprised that residents were still contacting me about the situation. When I returned to Edinburgh at the end of that week, I was appalled to see the same snow and ice was on footpaths.

I have now discussed the matter with the city Transport Convenor (Cllr Stephen Jenkinson) twice, and was pleased to learn he agrees there was an issue and will ask Council Officers for a frank assessment of what went wrong.

More recently, there has been positive news about everyday walking in Edinburgh South West. The "Muir Wood Field Path Improvement project" is being promoted by Juniper Green & Baberton Mains Community Council, and Currie Community Council. This is a popular route used by, amongst others, children walking to school. This project will help make the path all-weather. I fully support this project, and look forward to seeing the outcome of the recent consultation.



GORDON MACDONALD MSP
EDINBURGH PENTLANDS

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Happy New Year to everyone and I hope that you had time to relax and enjoy some of the festive season.

The prospect of the new year is filled with optimism and anticipation for starting afresh but, while I would like to hope this would be the case for everyone, sadly it is not. Far too many people are being let down and 2025 is shaping up to be another year where the cost of living will increase ever further. Starting the year, not to mention the coldest time of the year, with another rise in energy costs will put further financial pressure on already squeezed households.

I recently met with representatives from Scottish Gas and the British Gas Energy Trust in the Scottish Parliament to discuss the help and support available to households. The British Gas Energy Support Fund provides grants of up to £2,000 to thousands of its customers with debt. In addition, the British Gas Energy Trust delivers millions in grants, energy efficiency measures, fuel vouchers and advice to all energy consumers so you don't need to be a British Gas customer to seek support from the Trust.

Last month, Citizens Advice Scotland published research showing almost two thirds of people in Scotland are having to cut back on household spending because of rising energy costs. The research revealed that more than two fifths of people are worried about costs in general due to rising energy prices while almost one in six is not heating all the rooms in their home or turning down thermostats just to keep costs down, a shocking situation given Scotland is energy rich.

I would encourage readers to find out more about the support available by contacting British Gas Energy Trust on 0121 348 7797 and to check their eligibility for assistance through the Scottish Government at <https://www.mygov.scot/browse/benefits/heating-and-housing>



SUE WEBBER MSP
LOTHIAN REGION

SNOW-GO AREAS?

Going along the main roads through Colinton to Balerno during the cold snap, you might think we coped well, with streets clear and buses running and, as long as we all wrapped up, then life in sub-zero temperatures wasn't so bad.

But off the main roads – or as the council calls them, the "Priority One" routes – it was a different story

As the snow got deeper, the side roads and pavements were forgotten. Then the snow turned to slush, which then turned to ice as the overnight temperature dropped.

Our Facebook pages were full of posts pleading for gritters and snow ploughs for our roads and pavements and, although they came, for days on end they only serviced "Priority One" streets.

I wrote to councillors asking for the side roads to be treated, and I was so frustrated when I was asked for specific street names that I just said: "All of them."

I heard a funeral in Balerno was delayed because treacherous ice made it difficult to get the coffin into the church. Service 33 buses in Baberton Mains ground to a halt at the top of the estate because, with the buses now going in both directions, there was not enough cleared road space to for them to pass each other.

Elderly people were largely housebound for fear of falls or slips which would put them into the Royal Infirmary's besieged A&E unit.

Yet, at the bottom of Lanark Road, although it looked as if there had never been severe weather, gritters and ploughs were still treating completely clear roads and pavements.

It's the same every year, so the council needs to realise that being higher up means that in cold snaps our communities are held hostage to snow and ice, and every street should be "Priority One".



CLLR GRAEME BRUCE
PENTLAND HILLS WARD

'S'NO GOOD'

The inevitable snow struck again in the upper regions of this ward especially Currie and Balerno. While the council did a great job of keeping the main roads open, I didn't feel the side roads and pavements got the attention at the right times, ie. they could have been quicker off the mark to deal with this. Most other parts of Edinburgh were not affected. I suspect a lot of this is down to lack of resources and financial constraints but I've fed my concerns to our Transport & Environment Convenor with a view to finding out what could be done better going forward, including making sure the grit bins are replenished on a more regular basis because the snow will fall again and the next time it could be a lot worse.

The Council decided recently that the speed limit on Lanark Road from Gillespie Crossroads to the junction of Muirwood Road will be reduced to 20mph in the near future. Now, I realise there are a few pinch points in Juniper Green where 20mph is all you can do at certain times of the day but people adhere to those conditions. So there you have it - your bus journey to and from town just got longer (as if it didn't take long enough already) and more of your council tax money will be wasted.

Also please be aware that the bus lanes along the entire length of the 44 bus route within Edinburgh will soon be 7 days a week, from 7am to 7pm. I'm not convinced this will make any difference to bus journey times but it is ratcheting up the notch to make our citizens' lives more miserable trying to get around the city by car. I have no doubt I will get many more complaints from local residents when more bus lane fines start landing on their doorstep. It's meant to be a trial period but, rest assured, you know what's going to happen.

