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C&B NEWS

CURRIE ◦ BALERNO ◦ JUNIPER GREEN ◦ BABERTON MAINS ◦ COLINTON



DAYS TO REMEMBER

INSIDE: NEWS p2 LOCAL HISTORY p16 FEATURES p19 VIEWS p28 WHAT'S ON p41

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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Advertising rates are listed on our website. Adverts must be booked by the published deadlines. We reserve the right to refuse or amend adverts and accept no responsibility for any omission or inaccuracy.

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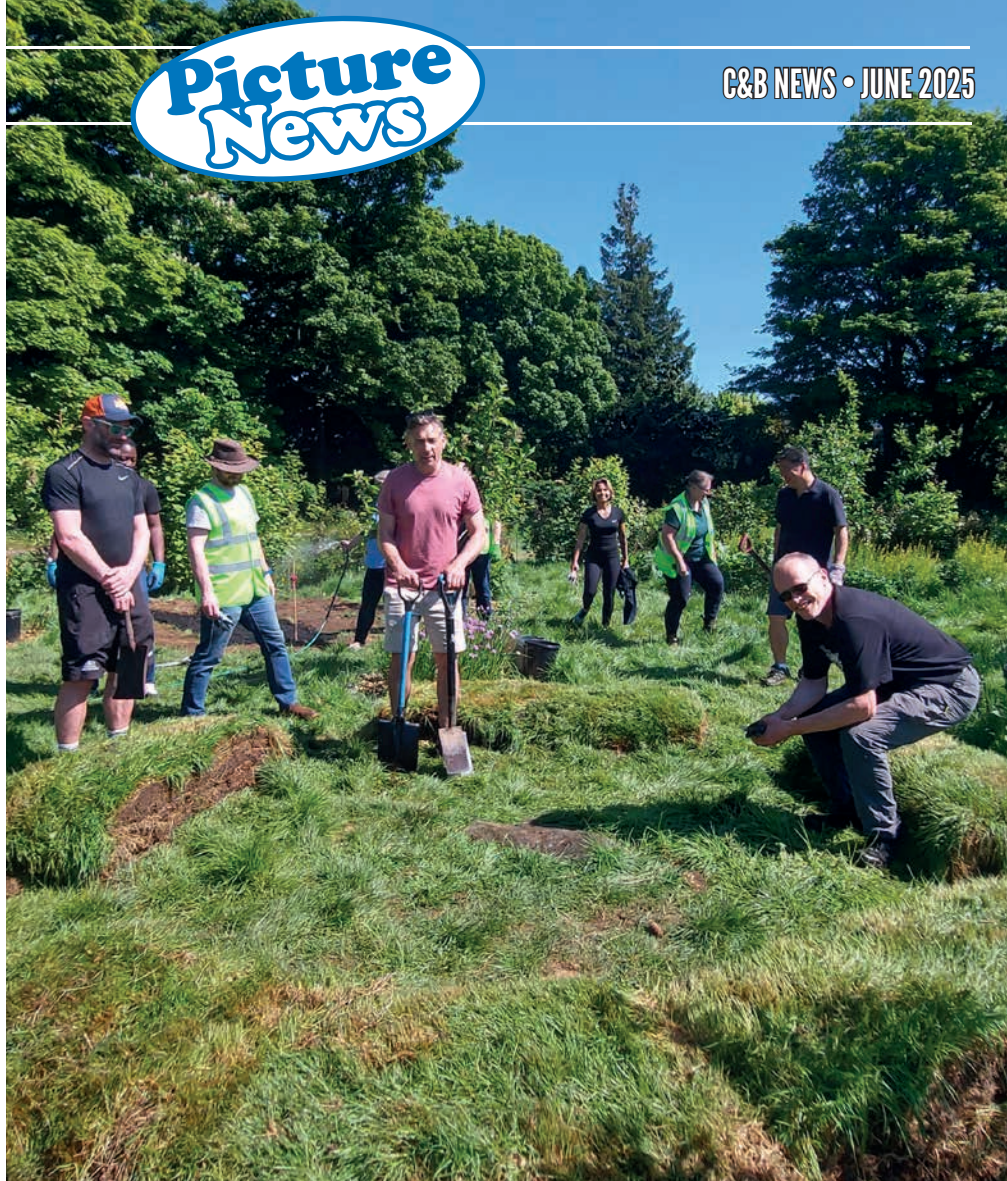
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DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE

ADVERTISING & LISTINGS: 10 JUNE
EDITORIAL: 15 JUNE
ISSUE DISTRIBUTED: 27 JUNE



Above: Mike Harrower and Natwest Community volunteers help build a new natural seating area at the heart of the Campbell Park Community Orchard. Below: Shona Harrower (left), chairperson of the Friends of Campbell Park, thanks City of Edinburgh Council Park Ranger Andy Aiken for overseeing the creation of a new woodchip path from the entrance of Campbell Park to the sports pitches, via the nature mural. This route is regularly used by the football and cricket clubs, so can get very muddy during wet spells!



Above: *C&B News* can report that work has begun on planting fresh wild flowers along Nether Currie Lane, including polite signage and clear white marker posts which will hopefully deter CEC employees from mowing any wildflowers down—while, at the same time, keeping the grassy strip in front of the flowers regularly cut!

Below and bottom: In recent weeks, members of Currie Balerno Rotary have joined in with “spring cleaning” the Water of Leith and also helping weed, water, and maintain the fruit trees planted in Currie’s George V Park. See page 13 for more details. Photos: Water of Leith Conservation Trust, Currie Balerno Rotary.



Above: Congratulations to everyone who completed this year’s Balerno Rigg Race, not least Martin Lyall who, for the occasion, dressed as a Fairtrade banana!



BRIEFLY NEWS

- **MARKET FORCES:** The 20th anniversary of Balerno Farmers’ Market was officially noted in both the Scottish and UK Parliaments: Gordon Macdonald MSP lodged motion S6M-17225 on 21 April, while Scott Arthur MP tabled Early Day Motion (EDM) 1091 the following day, praising “two decades of consistent service to the local community and surrounding area”. Modestly, it was *C&B News* which reminded Balerno Village Trust of the impending anniversary! (What can we say? We love birthday cake!)
- **“PRIDE IN OUR CITY”:** During the next year, CEC is spending “almost a million pounds” cleaning up the city’s streets: removing dog fouling, dumped items, graffiti, chewing gum and general litter. Their “dedicated teams” are working “one ward at a time”, having started in Leith Walk (Ward 12) in April. With an initial focus on the north of the city (June/ July) and the city centre (during August), when they might travel out to Colinton/Fairmilehead (Ward 8) or the Pentland Hills (Ward 2) is anyone’s guess! <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/litter-flytipping/pride-city>
- **THIRSTY!** This year has been the driest start to the year in Scotland since 1964. Scottish Water have already asked the public to consider how much water they use to avoid the potential need for restrictions. Meantime the Scottish Fire Service urges people to enjoy the outdoors responsibly, to avoid wildfires.
- **BUSES:** A recent survey by Business Management students at Edinburgh Napier University for the Edinburgh Bus Users Group found that most respondents wanted more frequent buses, expanded route coverage, better real-time information, and improved services outside standard hours. Highest satisfaction ratings concerned cleanliness and comfort but, in general, the least satisfied travellers were those aged 35 to 54. (The most satisfied passengers were 18-to-24-year olds.)
- **SUPPORTED BUSES:** On 22 May, CEC’s Transport and Environment committee considered a motion by Morningside councillor

Advice Surgeries:

I hold surgeries on the **first Saturday of every month** at the following places:

- Fountainbridge Library • Wester Hailes Library
- Colinton Mains Tesco • Oxfangs Library

No issue is too big or too small for me to take up, so if you think I can help you, please get in touch!

Contact Scott:

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

Published by Gordon Macdonald MSP, Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP. Cost of publication has been met by parliamentary allowances. Parliament is not responsible for the content of other internet sites.

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.

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The 2025 Gala Court was officially crowned as part of this year's Balerno Children's Gala on Saturday 24 May: a day to remember for Charlotte Hill (Queen), Jamie Gettinby (King), Callie Brown (Queen's escort), Andrew Gough (King's escort), Libby Harman and Brodie Allan (Heralds), Chole Lee and Maja Gosney (Flower girls). Photo: Balerno Children's Gala.

Balerno Scarecrow Trail is Back!

VALERIE REID
MARKETING AND EVENTS OFFICER,
BALERNO VILLAGE TRUST

It's time to get your thinking caps on for the much-loved Scarecrow Trail!

This year there are two categories for scarecrows: one for community organisations and businesses, the other for private residences and individuals.

To enter you must be a resident of Balerno, and your scarecrow must be on display at an address in Balerno.