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CLLR NEIL GARDINER
PENTLAND HILLS WARD

CONCERNS

At the start of the year the Water of Leith Villages had to endure icy conditions, with pavements frozen over. Unfortunately, many salt bins filled with water and, when eventually replenished, turned to slush. The council's winter preparedness can be addressed through the Transport and Environment Committee.

Following concerns expressed by Balerno Community Council regarding the layout change at the Bridge Road/Lanark Road West junction, I raised the issues with council officers, who took some time to provide a response.

Following concern about increased numbers of rodents associated with the building works at the new Currie Community High School, I raised this with council officers, resulting a well-attended public meeting attended by my colleague Cllr Glasgow.

The Labour Party Leader of City of Edinburgh Council resigned in December. There is ongoing concern that CEC currently lacks direction and leadership among the three coalition parties—at a time when the annual budget requires to be set. It is important to protect public services across the board, including education and those which assist the most vulnerable members of our communities.

A meeting of the Pentland Hills Regional Park Joint Committee will be arranged this spring, where parking charges can be discussed. It was previously agreed at the committee that all revenue raised would be ring-fenced to be invested in the park and the ranger service.

I recently received an email from Dean Park Primary School highlighting the positive impact of the ongoing interaction between pupils and park rangers. This includes outdoor learning visits to the park, promoting the countryside access code and water safety awareness. I'm aware that other schools in the area are rightly seeking to build on this excellent initiative.



CLLR FIONA GLASGOW
PENTLAND HILLS WARD

SEASONAL CATCH-UP

Happy New Year to everyone! I hope you had a great festive period. I used the time to recharge my batteries and inadvertently missed all of the bad weather here in our ward!

December was a great month for our communities, I had the opportunity to meet Dolphin West Residents in Currie to hear about the issues they are experiencing and had a walkabout to identify areas of concern which were reported—what a great bunch of people, taking forward issues that affect them and their neighbours!

I had the joy of attending the Edinburgh Christmas Light switch-on for the very first time. It was an amazing event; I did notice that not many residents are aware of it! I also attended the wonderful P4 Christmas Extravaganza concert held at Dean Park Primary School and got there in time despite all the road issues. Well done to all the pupils and teachers involved.

The Balerno Christmas light switch-on was fantastic with a very good attendance, even though it was a cold evening. Always great not to have the rain. Many thanks to everyone who worked so hard to put this annual event on. Thanks to my colleagues Cllr Gardiner and Cllr Jenkinson for their participation. I had just attended a seven-hour meeting and arrived a short while before the switch-on, so managed to avoid being "centre stage".

Balerno Christmas Farmers' Market was also a lovely affair and I was delighted to manage to pop-in despite having a busy schedule that day.

It looks like being a busy month ahead with the City of Edinburgh Council budget being discussed at a time when money is tight. I hope that our residents took the opportunity to have their say in the online survey that was conducted over the past couple of months.



CLLR STEPHEN JENKINSON
PENTLAND HILLS

MORE SNOW

For my first article of this year it would be remiss of me to not mention the snowy and icy conditions Balerno faced as we entered 2025

The City of Edinburgh Council's winter preparations for Balerno focus on ensuring the safety and accessibility of roads and pavements during adverse weather conditions. CEC has designated key thoroughfares in Balerno as "Priority 1" routes for gritting, ensuring they receive prompt attention during icy or snowy conditions.

Despite these measures, winter weather can significantly impact Balerno, leading to hazardous travel conditions and potential disruptions to daily life. Challenges such as black ice, heavy snowfall, and freezing temperatures can impede mobility and pose safety risks.

To enhance winter resilience in Balerno, several improvements could and should be considered:

- Enhanced Communication: Providing real-time updates on gritting schedules and road conditions through digital platforms can help residents plan their travel more effectively.

- Community Involvement: Encouraging local residents to participate in snow-clearing and gritting efforts, particularly in residential areas, can complement council services and ensure quicker clearance of less accessible routes.

- Resource Allocation: Assessing and potentially increasing the number of grit bins and ensuring they are adequately stocked throughout the winter season.

- Infrastructure Investment: Investing in advanced weather monitoring systems and efficient gritting machinery can enhance the council's ability to respond swiftly to changing conditions.

By implementing these strategies, Edinburgh can bolster its winter preparedness in Balerno, mitigating the impact of severe weather and ensuring safer conditions for all residents in the future.



CLLR JASON RUST
COLINTON/FAIRMILEHEAD WARD

BUSY START TO 2025

It has been a busy start to 2025, as the lone councillor for Colinton/Fairmilehead Ward. (Given both my SNP and Liberal Democrat colleagues resigned when I was on a week's annual leave last November, I am rather uncertain about taking another holiday anytime soon!)

By the time you read this, post-by-elections, the first job for my two new colleagues will be to attend a special Full Council meeting on the Transient Visitor Levy (AKA "Tourist Tax"). I know there are concerns about a surge in wild camping if tent pitches are included.

As the penultimate councillor to be elected under the previous First Past The Post system, I am used to being the sole representative but, back in the day, that was simply for Colinton and Swanston Village. The larger multi-member ward now extends from Buckstone through Colinton Main and Oxbgangs to Hailes in the west. This brings with it a large number of queries and interaction with constituents on an extensive range of issues.

Gritting – or rather its absence – during the recent cold snap was a source of discontent in particular. Understandable prioritisation of arterial routes did mean that roads and footways in residential areas did not receive adequate timely attention.

The Gillespie Road landslip has also been raised by a number of people. CEC is working with the landowner to get a solution but, as yet, there is no timescale for remediation. At least the Dell is accessible from Dell Road now.

Housing issues from squirrels accessing the attic of council properties to poorly maintained stairs have also been raised; concerns about the accessibility of Colinton Library regarding opening hours; and, as ever, the condition of our roads and pavements. After much pressure over years we are hopefully going to see Dregghorn Loan resurfaced—so some optimism on the horizon.



Highland Dance Classes

As a passionate Highland Dance teacher, I offer classes for all ages and skill levels, from complete beginners to advanced dancers. Whether you're looking to dance for fun or prepare for competitions, I provide a welcoming environment for both recreational and competitive dancers.

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Where & when?

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42nd Pentland (Currie) Scout Group
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Edinburgh

Get in touch

Courtenay Hamilton
0796 9432 517
hamiltonheeltoe@outlook.com



RICHARD M HENDERSON
BALERNO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

ROCK/HARD LANDING

So what do snow in Balerno and planning applications about Ravelrig Quarry have in common? For starters, both caused problems over the Christmas period; but, more seriously, both cast a light on the way in which the City of Edinburgh Council may view our community.

Two planning applications were lodged in December concerning the Quarry. Quarries are dangerous places and are associated, at the very least, with noise and nuisance. A more complete picture could be obtained if the two applications were dealt with together. Not so, according to CEC, which applied different processes to each, leading to confusion and more anxiety. Complicated issues had to be confronted by concerned residents, across the festive period.

What about the snow? Balerno had its share of snow and ice in the first fortnight of the year. Gritters were in short supply, and buses stopped running for a short time. Side streets and pavements became rutted and dangerous no-go areas with packed snow freezing into cart tracks. Elderly and vulnerable people were effectively housebound. Gritters did start appearing but they were, literally, scraping the surface while unable to spread grit: not good. The City's resources are stretched at present but, if you ask local residents for their view, they will describe CEC's response to the snow in words including, at their mildest, "disgraceful" and "rubbish".

Is there a common factor? Government – central or local – can be accused of being distant. There's always room for improvement, and, yes, that applies as much to Community Councils as it does to the authorities with real power. Perhaps CEC officials should ask themselves the question, in whatever they do: "How would I feel if this was happening to me?" And Community Councils? Well they try to work for their communities, but they need your help too. Why not get involved?



DR KEITH JAMES SYMINGTON
CURRIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

LOCAL ISSUES

At the latest Currie Community Council meeting a range of local concerns were discussed, with the two key points being the High School and transport issues.

The first topic was waste and pest control near Currie Community High School. Presentations were made by both Richard Cairns from Keir Construction and local resident Ashlee Hogarth. Residents have been reporting rat sightings in Dolphin Gardens West for a few months now and expressed frustration about personal expenses for pest control. The increase was thought to be linked to construction vibrations but baiting efforts by both Keir Construction and CEC have shown no rats on site. The next step forward is to ask CEC to review bin sizes and collection frequencies near the school, including a mail drop with pest control advice. It was suggested that residents be wary when feeding wildlife for the moment, just in case pests are being fed indirectly.

Several transport issues were raised. A proposal to extend Route 45 to improve park-and-ride and hospital connections will be relayed by Councillors to Lothian Buses. Suggestions also included improving school transport options for Edinburgh College students using the 400 and 44. As Lothian Buses are an independent commercial company, they will consider commercial viability before making any changes.

Councillors' reports highlighted mounting financial pressures on road maintenance, with only basic statutory services guaranteed. Minor fixes continue on Riccarton Mains Road, but no substantial repairs are imminent. Poor lighting and fading car park markings at Pentland View are likely to remain unresolved. At Dalmahoy Junction, roadworks are delayed due to land acquisition complications, following the landowner's passing.



DAVID HOUSTON
CO-CHAIR, COLINTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

FIRST 10 YEARS

In January 2015, a warmly-clad group of locals sat round a table in a very cold Loan Hall facing our Returning Officer – the very first meeting of Colinton Community Council. Office bearers were elected and we were hoping to do great things for our local residents and work with the City of Edinburgh Council to achieve these ends.

Why had Colinton not taken this step before? Several active local organisations in Colinton met most peoples' needs but we were missing out on direct access to the public decision-making processes going on at the City Chambers that affected us.

There was a big local issue in 2015: the plans to open a new Co-op in a conservation village. We helped balance the environmental concerns with the need for a comprehensive local store to boost the business life of the Village and reduce car travel. Since then we have achieved many things: some small but effective like the eight seconds right turn time at the main traffic lights; others more significant like getting a regular Bonaly bus service. We even had our "Clochemerle" moment in saving our public toilets from closure.