Entry costs just £5, which includes a bag of straw to get you started. The deadline for entries is 5pm on Thursday 5 June, with the trail running over the weekend of Saturday 7 and Sunday 8 June.

Maps of the scarecrows' locations will be available online from Friday 6 June, with paper copies (and voting slips) available from the Balerno Hardware shop, 26 Main Street.

Scarecrows should be placed outside ready for folk to go scarecrow-hunting by noon on Saturday 7 June. We will be taking photographs for judging that Saturday after 1pm. We ask that you leave your scarecrow out



for at least the two days, though you can of course leave your scarecrow out for longer if you wish!

Photographs of the individual scarecrow entries will be posted on the Balerno Farmers' Market and Balerno Village Trust Facebook pages and also BVT's website: balernovt.org.uk. Voting will take place from Monday 9 June until noon on Saturday 14 June, with voting slips also available from the Village Trust stall at Saturday's Farmers'

Market. No personal details will be published with the photos apart from the address where the scarecrow resides!

Residents can register their vote by "liking" the scarecrow of their choice on Facebook, using the voting slips or by emailing your vote: farmersmarket@balernovt.org.uk.

The winners will be announced at 12.30pm during June's Farmers' Market, and prizes then presented—including a specially commissioned trophy from Harmonies in Wood, Farmers' Market vouchers for individual entrants, and sweets and certificates for the business entrants.

The winner and runners up must consent to their name and winning scarecrow photo being made public on social media and in C&B News.

• Email farmersmarket@balernovt.org.uk for more details, and to arrange collection or delivery of your straw!

• The deadline for entries is 5pm on Thursday 5 June.

• www.balernovt.org.uk/scarecrows-2025

BRIEFLY...

p3>>>

Neil Ross calling on a report into raising additional funds for council-supported bus services by removing discounted parking charges in current nine-hour parking bays across the city, as well as applying standard charges on Boxing Day and Easter Monday.

• **BUS LANES:** According to a Freedom of Information request by Edinburgh Bus Users Group, The City of Edinburgh Council estimates there are 41.5 miles (66.7 km) of bus lanes across the city—however, this is an estimate, given that CEC has not carried out an audit in recent years.

• **BONALY PARK TOILET:** We've heard that, following the delayed rectifying of some construction defects, "the opening of these new facilities to be in line with a more formal celebration of the completion of the upgraded car park" is estimated to take place in June. Fingers, and legs, crossed!

• **DREGHORN HOUSING:** CEC has made a formal offer to purchase the remaining 38 homes in the Dregghorn estate from the MOD, including those which are currently tenanted.

• **ROAD WORKINGS:** According to CEC's Local Traffic Improvement programme, construction of a new section of pavement on Riccarton Mains Road, including repairs to a boundary wall, will cost at least £40,000. Meantime, proposed improvements at the Bridge Road/Spylaw Street junction in Colinton, including pavement buildouts and junction narrowing, have been estimated to cost between £50,000 and £100,000. A similar price-tag has been put on a proposed new footway along Balerno's Mansfield Road, from the Cockburn Crescent bus terminus to Malleny Millgate.

• **PHOTO COMPETITION:** Edinburgh Libraries have launched a photography competition celebrating gardening and the city's parks, gardens and green spaces. Free to enter and open to all: all entries must be submitted via Edinburgh Collected (www.edinburghcollected.org) where they will become part of a community archive of Edinburgh memories. Three prizes of £100, £50 and £25 book tokens. Closes 31 July 2025. Any queries, email: informationdigital@edinburgh.gov.uk

>p7

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New Active Travel Consultation in Currie

GERT RIJSDIJK
TRANSPORT OFFICER, ACTIVE TRAVEL,
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

The City of Edinburgh Council has received contributions from housing developments in the Currie area to improve active travel connections to Curriehill Station.

CEC's Active Travel team will lead the improvement project and use additional funding to improve walking, wheeling and cycling in

the local area—which includes schools, shops and the medical centre.

The proposed improvements include safer junctions and crossings near the schools and shops, and a ramp to access the Pentlands Medical Centre and the shops from Pentland View and Pentland Place.

• CEC is looking for your views on the proposals and invites you to fill out the following questionnaire:

<https://tinyurl.com/hrwysywm>

• Paper copies of the questionnaire are also available from Currie Library. The closing date for responses is Sunday 6 July 2025.

• A drop-in event with images of the proposals will be held in Currie Library on Monday 16 June, between 2pm and 5pm. Council staff will be available to listen to your views and comments, and answer questions.



The Balerno Fry, on Bavelaw Road, is up for sale. Described as a "fantastic business opportunity in a prominent location" in "the salubrious suburb of Balerno" (ooh, get them), agents Graham + Sibbald are looking for offers "in the region of" £600,000. Whatever happens, it's the end of an era! If you're interested in going into fast foods, and have found sufficient cash down the back of the sofa, email either: martin.sutherland@g-s.co.uk or emily.hewitson@g-s.co.uk

Local Optician Appointed as Optometry Scotland Director

JONATHAN JENNETT
CLEARVUE OPTICIANS

Local optician Jonathan Jennett, of Clearvue Opticians in Currie, has been appointed to the board of Optometry Scotland—the national representative body for Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians.

In his new role as Director, Jonathan will represent Independent Optician Practices across South and East Scotland, helping shape the future of eye care in our communities.

"Optometry Scotland played the main role in establishing the NHS contract that now allows everyone in Scotland to access free, world-class eye care," says Jonathan. "It's a privilege to contribute to that legacy."

"Being on the board gives me a voice to represent Independent Opticians and advocate for practical advancements in Optometry—whether it's managing more eye conditions within the community or getting support for home visits with better equipment. It's all about putting patients first and ensuring their care continues to evolve with their needs."

Jonathan also serves as Vice-Chair of the Lothian Area Optical Committee, working

closely to support ongoing education events for opticians and providing strategic input to the Lothian Health Board as the Optometry representative on the NHS Lothian Area Clinical Forum.

"Eye care has come a long way since I began practising," he adds. "With advanced diagnostic tools now available, we're catching conditions that often show no early symptoms. That's why it's so important for everyone to take advantage of the sight-saving services Scotland offers. OS is committed to ensuring our national eye care remains world-leading."

• www.optometryscotland.org.uk

Residents Urged to Replace RTS Electricity Metres

PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
C&B NEWS

Local residents have been urged to replace older electricity meters which use the Radio Teleswitch Service (RTS), ahead of a national switch-off on 30 June.

Edinburgh Pentlands constituency MSP Gordon Macdonald has urged people to check and, where necessary, upgrade their meters, after it was revealed that 15,326 RTS meters are still in operation across the city.

Electricity suppliers are responsible for replacing RTS meters with smart meters at no additional cost—if you think you have an RTS meter, contact your supplier now to book an upgrade.

Without the technology to tell RTS meters when to swap between peak and offpeak rates, meaning your heating and hot water supply stops functioning as normal—possibly also leading to higher bills.

"The RTS switch-off could have real consequences for households that haven't made the switch," Gordon said. "Replacing these old meters is free, people only need to contact their electricity supplier."

"I'm particularly concerned about vulnerable residents, including older people who may not be aware of this change. I urge the UK Government and Ofgem to immediately delay or guarantee full compensation to consumers ahead of the switch off."

• For more details, visit the Ofgem website: <https://tinyurl.com/29h3mfi7>

BRIEFLY...

PS>>>

• **PLANNING UPDATE:** Application 25/01216/FUL, for 10 flats on the site of the former Bank of Scotland branch at 158A Lanark Road West, has now been revised down to nine, with the external bin stores incorporated into the building instead of being sited on the pavement at the boundary wall with the Gibson Craig Halls.

• **CAFÉ CULTURE:** City councillors in May voted to enable cafes and restaurants across Edinburgh to apply to put out their tables and chairs between 7.30am and 10pm (instead of the current 9am - 9pm). It's unclear to what extent locals or visitors to the upper Water of Leith valley will wish to enjoy their coffee outside during the so-called morning "rush" hour...

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/overshadowing) or traffic/parking/access issues.

• **BALERNO:** Change of use class from domestic to single occupancy care facility to enable approval from Care Inspectorate; 93 Curriehill Castle Drive. (25/02140/FUL) Comments by 2 June.

• **BALERNO:** Extension to rear of dwelling; 21 Johnsburn Road. (25/02409/CLP) Comments by 2 June.

• **BALERNO:** Removal of existing porch and erection of engineered hardwood sunroom extension; 6 Lovedale Road. (25/02331/FUL) Comments by 3 June.