Monthly meetings open to the public are our main instrument. The three ward councillors attend the meetings regularly and even MSPs occasionally. We have presentations from the Police and senior council officers – it was standing room only at a presentation on potholes last year. We alternate between face-to-face meetings at the Bowling Club and Zoom meetings to maximise accessibility.

With the Community Council Elections this month, now is the opportunity to get involved with Colinton's future – nominations by 27 February. My co-chair (fellow columnist) and I will be standing aside and other office bearer positions are available – we both feel newer (and younger) ideas would benefit the Colinton community in 2025. It is so important to make local views count.

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VACANCY

Balerno Parish church's initiative – The Mill Café is a thriving community café for all in the centre of Balerno which is open 4 days-a-week and on the monthly Farmers' Market Saturdays. It is staffed mainly by volunteers working with a small staff team. The Mill Café is 12 years old.

Staff Positions rarely come up making this a wonderful opportunity for someone to work locally.
Part time Café Supervisor –
Wednesday & Friday 8am-3.30pm (15 hrs)
& a share of Farmers markets Saturdays

We would be happy to consider splitting the days to create 2 Positions should we get interest. Job description available upon request.

Send CV with appropriate qualifications and relevant experience to: – The Mill Café manager: – Lynsey Inglis themillatstjosephs@gmail.com Closing date for applications: – 28/02/25

We reserve the right to offer the position to the right person should they come along earlier.
• Balerno Parish Church has been accredited as a real Living Wage Employer

At our independent, family-run community pharmacies, we are dedicated to providing personalized, top-notch healthcare services to our valued community.

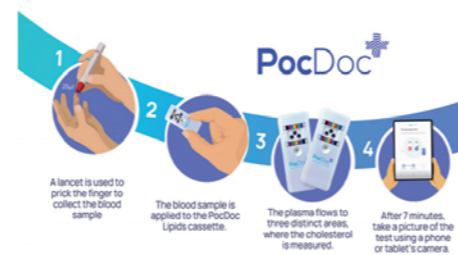


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Celebrating 10th Pentlands Book Festival

**JOHN ELLIOTT
PENTLANDS BOOK FESTIVAL**

This was the tenth year that the Pentlands Book Festival has run. We put on 14 engaging events and over 540 ticket holders came out to support us. The 2024 flyer can still be downloaded from the website if you want a reminder of what went on over the seven weeks.

Yes—seven! We ran PBF2024 over an extended period this year, partly due to authors' availability but also due to committee members' availability. Furthermore, it served as an experiment. We will survey audience members to see if this is a preferred format.

This year Lin Anderson, Stef Lyons, and Marsali Taylor gave us a heavy dose of crime fiction. Graeme Johncock and Linda Cracknell satisfied our curiosity about exploring our wonderful countryside. We heard from Derek Forbes about his life in Simple Minds. Allan Little shared insights about his career in current affairs. David Greig discussed his first book, as he transitions from his role as Artistic Director of the Lyceum to once again full-time writer. And Alan Bissett brought "Moirira" back for an unforgettable finale to the Moirira Monologues trilogy.

All the authors attracted enthusiastic crowds and many of the audiences took away a book or two to indulge in a new favourite author's writings.

Audience donations were gratefully received at the events and afterwards online. There is a donations link on our website should anyone



Top left: New branding for the Pentland Book Festival. Top right: some of the many books and authors featured in this year's extended programme. Above centre: Kate Foster. Above: Derek Forbes. Right: Lin Anderson. Photos: Karen Wilson. Graphics: John Elliott.



wish to support us throughout the year.

A gallery of photos from this year's events has been uploaded to the website. More photos can be seen on our Instagram account, @pentlandsbookfestival.

We're looking forward to seeing everyone again in October/November 2025. Planning has already started, determining who the speakers will be.

If you know anyone who is interested in attending or speaking next year, please share this bulletin, and encourage them to sign up to be first to hear our news.

• Check out our website – <https://pentlandsbookfestival.org> – or visit our Facebook and Instagram pages.



Fundraising Concert by Local Musician

**CATRIONA DUNCAN
CURRIE RESIDENT**

As a former Currie resident now studying music at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in Glasgow, I am putting on a fundraising concert in Balerno Parish church at the end of March.

This is part of my goal to raise £3,000 for the charity "Dig Deep", which supports water and sanitation projects in Bomet County, Kenya—a part of the world where two in three people don't have access to clean water, more than half don't have safe toilets, and many children don't have access to basic hygiene education.

The money I raise will help save lives, improve education, empower women and girls, and strengthen livelihoods.

I've already run a stall at the Currie Church Christmas fair and sold honey from my Dad's bees. I'll also be taking on the challenge this summer of climbing Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa's highest peak and the world's highest freestanding mountain.

I'd like to say a big thank you to everyone who has supported me by donating so far!

• My concert is on Saturday 29 March, 2pm - 3pm, in Balerno Parish Church. Tickets are £7.50. (Under 18s free if accompanied by an adult.)