• **COLINTON:** Replace existing ATM and install new ATM surround sign; 64 Bridge Road. (25/02312/LBC & 25/02314/ADV) Comments by 6 June. **>P9**

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Europe Week 2025 Began in Currie

GRAHAM DANE
C&B NEWS

The Pentlands Ukrainian Support Group started Europe Week in Currie on 3 May 2025.

Currie Community Centre was the setting for their colourful and moving cultural spectacle. Choirs and soloists of all ages sang of love for their country and the home life they long for; superb costumes added to the sense of occasion; and dancers performed to great appreciation from the large audience.

Europe Week is a non-political celebration of closeness to our nearest neighbours but, for the Ukrainians especially, it represented solidarity with their country.

Depute Lord Provost Lezley Marion Cameron gave a warm welcome on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council, while local MP Dr Scott Arthur joined the participants to add his support.

The main Ukrainian choir was invited to the Civic Reception later in the week, as were Natalia Duncan and Maria Laskowska, who coordinated the Currie celebrations.



TEC Approves Priority Projects for City Mobility Plan

PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
C&B NEWS

The City of Edinburgh Council's Transport and Environment Committee (TEC) on 22 May approved the Capital Investment Programme prioritising projects designed to ensure sustainable, safe and effective movement of people and goods within the city.

The CIP covers all capital investment in CEC's City Mobility Plan except for ongoing renewal work on roads, footpaths, cycle paths and bridges, as well as the proposed new tramline from Granton to the Bioquarter and beyond.

More than 70 projects were set to be taken forward, judged in terms of potential improvements to overall road safety, deliverability, and available finances.

Projects of local interest to C&B News readers, which will proceed during 2025/26, include:

the trialing of 7-7-7 bus lanes (operating 7am to 7pm, seven days a week) along the route of Lothian Buses service 44 between Balerno and Musselburgh; the West Edinburgh Link active travel route (linking Drum Brae and the Gyle with Sighthill/Gorgie, Colinton/Fairmilehead and the Pentland Hills); local "interventions" to create quieter on-road cycling connections through Currie and Balerno, including Curriehill Station and the new Currie Community High School; a programme of speed reductions on many roads outside the urban area, especially on minor rural roads; the instigation of a cross-boundary active travel corridor between Midlothian, Edinburgh and East Lothian council areas; active travel improvements between Heriot-Watt and Curriehill; and much-demanded improvements to the Dalmahey Junction.

Among the 50 projects paused for the conceivable future (most

of which were already on hold) include: A71 Dalmahey to Dalry bus priority measures (including proposed continuous bus lanes along Calder Road); Park and Ride expansion at Hermiston; and active travel improvements between Heriot-Watt University and Sighthill.

"I'm really pleased that we've agreed this bold programme for our city," said Transport and Environment Committee Convener, and local Pentland Hills councillor, Stephen Jenkinson. "Prioritisation allows us to work smarter with the resources we have available - making sure we have a clear and achievable path to achieving our objectives."

"This is an extensive piece of work which allows the City Mobility Plan to be agile, and able to adapt in the future as necessary. We'll now take forward these projects which will keep Edinburgh moving and make our city a safer, more sustainable and accessible place for all."

NEWS 9

BRIEFLY...

p7>>>

- **JUNIPER GREEN:** Erect shed with floor area of 13 x 8 feet; 13 Juniper Park Road. (25/02333/FUL) Comments by 13 June.
- **JUNIPER GREEN:** Demolition of conservatory and erection of rear single storey extension; Flat 1, 38 Woodhall, Millbrae. (25/02351/FUL) Comments by 13 June.

PLANNING DECISIONS

- **COLINTON:** Replacement windows and doors; 2 Barnshot Road. (25/00484/FUL) Granted, 12 May.
- **COLINTON:** Proposed single-storey side extension to existing property including internal alterations; 73 Redford Loan. (24/06295/FUL) Granted, 13 May.
- **COLINTON:** Replace existing paving area around house with new, replace and extend existing low dry stone wall with brick wall matching existing exterior brick work on house, extend existing paved sitting area at rear adding brick-raised plant bed and three new sets of steps, add new meadow area with multi-stem low trees and seat made from recycled stone from garden, add new composting area; 3 Bonaly Road. (25/01454/FUL) Granted, 13 May.
- **COLINTON:** Proposed removal of existing garage and replacement with new side extension and attic conversion with rear and side dormer, solar panels installed on south and west-facing roofs; 28 Hailes Gardens. (25/00931/FUL) Granted, 13 May.
- **COLINTON:** Extension and internal alterations; 19 Hailes Gardens. (25/01232/FUL) Granted, 14 May.
- **BALERNO:** Remove Leylandii tree; 17 Johnsburn Road. (25/02051/TCO) Tree preservation order not made, 15 May.
- **CURRIE:** Enlarge window and at Juliet balcony; 9 Provost Haugh. (25/01915/FUL) Granted, 15 May.
- **BABERTON MAINS:** Demolish existing detached garage to rear, construct single storey extension to side, extending full depth of house and rear extension and also forming new porch area, install new velum roof light and alter existing French doors to rear; 15 Baberton Mains Wynd. (25/01823/FUL) Granted, 15 May

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Heriot-Watt Strengthens Partnership with Age Scotland

CRAIG PHILIP
HERIOT-WATT UNIVERSITY

Heriot-Watt University has cemented its longstanding relationship with leading charity Age Scotland by signing a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at accelerating impactful research and innovation to enhance the lives of older people across the country.

The new agreement builds on a rich history of collaboration between the two organisations, particularly through initiatives led by Professor Alan Gow and the University's wattAGE network, which has championed healthy ageing projects for several years.

Age Scotland is a key partner in "Consolidate": the £2 million project, led by Professor Gow and funded by the UK's Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, focuses on co-designing technology for people with dementia. The aim is to ensure that emerging technologies meet actual needs, promoting a better quality of life for users and helping to address pressing challenges in health and social care.

"By working more closely with Age Scotland, we will drive forward research and innovation to positively impact quality of life for all as we get older," said Professor Gow.



Professor Alan Gow, Age Scotland's Chief Executive Katherine Crawford, and Michelle Beukes, Business Development Manager at Heriot-Watt University.

Beyond research, the MOU outlines opportunities for wider collaboration, including student internships, staff volunteering, community engagement projects, and policy influence initiatives. With Age Scotland playing a major role in shaping national policy on ageing issues, Heriot-Watt's research can feed directly into government conversations around healthcare innovation, digital inclusion, and support for ageing in place.

"Supporting an older and ageing population is one of the biggest challenges of our time, and one which governments across the world have not yet got to grips with," added Katherine

Crawford, Chief Executive of Age Scotland.

"Ensuring older people are at the heart of the research which drives innovation for their benefit is essential. Their unique experiences and perspectives are hugely valuable, but they are often excluded. I am really excited about what we can achieve together by pairing Age Scotland's networks, insight and expertise with world class researchers at Heriot-Watt University."

Great Big Green Week at the Hub@531

ANNETTE WILSON
DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, HUB@531

On Saturday 7 June we're excited to be taking part in this year's national Climate Coalition focus week, bringing together a programme of fantastic, free activities for adults and children to enjoy while finding out more about caring for the planet and the people, plants and animals who live here.

For families, we have a short workshop at 1.15pm on making your own beeswax food wrap; this is suitable for children aged 8+ if accompanied by an adult. We also have an exciting chance to join a River Dipping session with Earth Calling at 9.45am, suitable for children 8+. Both these activities must be booked, as space is limited.

For adults, there's also a chance to make beeswax food wraps at 2pm, while Earth Calling will be leading a gentle stroll along the



local stretch of the Water of Leith, to take a closer look at the plants. Join Gus for a Botanical Blether,

meeting at 11.15am outside the Hub. Please book to avoid disappointment.

Make sure you have time to pop along to the Hub in the morning between 10am and 11.30am, when we'll have plenty of stalls, enthusiastic volunteers, Fairtrade products for sale, some plants from our gardening group, meat-free snacks to try and tea / coffee / cake on offer too!

At 11.30am we also welcome Edinburgh Community Solar Cooperative along for a short talk about what they do and what opportunities there might be for individuals or communities.

We'd love to see you at the Hub on the day—do drop in and say hello!

• Great Big Green Week at the Hub@531, Saturday 7 June, 10am - 2.30pm.

• To book online, visit <https://hub531.appointedd.com> or email: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

BRIEFLY...

p9>>>

May.

- COLINTON: Replace roof with modern version, replace external white windows, doors and fascia boards with new like-for-like uPVC/composite, replace leaning boundary wall to no. 8 with wooden fence in grey/black; 6 Fernielaw Avenue. (25/01573/CLP) Granted, 15 May.
- COLINTON: Proposed single storey rear extension and attic conversion; 80 Redford Avenue. (24/06316/FUL) Granted, 16 May.

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.

- DREGHORN: Redford Road at Dreghorn Link, off-peak three-way temporary traffic lights for crane works for mast replacement; 3, 6, 17 & 20 June.
- BONALY: Bonaly Crescent closed between Laverockdale Loan and Bonaly Terrace (Openreach); 14-15 August.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

THURSDAY 5 JUNE

- BALERNO COMMUNITY COUNCIL: Community Centre, Main Street; 7pm. (First Thursday of the month.)

TUESDAY 10 JUNE

- COLINTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL: Colinton Bowling Club, Redford Road; 7.30pm. (Second Tuesday of the month.)

WEDNESDAY 11 JUNE

- CURRIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL: Gibson Craig Halls (rear), Lanark Road West; 7.30pm. (Second Wednesday of the month.)

WEDNESDAY 25 JUNE

- JUNIPER GREEN & BABERTON MAINS COMMUNITY COUNCIL: the hub@531 Lanark Road; 7.30pm. (Fourth Wednesday of the month.)

LOCAL UPDATES • LOCAL UPDATES

New Menopause Support Group

ANNETTE WILSON
DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, HUB@531

Earlier this year, the hub@531 hosted three evenings with Annette from Pond Wellness, and welcomed a lovely group of local women who appreciated the chance to come together and talk openly about some of the issues and challenges they face during menopause. All agreed it's important to connect with others who understand, and to meet people from the local community to share stories, experiences, useful tips and laughter!

We are really happy that two of those lovely ladies have volunteered to be at the Hub@531 once a month, to welcome anyone along for a cuppa and a chat. We hope there will be enough interest to sustain this community group monthly, from September onwards. Please come along if this group sounds of interest to you!

• The next meeting is at the Hub@531, Lanark Road, Juniper Green on Monday 2 June, from 8pm to 9.30pm. After a break over the summer, hopefully monthly meetings will continue from September.

• The Hub@531 is a small and friendly space, and we welcome ideas for new groups or activities. If you have an idea for something you'd like to start in the community, please get in touch with our development officer by emailing: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

Members of Currie Balerno Rotary were delighted to attend an excellent concert organised by Ukrainians living in our area as part of the Festival of Europe, writes Mike Rowe.

The concert was held in the Currie Community Centre on Saturday 3 May, featuring a Ukrainian choir, Ukrainian dancers and a major contribution from children of all ages. There were hand-made examples of traditional Ukrainian arts and crafts and of the country's cuisine.

This event will no doubt be reported elsewhere (see page 9—Editor) but Currie Balerno Rotary would like to offer their congratulations to the Pentlands Ukrainian Support Group, with whom we have had a long and close relationship

www.candbnews.com

Award Success for Local Architectural Firm

KAREN PARRY
KPA

Karen Parry Architects has firmly established itself as a cornerstone of Scotland's home improvement sector, garnering an impressive eight accolades at the Scottish Home Improvement Awards. This consistent recognition underscores the firm's dedication to excellence in domestic architecture.

Since their initial SHIA triumph back in 2016, KPA has been honoured with the "Best Architectural Practice" a further four times—in 2017, 2019, 2023, and 2024. Additionally, they secured the "Architect of the Year" title in 2022, 2023, and 2024. Their consistent presence as finalists and recipients of "Highly Recommended" distinctions in 2021 and 2022 further attests to their sustained excellence.

Founded in 2005, KPA specialises in domestic projects—including extensions, conversions, and new builds. Their approach combines technical expertise with a deep understanding of clients' aspirations, ensuring



each project is both functional and aesthetically pleasing. This client-centric philosophy has been pivotal in their repeated SHIA successes. With offices in Glasgow and recently Colinton, KPA has firmly established itself as a leader in domestic architecture across Scotland. Their portfolio showcases a range of projects that enhance living spaces while respecting the unique character of each home.

Beyond SHIA, KPA's excellence has been recognised by industry platforms like Houzz, where they've received multiple "Best of Houzz Design" awards.

Such accolades reflect their commitment to design innovation and client satisfaction.

As KPA continues to shape Scotland's architectural landscape, their SHIA achievements serve as a testament to their unwavering dedication to quality and client-focused design.

For homeowners seeking to transform their living spaces, Karen Parry Architects offers a proven track record of delivering exceptional results, making them a standout choice in Scotland's architectural landscape.

• www.karenparryarchitects.com

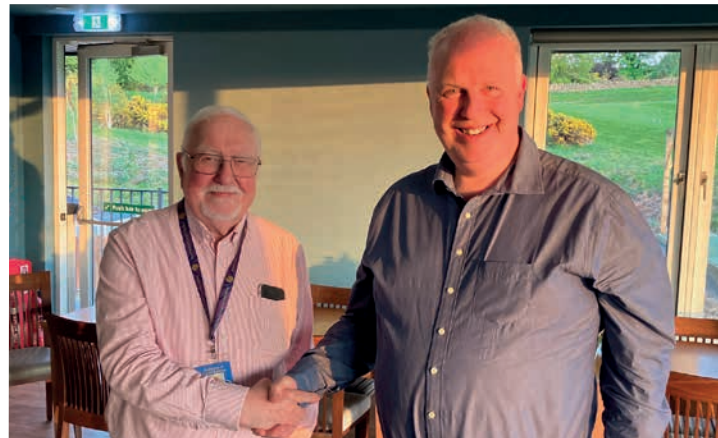
Chris Harkess Joins Rotary to Represent William Purves

MIKE ROWE
CURRIE BALERNO ROTARY

On becoming a Rotary Community Member, William Purves nominated Chris Harkess to represent them as a member of Currie Balerno Rotary. He is seen here (on the right) being welcomed by our President Ian Campbell.

Chris was born and raised in Edinburgh and he and his wife Janet have lived in Currie for more than 20 years.

Chris studied economics at Heriot-Watt University—he says he's old enough to have studied at the Grassmarket and young enough to have finished



at Riccarton. Having studied economics, he recognised that he was not attracted to this as a career. He took a temporary job with William Purves, which has lasted 34 years—so far.

William Purves became the fifth Rotary Community Members linked with Currie Balerno Rotary and they have since been joined by a sixth—Orian.

• Currie Balerno Rotary and its partners serve the communities of Ratho, Kirknewton, Balerno, Currie, Juniper Green, Baberton Mains, Colinton and Wester Hailes.

• To find out more, contact Mike Rowe at PR@cbrotary.org or visit: cbrotary.org or facebook.com/rotary1020

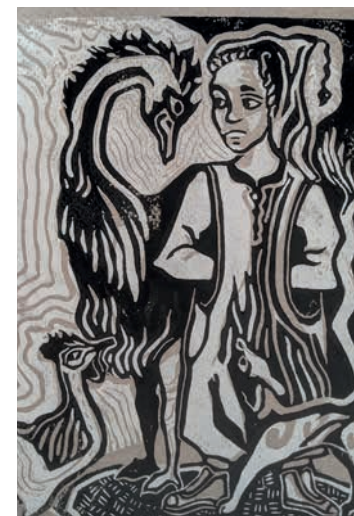
LOCAL UPDATES • LOCAL UPDATES



Tiphereth Hosts Vibrant Art Exhibition

SANDY WALTON
QUALITY MANAGER, TIPHERETH

During May, Tiphereth, a charity based in Colinton that supports adults with learning disabilities and autism, opened its doors to the public for the second year, hosting



a special Art Exhibition celebrating the incredible creativity of the co-workers currently working there.

The exhibition offered a vibrant and inspiring display of mixed media artwork, showcasing everything from painting and drawing to ceramics, print and photography. Each piece reflected the unique voice, imagination, and talent of the individuals who contribute so much to the life and spirit of the Tiphereth community. "Art plays a vital role in the



lives of the people we support—offering a sense of purpose, joy, and a way to connect with others," said exhibiting artist Helen Comloquoy.

"We know we have amazing talented co-workers at Tiphereth, but seeing their personal work exhibited, reminds us of how privileged we are to work together," added Quality Manager Sandy Walton.

• www.tiphereth.org.uk

Strimming Days

ANNIE MACDONALD
PESTICIDE FREE BALERNO

Since our last update, the City of Edinburgh Council visited Balerno, using brand new electric trimmers to manually remove weeds in shared areas of the village.

Strimming has been reported by many councils as a very convenient pesticide-free option to deal with unwanted weeds

around highly frequented areas like schools, parks and paths where quick safe solutions are required.

Thank you Balerno residents for being inspiring and consistently supporting this important initiative, keeping harmful chemicals away from our community. Simply manually removing weeds in front of your own property and taking ownership of the small patch in front of your own home, illustrates and leads the way—many other

communities UK-wide now follow.