• Tickets can be purchased from the Balerno Church Office, or from myself—by text: 07393 950252 or email: catrionaaduncan@gmail.com

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 PLAYGROUP:** 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 MAHJONG:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 10am - noon. Join our regulars, any experience level is welcome, newcomers can watch and learn and join in when they feel ready. The tile game is like rummy with layers of complexity, but easy to start!

• **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 each Monday to enjoy a guided relaxation to calm the mind and ease stress. No booking required, please drop in.

• **BALERNO BRIDGE CLUB:** Gibson Craig Halls, 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. Stories and songs for babies and toddlers. Meet other parents/carers for friendship, peer support and sharing a cuppa. Lovely warm and welcoming space.

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

www.candbnews.com

please email: cubs@babertonscouts.org

• **MONTHLY BOOK GROUP:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 7pm - 9pm. We have a waiting list 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

• **ITALIAN CONVERSATION GROUP:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 2.30pm - 3.30pm. Please drop in to practise your Italian language skills in an informal setting.

• **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

• **LADIES' BADMINTON GROUP:** Juniper Green Church Hall, 496a Lanark Road; 10am. Play for fun and enjoy a short break for coffee and chat; new players welcome. Contact: Linda Sharp, (0131) 453 4985.

• **BALERNO RAMBLERS MIDWEEK GROUP:** Meet for

walks in the Lothians, Fife, the Borders and further afield. For walk details contact M Timmins on 07917 878955. 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 Halls, Lanark Road West; 7pm - 9pm. Contact Claire Maloney: 07999 410721

THURSDAYS

• **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. Please email to enquire about spaces hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

• **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:** 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>

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@balernoramblers.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. For more details, contact Bill Brown: [bill.brown53@yahoo.com](mailto:brown53@yahoo.com)

FORTNIGHTLY

ALTERNATE MONDAYS

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

ALTERNATE THURSDAYS

• **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.

ALTERNATE FRIDAYS: 7 & 21 FEBRUARY; 7 & 21 MARCH

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

ALTERNATE SATURDAYS: 1 & 15 FEBRUARY, 1 & 15 MARCH

• **FREE ART & CHAT:** Currie Library, 210 Lanark Road West; 10.30am - 11.30am. An opportunity to practice 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

MONDAY 3 FEBRUARY

• **COLINTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY:** Dreghorn Loan Hall (Upper); 8pm. "Rebuilding Roman armour—the story of a remarkable arm guard from the Scottish Borders", presented by Fraser Hunter. For more information visit www.colintonhistory.org.uk

WEDNESDAY 5 FEBRUARY

• **PENTLAND PROBUS CLUB:** Edinburgh Pentlands Parish Church Hall, Juniper Green; 10am. "West Lothian's UFO's", a talk by Ian Wark. New members welcome. Further enquiries from Club Secretary Leslie Hannaford on (0131) 453 3012 or email lesliehannaford@blueyonder.co.uk

• **BALERNO CHURCH GUILD:** The Ogston Hall, Balerno Parish Church; 7.30pm. Douglas Lowe will give the second part of his talk on the history of Balerno.

• **THE 'LIT' (COLINTON LITERARY SOCIETY):** Dreghorn Loan Hall; 7.30pm for 8pm start. "Edinburgh—The Silent City". Stuart Montgomery presents a portrait of Edinburgh in lockdown. For more information visit www.colintonhistory.org.uk

FRIDAY 7 FEBRUARY

• **GARDENING GROUP:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 10.30am - noon. Gardening Group (1st Friday of each month) All Welcome - experienced or novice, pot planters or allotments. Today: "What to Plant, When"—a chat through the gardening calendar to support planning what to buy and plant throughout the year.

SATURDAY 8 FEBRUARY

• **BALERNO FARMERS' MARKET:** Main Street, Balerno; 9am - noon. First market of 2025. More information, visit balernovt.org.uk/category/balerno-farmers-market or email: hello@balernovt.org.uk

MONDAY 10 FEBRUARY

• **CURRIE & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY:** Gibson Craig Halls (back hall), Currie; 7.30pm prompt. "The Ragged Schools," a talk by Mairi Mitchell. For further details see <https://www.curriehistory.org/>

• **MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 7pm - 9pm. 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. You can book a space online or just turn up. Online booking is available at <https://hub531.appointedd.com/> or by email: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

WEDNESDAY 12 FEBRUARY

• **THE 'LIT' (COLINTON LITERARY SOCIETY):** Dreghorn Loan Hall; 7.30pm for 8pm start. "Stories of Changing Landscapes". Jamie Crawford uses landscapes to tell a story of transformation. For more information visit www.colintonhistory.org.uk

MONDAY 17 FEBRUARY

• **MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 7pm - 9pm. See entry for Monday 10 February.