If it's safe and you're able to do so, please continue to manually weed the small strip in front of your home, help less-able neighbours, and contact the PFB team to let us know about any weedy areas in Balerno needing attention.

• Get in touch by email: Pesticidefreebalerno@gmail.com

• For more details, visit: www.PesticideFreeBalerno.com

Currie Balerno Rotary's Environmental Work

MIKE ROWE
CURRIE BALERNO ROTARY

WATER OF LEITH SPRING CLEAN

Several members of Currie Balerno Rotary took part along with members of other Edinburgh Rotary clubs and other volunteers—all led by

Johnny Wells of the Water of Leith Conservation Trust.

ORCHARD MAINTENANCE

Our fruit trees in Currie's George V Park are doing great. In 2023, Currie Balerno Rotary – in partnership with Pentlands Eco Network, Village Green and The City of Edinburgh Council – planted 25 fruit trees.

They are all doing well but they need to be looked after, of course and last month was the time to do it. Together with our orchard partners, Pentlands Eco Network and other volunteers, members

of Currie Balerno Rotary were out weeding, watering and maintaining the orchard.

A great effort by everyone. We look forward to a tasting later.

CURRIE FLOWERS

You may have already seen the replacement tubs provided by CEC; you will soon be seeing the colour, as Currie Balerno Rotary plants this year's flowers to maintain our annual display.

We started the Currie Flowers in 2002 and we've maintained them ever since.

Balerno SWI: May 'Open Night' Report

EDINGELL THOMSON
BALERNO SWI

In May we welcomed members from Corstorphine and Pentland institutes to our "Open Night" in St Joseph's Hall, Balerno.

Our guest speaker, Jo from Cupar Quilters in Fife, had brought only a small suitcase with her. Expecting to see some quilting, how, we wondered, was she going to produce even one quilt out of that?

But, ably assisted by our President, Rita, Jo produced no fewer than 28 small quilts, made to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the quilting group. Although all on the theme of "Seasons", no two were alike, and they showed an amazing variety of colours and quilting techniques: piecing (some traditional blocks, others more contemporary) Appliqué, embroidery, and both hand and machine stitching. There were cherry blossoms, autumn leaves, bare branches laden with snow, even geese returning for the winter—not to forget Santa flying over. It was a truly stunning display, and much appreciated by both the quilters and non-quilters among us.

We then enjoyed tea with a tempting array of delicious home baking, bought items from the "Bring and Buy" table, and checked to see who had been lucky in the customary raffle.

• Balerno Scottish Women's Institute usually meet on the first Tuesday of the month from 7.30pm at Balerno Community Centre, Main Street. However, on 3 June the group are instead making a trip to the Burrell Collection in Glasgow. The bus leaves from outside the former Balerno Police Station, Bridge Road, at 10am, and will shortly after pick up members from Juniper Green.

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Tartan Parade for Balerno Schools Pipe Band

GILLIAN MERCHANT
BALERNO SCHOOLS PIPE BAND

Members of the Balerno Schools Pipe Band were delighted to parade through the streets of Edinburgh in the city's first ever Tartan Day Parade, on Saturday 10 May.

Under bright blue skies and soaring temperatures they joined 1,600 other performers – including musicians, dancers, drummers, Vikings and Bay City Rollers communities – to celebrate Scotland's rich heritage, tartans, culture and inclusivity—as well as commemorate Edinburgh's 900th anniversary as a city.

Crowds packed the route from

the Royal Mile down Cockburn Street and over Waverley Bridge to see the colourful, spectacular (and noisy!) procession led by President of the NYC Tartan Day Parade Kyle Dawson, Scotland's National Piper and Lord Provost's Piper Louise Marshall, and TV star and Fair Trade Ambassador Gail Porter, alongside city dignitaries.

Balerno's inclusion was important for the event's organiser, Tania Pramschufer, thanks to the village's long history with the Fair Trade movement, as the parade fell on World Fair Trade Day. In fact, the band was also invited to play with Louise Marshall at the event's afterparty—a sold-out show at the Usher Hall, featuring trad and piping superbands Rura and the Red Hot Chilli Pipers.

Playing on such an illustrious stage to surely their biggest audience yet was a huge moment for the young band members, and their supporters, who will all have taken away lasting memories of a big night out.



PHOTOS: NEIL GRANT



From 6th Avenue to The Royal Mile

DEEANNE GRANT
PENTLAND CALEDONIA PIPE BAND

Following on from the Pentland Caledonia Pipe Band's performance in the New York Tartan Day Parade in April, Pentland Caledonia Pipe Band – who are celebrating their 25th anniversary this year – took to the historic streets of Edinburgh for the first-ever Tartan Day Scotland Parade on Saturday 10 May. The parade route included The Royal Mile, Cockburn Street, Market Street, Princes Street Gardens, and the Mound Precinct, providing a picturesque backdrop for this momentous occasion.

The parade was led by TV personality Gail Porter and Kyle Dawson, president of New York's Tartan Week, who began the

march when Edinburgh's famous One O'Clock Gun sounded. The inaugural parade was planned for 2025 as part of the city's "Edinburgh 900" celebrations, marking nine centuries since the founding of Scotland's capital, where 1,600 participants registered to take part in this event.

Under a bright sun, thousands of spectators lined the streets, creating a vibrant and festive atmosphere, and the event was live-streamed globally. This parade marked the debut performance for one of the band's pipers, providing an exceptional start to his journey with the band.

The band played a few tunes that the crowds knew, and a few that they didn't, as the band like to incorporate less well-known Scottish tunes in to their repertoire.

Events like this are great for reunions for people within the pipe band world and hopefully this becomes an annual event, as the band would love to take part again in the future.

Piping for Fairtrade

LESLEY HENDERSON
BALERNO FAIRTRADE VILLAGE GROUP

Were you lucky enough to hear and see Balerno and District Schools Pipe Band's splendid, stirring part in the inaugural Tartan Parade in central Edinburgh on a wonderfully sunny 10 May?

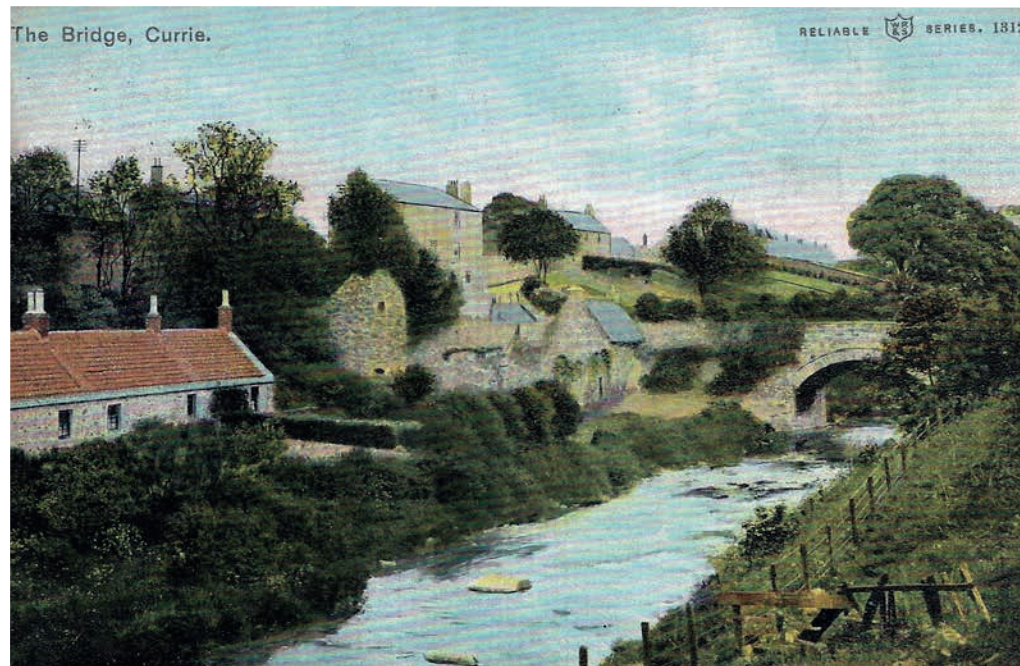
The Lord Provost welcomed the parade's part in Edinburgh's inclusivity, among so much else. The Band's own Facebook message on 6 May showed them "delighted

to be invited to this historic event on World Fair Trade Day in recognition of Balerno's fair trade history". What a day, and a great band truly deserving all our thanks.

Here, we await with bated breath offers from people with fresh ideas for local FT, with big thanks to Dean Park Primary School for helping us contact some of them. But is there a summer lull ahead then, while the autumn Farmers' Market FT stall and FT Fortnight shape up? No: not while world trade, and some harvests, are in turmoil, and all our FT purchases are needed more than ever! • <https://www.facebook.com/Balernofairtradevillagegroup/>

www.facebook.com/candbnews

Snapshots of the Past



Above left: Looking from Currie Toll westwards, which includes both the Wester Currie Farm, now Riccarton Inn, and Mid Currie Farmhouse, now Lilybank House. Above right and below: Other contemporary views of Currie. Photos: Douglas Lowe/CDLHS.

‘The Community That Cares’—but not in 1827!

DOUGLAS LOWE
CURRIE & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

We all, at some time, pass the road signs that advise us that we are entering Currie, the “Community that Cares”. It gives you a glow of anticipation that we will be safe or at least treated with a degree of kindness.

However this was not the case when Alexander Lawson, a weaver by trade, walked into Currie village around 8pm on 6 August 1827, accompanied by his wife Jane and their five children. The “unfeeling treatment” they received was subsequently widely reported in detailed newspaper reports following the case in the High Court in Edinburgh. Two men from Currie, John Campbell (31) and William Helm (23), both stonemasons, were charged with the culpable homicide of Mr Lawson in Currie on the night the family arrived. As reported in the subsequent High Court case the Lord Advocate had expressed himself strongly on the moral features of the case and indignantly on the unfeeling treatment this poor family had experienced from some of the inhabitants of Currie when seeking a place of shelter.

Alexander Lawson and his family had moved to Glasgow from Ireland around 18 months earlier and were, at this point, heading to Edinburgh in search of work—possibly harvesting, given the time of year. They arrived in the centre of Currie

village which, at that time, was very much dominated by three farmhouses on the north side of the road. There was the smiddy, Wester Currie Farm (also operating as Ferguson’s Inn—now the Riccarton Inn), Mid-Currie Farm (now Lilybank House) and, across Riccarton Mains Road, Easter Currie Farm and cottages. All this was the historic centre of the village, but there were also cottages on the south side of Lanark Road, the original school, and a small cluster of cottages beside Currie Brig and around Currie Grain Mill and the alehouse.

The Lawson family asked about lodgings but were messed around, firstly directed to one property and then told that there were no lodgings in the village. They were then directed to a Mr Hardie’s property, which was one of the farmhouses. However neither Mr or Mrs Hardie were at home so their servant said that they could wait and talk to Mr Hardie when he returned. The family found an open cart shed a short distance from the farmhouse and, having shifted one

of the carts, they made an area for the family in the corner of the shed. They gathered up some straw and used their clothes to make a bed for themselves and the children.

Jane had visited two nearby cottages asking if they could provide some boiling water to make porridge/brose for supper, but neither was prepared to do this. One of the cottages was John Campbell’s cottage. The family then bought bread, sugar and beer and made a supper of this for the family. The family all said their prayers and settled down for the night.

John Campbell’s wife, in an attempt to get her husband to leave the pub (as he had been there for two hours), invented a story of an intrusion into the house by a stranger. Unfortunately his over-reaction to this, aided by his friend William Helm, and some others, led directly to the death of Alexander Lawson. The family were awakened when John and William entered the shed and, grabbing Alexander, bundled him naked out into the courtyard. He was either pushed

over or thrown down onto the cobbles, resulting in his head being badly fractured, and he subsequently died from his injuries.

The clear evidence given by his widow and her eldest daughter, their passive acceptance of various setbacks, and her late husband’s insistence on the family saying prayers before bedtime, certainly won over the jury and the Lord Advocate, and the two accused men were found guilty of culpable homicide. However, both men had been well dressed and respectful, and had voluntarily submitted to trial. Supported by both the Currie minister, Rev Dr Somerville, and Thomas Newton of the Curriehill Estate, the two were given a short sentence—Transportation for seven years!

Reading the various contemporary reports of trials and sentencing in the newspapers I was surprised how many “transportation” sentences were given out at that time—either to Australia, or America and the West Indies. Individuals would have needed to be “well heeled” to be able to return home at the end of their sentence, or would otherwise be expected to remain and work.

I have no idea if the widowed Jane Lawson, along with her family, returned to Ireland or was just absorbed into an Irish community in Scotland.

Why was a weaver like Alexander Lawson in Scotland? At the time, weaving had suffered a decline, not just in Scotland but presumably Ireland as well. When looking at the life of our “Weaver Poet, Jamie Thomson of Killeith”, I had carried out a some research on weaving: historical accounts tell us that, in 1814, weaving was the most important industry in Scotland and that weavers were well remunerated—indeed by 1791, weaving wages had trebled. However competition from power looms, and an increase in handloom weavers from both the Highlands and Ireland moving into Central Scotland, led to a decline after 1815 and wages dropped dramatically. The New Statistical Account, 1834-1845 mentioned that there were, by that point, no handloom weavers in Currie Parish.

THIS
MONTH
IN...

1995

LOCAL HISTORY AS
REPORTED BY C&B NEWS.

PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
C&B NEWS

While *Currie & Balerno News* has long included reports on local sporting action, it’s been fairly rare for any of them to appear on the front page. However, “the first ever all Currie final of the EPSSA Cup” was considered sufficiently historic to merit such an honour. The Cup, David Dickson’s report explained, was “a football competition open to all Lothian Region Schools with a roll of under 240 pupils” and, of the 30 schools which had entered the competition in 1995, the two which reached the final were neighbouring Nether Currie and Curriehill primary schools.

“As would be expected with close neighbours contesting a final, there was an added edge to the game which was very keenly contested throughout.” The match was, naturally enough, played on neutral territory – Warriston Playing Fields – with a large turnout to support both schools. After what appeared to be a tightly-contested game, the Nether Currie team finally scored the only goal of the evening—a mere 10 minutes before the final whistle. “The boys from both sides should be complimented on the high level of skill and sportsmanship they displayed, and for providing a great night’s entertainment for all the spectators,” David wrote.

Talking of “historic”, Currie District History Society (as was) planned to mark its silver jubilee on Friday 16 June with a reception for members and guests at the Gibson Craig Hall, “with a buffet and wine, a few speeches, a celebratory cake cut and a small photographic exhibition of old Currie Parish”. We wish the Currie & District Local History Society (as is) all the best for their forthcoming Emerald (ie, 55th) anniversary this month.

Meanwhile, in the letters page, a months-long discussion continued regarding the Water of Leith Walkway and whether replacing the existing dirt track with a proper tarmac surface would inevitably encourage



cyclists to travel at speeds dangerous to other users—such as dog-walkers and horse-riders. The 31st Midlothian Cubs took the opportunity to thank “PC Denholm from Balerno Police Station for putting 18 Cubs through their cyclist badge”, while the Currie Senior Citizen’s Club thanked “everyone who supported their stand” at the recent Currie Fair in May.

In bus news – always a perennial subject in *C&B News* – the paper announced the impending

July launch of a new “village link” service connecting Currie and the Gyle, travelling via Juniper Green and Sighthill. Apparently taking 24 minutes in total, the hourly service was expected to run between 10.30am and 4.25pm. Given the narrowness of many of the roads on the route, we’re assuming it featured minibuses rather than double deckers!

Libraries, meantime, were an ongoing subject of concern for the local community councils in Balerno and Currie: specifically, the subject of where they were going to be! Possible sites for a new facility in Currie were either “adjacent to the Youth Club” or “somewhere within the grounds of a refurbished Currie High School”. Meantime, Balerno councillors were going “to enquire of both the District Council and the new city unitary authority (to take office in 1996) as to the position of a proposed new library to replace the existing, cramped facility at the Dean Park Annexe”. (The question clearly didn’t get far: Balerno library is still located in the Annexe, 30 years later.)

Finally, back to sport. The paper reported that, in the run-up to the summer holidays, then-Hearts and Scotland footballer Craig Levein (left) had helped launch “a new summer coaching scheme for sporting youngsters from nine to 16 years” at the Heriot-Watt Sports Centre at Riccarton. Craig, who was encouraged to try the new purpose-built climbing wall (if only as a photo opportunity) said: “I think this is a fantastic opportunity for children of all ages to be involved in various sporting activities.” Those activities included basketball, badminton, short tennis, netball, squash, football, rugby, rock-climbing and volleyball. (Sounds exhausting!)



• 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/>

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Cooking the Books



STEF LYONS

Have you heard the phrase, “a little knowledge is a bad thing”? I am here to dispute it. Just this once. There is a cookbook, with an accompanying Netflix series, that teaches in beautifully illustrated terms how to be a better cook. Most cookbooks offer that, but this one really means business. The first two hundred pages aren't even recipes. It's a guide to mastering different elements of cooking.

Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat is the work of American chef and foodie, Samin Nosrat. The unusual name of this book (and exquisitely filmed show) relates to what Nosrat tells us are the four main fundamentals of good cooking. In all things food: salt, fat, acid and heat are vital in making your dinner sing and your lunch melodious. Using this book I have made the best roast chicken anyone has ever tasted. (I dare you to dispute that!) It has taught me how to make even boiled vegetables better. How? Salt. Fat. Acid. Heat.