• **COLINTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY:** Dreghorn Loan Hall (Upper); 8pm. "Through ice and fire—a Russian Arctic convoy diary, 1942", presented by Leona Thomas. For more information visit www.colintonhistory.org.uk

WEDNESDAY 19 FEBRUARY

• **PENTLAND PROBUS CLUB:** Edinburgh Pentlands Parish Church Hall, Juniper Green; 10am. "The National Trust of

Scotland", an illustrated talk by Claire Grant. New members welcome. Further enquiries from Club Secretary Leslie Hannaford on (0131) 453 3012 or email lesliehannaford@blueyonder.co.uk

• **TOTE BAG DESIGN (Adults only):** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 7.30pm - 9pm. Make a simple design on a plain tote bag by cutting fabric shapes to attach using hot glue and/or hand stitching. Fabric paints also available. Bags and basic materials will be provided, but you might like to bring along some old fabric / clothing to use in your design—making this an upcycle project! This event is free of charge but we welcome donations. Online booking is available at <https://hub531.appointedd.com/> or by email hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

• **BALERNO CHURCH GUILD:** The Ogston Hall, Balerno Parish Church; 7.30pm. A spring flower arranging demonstration with Shelagh Anderson.

• **THE 'LIT' (COLINTON LITERARY SOCIETY):** Dreghorn Loan Hall; 7.30pm for 8pm start. "The Royal Letter Book": Louise Gardiner explores Royal correspondence in late 14th century England. For more information visit www.colintonhistory.org.uk

FRIDAY 21 FEBRUARY

• **TOTE BAG DESIGN (adults and ages 12+):** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 2.30pm - 4.30pm. See entry for Wednesday 19 February.

SATURDAY 22 FEBRUARY

• **TEXTILE REPAIR:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 1pm - 3pm. Learn how to replace zips/buttons and repair rips/holes in your favourite knitted or woven garments using a range of creative hand sewing techniques including visible/invisible mending methods. Please bring one or two damaged textile items to repair and note that garments requiring alterations to their fit/length should be brought to the workshop that will be held in March. Spaces limited / booking essential. The Hub is funding this event but we welcome your donations on the day. Online booking is available at <https://hub531.appointedd.com/>

or by email hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

MONDAY 24 FEBRUARY

• **CURRIE & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY:** Gibson Craig Halls (back hall), Currie; 7.30pm prompt. "Scotland: The Impact of the Great War." The speaker is Pamela McConnell. For further details see <https://www.curriehistory.org/>

• **COLINTON GARDEN CLUB:** Dreghorn Loan Hall; 8pm. Members' Evening. The Speakers will be Richard Ennos, David Bryce and Cliff Dalley. For more information visit <http://www.colintongardens.org.uk/>

TUESDAY 25 FEBRUARY

• **BALERNO FOLK CLUB:** Balerno Bowling Club, 5 Ladycroft, Balerno; Doors open 7.30 for an 8.15pm start. Making a welcome return this month is Scottish Borders legend, Kenny Speirs. An original member of the John Wright Band before launching the much acclaimed "Real Time", this will be a solo visit. Expect a great mix of old and new, traditional and contemporary songs. Members and Guests" welcome.

• **MENOPAUSE SUPPORT:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 8pm - 9pm. Whether you want to feel informed and prepared, are experiencing difficult symptoms already, or maybe further on in your journey and have some insight and advice you would like to share—all very welcome to come along. Each session will focus on a different aspect of wellbeing during menopause, with an introductory talk and plenty time to ask questions, share experiences and connect with others over a cuppa. Free, but please book a space to receive a reminder. Online booking is available at <https://hub531.appointedd.com/> or by email: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

WEDNESDAY 26 FEBRUARY

• **THE 'LIT' (COLINTON LITERARY SOCIETY):** Dreghorn Loan Hall; 7.30pm for 8pm start. "Trial by Jury". David Lyle and soloists present Gilbert and Sullivan's ever popular opera. For more information visit www.colintonhistory.org.uk

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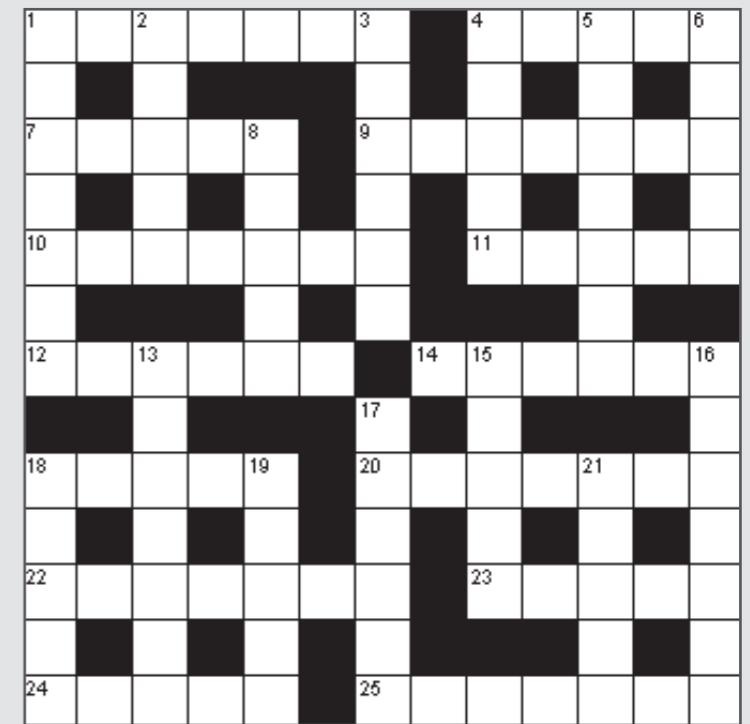
£25 PRIZE CROSSWORD

PRIZE CROSSWORD
BY PUZZLECHOICE.COM

To enter, please scan or photograph the completed puzzle and email it to: editor@candbnews.com before noon, Friday 14 February 2025.