Do you know how many different types of salt there are in the world? And how each of them has a different level of saltiness and a different purpose? Having read this book I get sad when I see someone season their cooking water with Maldon Salt; this is meant to be enjoyed sprinkled on a salad or even on a chocolate cookie with its distinctive and delectable crunch. I buy Diamond Crystal Kosher Salt for



Above: Chocolate Pudding Pie. Below: Panzanella.
Photos: Stef Lyons.

my everyday cooking (*kosher* just means there are no additives in the salt), and treat myself to different salts to add to food when I desire. In fact, a good pal of mine gave me Scottish salt as a gift for my birthday. Blackthorn Salt is from Ayr and is perfect for adding to dishes at the end for a final season, giving that tasty bit of bite.

And yes, salt has a bad rap when it comes to high blood pressure, but Nosrat shows us that when you salt from within – during the cooking process – you don't add as much to your dish but get all the flavour. Obviously, please follow any medical advice you are given about salt.

The other day I made a *panzanella* with asparagus (get it while it's in season), feta, mint and homemade croutons. The asparagus is blanched in water as salty as the sea, but you wouldn't know it from eating. You simply get gorgeous spring asparagus-sweetness to the max.

Fat and acid are important because they help with flavour and texture, as well as cooking. The perfect roast chicken is salted and then marinated in buttermilk overnight. The acid in the buttermilk works on the skin and tenderises the meat so it is the most moist flesh but with dark, extra crispy skin.

Heat is about the method you use cooking each dish. Nosrat talks through the things that happen when you heat up your ingredients, why it's happening and how you can use that to create something truly wonderful. Yes, there are a number of steps to a lot of her recipes, and some might wonder at the necessity of all of them. But if you have the time and the patience – which I occasionally do – it is utterly worth the extra effort.

I will leave you with the example of the Chocolate Pudding Pie: one of the unusual steps Nosrat suggested was freezing the bowls you use to make the pastry and even the cream topping. I can tell you it lasted about three minutes in the Lyons house. And that was with all my self-control. 10/10. Would recommend.

• *Blackthorn Scottish Sea Salt Flakes*, Salt pans Road, Ayr, KA8 8BZ; www.blackthornsalt.co.uk

Senior Snippets



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

Staying Cool

As temperatures rise in late spring and summer, staying cool becomes more than a comfort—it's essential for good health, especially for older adults. Ageing bodies don't regulate temperature as efficiently, making older people more vulnerable to heat-related illnesses.

Start by dressing smart: choose lightweight, breathable fabrics like cotton or moisture-wicking blends. Light-coloured clothing and a wide-brimmed hat can help reflect the sun's rays and keep you cooler outdoors.

Hydration is key. Drink water regularly throughout the day, even if you don't feel thirsty. Limit caffeine and alcohol, as both can contribute to dehydration. Keep a bottle of water nearby as a gentle reminder.

At home, use fans or air conditioning when possible. If air conditioning isn't available, spending time at a local library or community centre can offer a welcome break from the heat. Keep curtains closed during the hottest part of the day to block out sunlight, and consider cooling gel packs or damp cloths for quick relief.

Exercise in the early morning or late evening when it's cooler, and take frequent breaks. Pay attention to warning signs like dizziness, headache, or nausea—these may signal heat exhaustion.

By planning ahead and adjusting routines, it's possible to enjoy the warmer months safely and comfortably. Staying cool is part of ageing wisely.

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

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Wellbeing



ANNETTE WILSON

Looking After Your Mental Health

Men's Health Week – from 12 - 19 June this year – gives an opportunity to discuss all manner of health issues that impact men, and I'd like to focus this month's column on men's mental health.

Mental health really matters, and it matters just as much for men as it does for anyone else. Sources of stress that may affect men include financial pressures, traditional gender roles, gambling and substance abuse, stigma around having mental health issues and the fact that men are less likely to seek help when they experience difficulty.

Far too often men feel pressure to stay silent, to bottle things up, or to "just get on with it." But struggling in silence doesn't make life easier—it just makes things heavier. Whether you're dealing with stress at work, relationship worries, grief, addiction, or just feeling low without knowing why, it's okay to talk about it. In fact, it could change your life.

Scotland has a strong sense of community, resilience and grit. But even the strongest among us need support. That's why reaching out – whether it's to a friend, a partner, a GP, or a helpline – is one of the bravest things you can do. Services like SAMH, Tartan Talkers, Andy's Man Club and Samaritans are there to help, day or night.

Taking care of yourself doesn't always have to mean talking either. It could be as simple as going for a walk, joining a local club, getting some fresh air in the hills or cutting back on the things that drag you down. It's about making small choices every day to protect your peace of mind.

You're not alone. And you don't have to carry everything on your own. Looking after your mental health is just as important as looking after your physical health. So take that first step—for yourself, and for the people who care about you. You deserve to feel better.

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

www.candbnews.com



Malleny Garden: Summer Fair

JAMES BELL
HEAD GARDENER, MALLENY GARDEN

On Saturday 28 June we aim to hold our Malleny Garden Plant Fair. Hosting a variety of plant sellers, local community groups and horticultural-inspired vendors, we hope you will be able to come along. Please look for updates on our Malleny Garden Facebook page.

As we race into summer (already!) from a hot, dry spring, Malleny Garden has been noticeably influenced. Our daffodils faded earlier than expected. Lawns have grown slowly. Many plants are showing signs of water stress—some of our herbaceous borders have been wilting due to lack of rain. While not unusual for later in the year, it's not typical for May. While our species like roses have been flowering exceptionally well in the sun, our main collection of 19th century shrub roses appear to be coming into flower earlier than normal; many show signs of opening by mid-to-late May, at least a couple of weeks

earlier than normally expected. Clearly, the heat of spring has brought them forward a bit. Mid-June to mid-July is typical, but if they are flowering early, will they finish earlier or will we get a couple of extra flowering weeks? Gardens adapt and grow with the times. Our garden will adapt with the changing weather.

Following heavy pruning in September 2023, our four Yews tree – "The Four Evangelists," as they're known – are taking their time to green up and still look quite

bare. This was expected: the regrowth will be slow but they are steadily putting out new foliage. They are being fed and watered to help them along during this very dry spring. We are also investigating the potential for air injection into the root zone. This might help break up soil compaction, introduce oxygen



around the roots and help them recover. We will keep you posted if it goes ahead.

In the garden, weeding continues – it never ends – but this year we've noticed a huge reduction in the number of weeds. In part, the dry weather of spring has reduced the weeds, but it is mostly down to the hard work of our volunteers over the last few years, caring for the garden. Each year the garden gets closer to being weed-free—well, "weed minimal"! Thank you to everyone.

• *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/malleny-garden>



Ramblers' Updates

ROGER JONATHAN

GAIL COUSINS
BALERNO RAMBLERS

In late April, 17 ramblers travelled by road or rail to Rhu, near Helensburgh, to be part of the Scottish Gathering—three days of organised walks for all abilities and a chance to socialise with fellow Ramblers from all over Scotland. Waterproof clothing was a necessity for the weekend, but spirits were not dampened.



Now, after a prolonged dry spell – the driest spring for over 60 years – gardeners are praying for rain. Rivers and reservoirs are looking low, and the public has been asked to use water sparingly.

The sunshine shows off our beautiful countryside. Trees are in full leaf, hedgerows white with May blossom, bluebells in shaded woodland, and frolicking lambs in the fields.

The midweek group's 30th Anniversary walk and lunch were a great success: 43 members attended, with Keith Gordon being the guest of honour as one of our founder members. A compilation of digital photos formed a sideshow viewed on the large screen TV, while old photos and memorabilia were on display boards.

The midweek and weekend groups are compiling their summer programmes, and we are encouraging walk leaders and potential leaders to commit to leading a walk or sharing the responsibility. Our upcoming walk diary is looking a little sparse at the moment. So many members are on holiday, walking or relaxing at home or abroad.



• *With Ramblers walks, please register with the walk leader to attend and advise if you have a medical condition relevant to your walking.*

• *We regret no dogs are allowed on our walks.*

• *Please do not come on the walk if you are feeling unwell.*

• *For more up-to-date details of our upcoming walks, please access the Balerno Ramblers page on the Ramblers Scotland website: <https://www.ramblers.org.uk>*

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

• *If you are interested in joining us, we have*



a mailing list, which you are more than welcome to join to receive information on forthcoming walks. Email: balerno-ramblers+subscribe@googlegroups.com

FOR FUTURE WALKS, TURN TO PAGE 23.