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

Good luck everyone!



ACROSS

1. Floorshow. (7)
4. Spooky. (5)
7. Detection device. (5)
9. Vertical. (7)
10. Inactivity. (7)
11. Measuring implement. (5)
12. Dictator. (6)
14. Ecclesiastic. (6)
18. Copius. (5)
20. Drawn. (7)
22. Pouch worn with a kilt. (7)
23. Diadem. (5)
24. Admittance. (5)
25. Spiny anteater (7)

DOWN

1. Transported. (7)
2. Emblem. (5)
3. Tropical bird. (6)
4. Mistake. (5)
5. Dependable follower. (7)
6. Go in. (5)
8. Magnitude relation. (5)
13. Reinforcement. (7)
15. Reasoned judgement. (5)
16. Musical passage. (7)
17. Opportunity. (6)
18. Part of a church. (5)
19. Ahead of time. (5)
21. Obviate. (5)

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.

EASY

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				6			
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1					5		2
	9	3	2				7

MEDIUM

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HARD

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

LAST ISSUE'S SOLUTIONS

Our congratulations go to Alison Payne from Balerno, randomly selected from all correct entries to receive last issue's £25 prize.

T	A	R	T	A	N	U	C	A	J	O	L	E
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EASY

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

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

HARD

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



“Say goodbye to the old playing surface (above)! Juniper Green Tennis Club is very pleased to report that, just before Christmas, all the necessary contracts were signed off between the Lawn Tennis Association, the City of Edinburgh Council and the designated contractor Sportex regarding the Juniper Green Tennis Club Refurbishment,” writes JGTC Committee Chair Paul Murphy. “There will be two distinctive phases of the works: the initial phase, from 27 January and estimated to take seven weeks to complete, will focus on the removal of the existing blaes surface and replacing it with macadam, along with the installation of new fencing and a smartgate to secure the premises. After an appropriate curing period of two to three weeks, the second phase involves the application of an acrylic paint coating and marking lines—which should take one week to complete, subject to benign weather conditions. All things being equal, we could possibly be opening the new playing facilities by the time of the Easter weekend.”

• Email: junipergreentennis@gmail.com, visit <https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/JuniperGreenTennisClub> or follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/junipergreentennis/>

Hailes Swim to Championship Success



DUNCAN FRASER
PRESIDENT, HAILES SWIMMING CLUB

Hailes Swimming Club – based at Balerno High School swimming pool and drawn from children aged 7-17 in the Currie, Balerno, Juniper Green and surrounding areas – are the 2024 Forth Valley Junior League Gala Champions. There are time-based competitive galas throughout the year, and an “A” and “B” Finals event on the 15 December. In a tight swim at the Whitburn pool, Hailes successfully held off incredible challenges from two much bigger clubs – Trojan

(Whitburn and District), and Grangemouth – to become the Gala Champions. The Final consisted of more than 39 events, separated into age and gender groups with relays, and a final Squadron swim of six swimmers from all age groups. This is the first time that Hailes has won the title, though we came close five years ago, winning the “B” Final. What is more remarkable about this achievement, is the almost complete lack of swimming between June and November, due to school holidays and pool closures. The hard work of the coaching team,

Above: Still wet from the pool, the Hailes team celebrate with Club Lead Coach Geraldine Simpson (behind and right of the trophy), Club President Duncan Fraser (red sweatshirt at the back) and some of the Poolside Helpers who will, in time, become our next cadre of coaches.

who are largely still at – or have just left – school is at the heart of this success. We are grateful to Edinburgh Leisure, who manage our access to the pools.

• For anyone thinking of getting involved with us, please email membership@hailesswimclub.co.uk and arrange a trial swim.

Rugby Premiership ‘Too Close to Call’

PHIL THOMAS
CURRIE CHIEFTAINS



November 2024 finished on a high for Currie Chieftains when they secured a 27 – 24 points victory over league leaders Ayr.

However, any possibility of overconfidence on Currie’s part was quickly dispelled when they lost 43 - 29 points at Melrose on the 7 December. Melrose put on possibly their best performance of the season so far, but Currie Chieftains never got into their stride, and suffered uncharacteristic defensive and handling errors, much to the disappointment of their supporters.

Next up came the fixture against Edinburgh Academicals on 14 December, when the Chieftains – clearly feeling they had something to prove – blew Accies away, winning comfortably by 41 - 14.

Rugby then entered the winter break with the next scheduled match being against Hawick RFC on 10 January. However, no one had consulted with the weather gods, and snow and ice across Scotland brought club rugby to a complete halt.

The season thus resumed on Friday 17 January, following a month-long lay-off. Heriots Rugby then came to Mallyen for a much-anticipated evening encounter under floodlights. The weather was cold but otherwise conditions were almost perfect for rugby. However, possibly due to the month out of action, both teams seemed constrained; the match became a tight technical encounter, with Currie losing by 15 - 20 points in a closely fought match.

So, with six league matches still to play, Ayr and Heriots are heading the table with 66 league points and 65 league points respectively, Watsonians are third with 51 points and Currie Chieftains are next with 42 points. The chasing pack is headed by Selkirk and Melrose, both with 37 points. Thus, while the two leading clubs look to have booked their places in the post-league play-offs, the overall outcomes are still too close to call.

It should also be noted that Currie Chieftains A played their first match in the Arnold Clark Inter-City Reserve League, Stage 2 on Saturday 18 January. They defeated GHA 71 - 5 in a highly entertaining encounter. If you are not yet supporting A team rugby, we recommend you give it your consideration.

the café at the centre. Delicious cakes were provided by Emma from Oriam Walking Football Club. The donations from the sale of teas, coffees and cake raised more than £60 which all went towards OWF’s chosen charity, Alzheimer Scotland (AlzScot).

Paul Rendall and Gerry Butler, Chairs of OWF and Currie FC respectively, were delighted with the whole event and to be able to support a wonderful charity too. “It is extremely rare to have an event where young and old can share such an enjoyable experience. We’re delighted to be able to be part of it,” said Gerry. “There was a saying that life begins at 40. Well, events like this clearly show that sporting life can continue into your 70s and beyond,” said Paul.

Both clubs are already looking forward to next year’s rematch. The footballing partnership between the two clubs started in 2023 to show the continued benefits and attraction of playing

football across the generations from grandchildren to grandparents. “A “nutmeg” in football circles is when you kick, roll, or dribble the ball between an opponent’s feet/legs.

• For more information email: curriefc@virginmedia.com, cfcgirlsfootball@gmail.com or oriam2015wff@gmail.com



Football Game Again ‘Joins the Generations’

GERRY BUTLER
CHAIR OF CURRIE FC

The second “Join the Generations” football match took place between Oriam Walking Football Club (OWF) and Currie Football Club at the Currie Community Centre, on an early Sunday morning in December.

The OWF “Veterans” were all more than 70 years old—the Currie players were all around six! An addition for this year was the inclusion of a ladies’ team to play the Currie youngsters. Annie from OWF and the female coaches from Currie FC coaches bravely rose to the challenge.

As per last year’s inaugural event (see our December 2023/January 2024 issue), this one was a roaring success. Many small sided games were played with loads of goals, passing, “nutmegs”, banter, fun and laughter.

After many close matches the scores were tallied up and the youngsters ended up eventual winners. Their stamina and noise level far outweighed that of the elder statesmen.

After the game all the players, coaches and parents got together for a cuppa, cake and a blether in



Chieftains’ Community Update

GAVIN MCMURRAY
CHAIR, CURRIE CHIEFTAINS

Following my previous article in C&B News, Currie Chieftains have had some great community engagement which has led to the clubhouse being made available, free of charge, for an important health screening to be run. This, and some other engagement, has proved the value of community outreach and we will be continuing this programme—hoping to encourage other community groups to collaborate with each other.

My business did something similar through in East Kilbride where I work and our community support of two local charities led to an idea to introduce them to each other—as a result of which they formed a mutually supportive



relationship, which is one of the most rewarding outcomes from this type of work. However, this month I am also here to ask for your help. Our clubhouse and the equipment within it is ageing and, in some cases, failing. Our staff and volunteers work hard on maintenance but sometimes things just reach the end of their working life, despite everyone’s best efforts.

Of late we have had a bad run of major repairs and are reaching out to club members, the wider community and the rugby community for help. In the changing facilities the showers have had large areas of tiles coming off the walls. Then the clubhouse boiler failed, needing extensive repairs; the ceiling in the gym was badly damaged by a water leak; and now the chiller in the bar cellar

has failed and is beyond repair. So, my ask is this: if you are a club member, past member, or someone in the community who values the club and its facilities being available, or are just a kind-hearted citizen, please make a donation to help us cope with these repair costs. (The bill to date is £8,000, plus £6,200 + VAT for a new chiller unit.) We recently had a great reaction to our increased community outreach via C&B News. We’d like to be able to carry that on, and make an even greater contribution as a local community asset.

• For more information about Currie Chieftains, visit: <https://www.curriechieftains.org/> or email: hello@curriechieftains.org Clubhouse Enquires should be made to Donna Collins: clubhousemanager@curriechieftains.org

FREE!

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C&BSPORT

CURRIE ◦ BALERNO ◦ JUNIPER GREEN ◦ BABERTON MAINS ◦ COLINTON



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'Too Close to Call'

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