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FORTHCOMING WALKS

SATURDAY 7 JUNE

• **HERMITAGE OF BRAID:** An attractive and leisurely circular 6 mile (9.7 km) route through the Hermitage of Braid to Liberton Tower and return. Starts at the The Hermitage Lodge House (Braid Road); following the main path along the burn, downstream, we take a slight inclined track to emerge onto open hillside above the Hermitage, continuing along various grassy paths until we reach the Howe Dean Path. There we continue up and on to Braid Hills Drive, crossing the road to walk along the path below the golf course. Possible coffee stop at the Driving Range. Crossing back over the road we continue east to Liberton Tower, then various farm tracks till we reach the Montessori Arts School, taking farm tracks, we come out on to Blackford Glen Road. Here, we return along the Braid Burn and through the Hermitage, stopping for lunch at Hermiston House, then continue back to the start.

SUNDAY 15 JUNE

• **GLEN SHERUP HORSESHOE, NEAR GLENDEVON:** A strenuous 10 mile (16.1 km) circular upland walk over the tops surrounding Glen Sherup, at the eastern end of the Ochils, giving expansive views in all directions at different points and overlooking the scenic valley of Glen Sherup. Starting from the Glen Sherup car park, the route ascends to Innerdownie, continues over Whitewisp Hill, Tarmangie Hill, Scad Hill and Ben Shee, then returns to Glen Sherup and the car park.

SATURDAY 5 JULY

• **CURRIE TO SLATEFORD:** Introductory 5 mile (8 km) walk along the Water of Leith Walkway, with options to extend. Start from Pentland View car park; we join the Walkway heading east towards the Water of Leith Visitor Centre at Slateford, where toilet facilities and refreshments are available. The route follows the watercourse downstream, passing through Spylaw Park, and the green and scenic valleys of Colinton Dell and Craiglockhart Dell. Option here to finish the walk here and return to the start by foot/Lothian Bus Service 44 or travel home via Services 20, 34 or 36. Alternatively, if you wish to continue, we will walk westwards along the Union Canal to Wester Hailes, a distance of about 3 miles (4.8 km), where there is the option to walk uphill to Lanark Road to catch Lothian Bus service 44 to return to the start point at Pentland View car park. Alternatively, we may continue the walk further westwards to leave the canal at Heriot-Watt University's Riccarton Campus, returning to the start point, which gives a total length of walk of 13 miles (20.9 km).

Craft Corner



LUCIE NOVOVESKA

Happy Headbands

I love headbands. They are fun, fashionable and practical. When I searched the web for "who is famous for wearing headbands?" the results I received took me back. Way back... Headbands were really hot in the last century, so names like Bridget Bardot and Elizabeth Taylor came up. But fear not, headbands are coming back into fashion in this century as well. Current celebrities dabble in wearing headbands and whether you are a royal, a hippie or an upcycling enthusiast, headbands belong to your collection of accessories.

Making headbands is very straightforward. It is just a long rectangular piece of fabric folded and sewn together. I sewed my headbands inside out, then turned them the right way round, so nobody can see the seam, just like a very narrow sleeve. If you want to get points for craftsmanship, you can make your headband slightly wider in the centre and narrower towards the ends. For the connection, you can either keep the ends loose and make the headbands long enough to physically tie a knot, or make the headband into a circle with a little bit of elastic band to allow a bit of stretch to put it on. In any case, measure the head first.

The fabric selection is my favourite part.



You can pick your fabric based on colour, texture, or cost. You can upcycle fabric you may have around from previous projects or an old dress, sheets or curtains (which would easily get you about 100 headbands). Purchasing new fabric is always an option. Because you will only need about 20 cm x 100 cm of fabric for your new headband, you may buy an inexpensive fabric sample, which is typically only 20 cm wide, so perfect for what we are doing. You can always buy half a yard of fabric and make more headbands, or save the fabric for other projects. These days, the selection of fabric is unbelievable. You can find fabric with a print of anything including a variety of sports, hobbies, movies, animals, science... you name it. You might want to select a relatively small print on the fabric however, because the headband is very narrow.

Finally, you can decorate your headband by sewing in ribbons or gluing rhinestones, stars and other objects, whatever floats your boat and is safe for the user. If the headband is for a baby (a great customer who never complains) you may select organic, soft fabric and of course eliminate any choke hazards.



ROGER JONATHAN



Another Great May Fayre at Currie Primary School

SUSIE BASS
CO-CHAIR CURRIE PRIMARY SCHOOL PTA

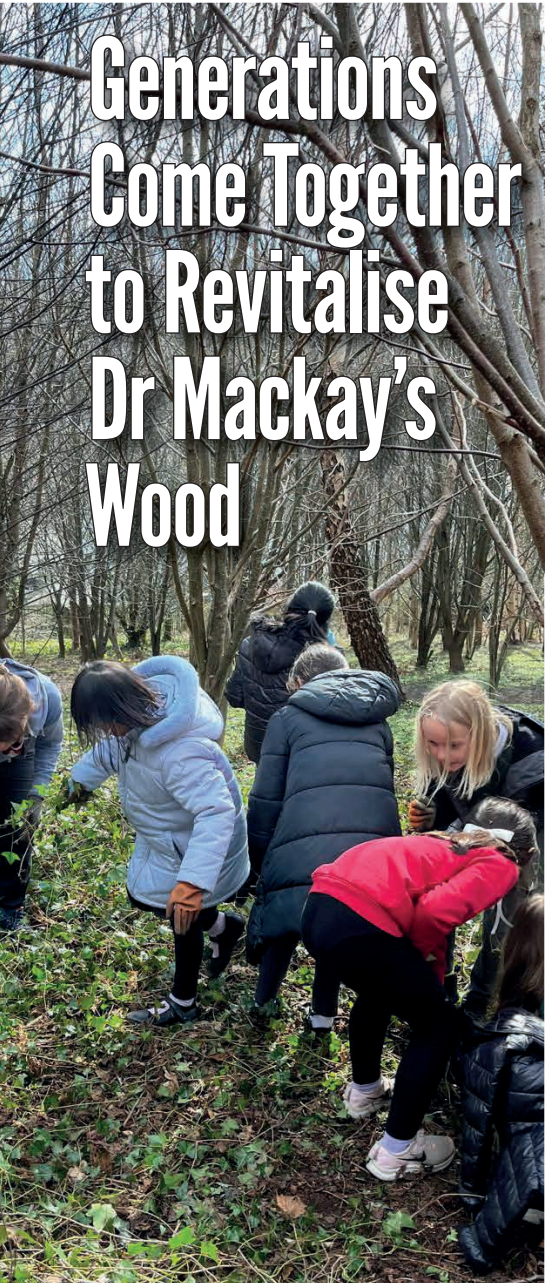
The sun was shining once again on Saturday 10 May as Currie Primary School held its annual May Fayre. Hundreds of people came to enjoy the fun and games: classic “hook a duck”, “splat the rat”, tombola, face-painting, “Splat the P7”—and much more!

We were delighted to be joined by the ambulance, police and fire brigade and Play2Learn football, and were treated to performances from Simon Says Dance, Balerno Dance Academy, Hamilton Heel and Toe, and the Currie Primary school choir.

We are so lucky to be supported by the school community and the many businesses who donated items for our raffle and silent auction, making the whole event possible.

The Fayre has raised an astonishing £10,000 for the school, which will be spent on new STEM resources.

Thank you to everyone who supported us and who came along to enjoy the fun on the day. We can’t wait to see you next year!



Generations Come Together to Revitalise Dr Mackay’s Wood



MICHAEL MUIRHEAD
JUNIPER GREEN RESIDENT

The work to improve Dr Mackay’s Wood has been continuing during recent months. We have carried out some thinning of trees to make the wood feel less dense but this has now stopped for the season as the trees are now in leaf. The wood is now looking a much more inviting, airy and light space.

As well as local volunteers, we have also had some additional outside help with a corporate group coming along to help remove the ground ivy that had been dominating the wood. We do not plan to remove all the ivy, however, as it also provides shelter and food for birds and insects.

An absolute highlight of the work to date has been the visit by two Primary 5 classes from Juniper Green Primary School, who

helped plant 400 bulbs—a mixture of snowdrops, wood anemones and native bluebells. The pupils did a brilliant job and their energy and enthusiasm was infectious—it was a real joy to work alongside them, and I’m sure there are some budding horticulturists amongst them. We can’t wait till next year when we will see the fruits of their labours and all the bulbs will be in flower. A big thank you for for all their hard work!

We have also put in a dead hedge. This not only helps define the path running through the wood but will also become a haven for a host of wildlife, helping to improve the biodiversity within the wood. The dead hedge was created using the branches from the hazel trees within the wood that were coppiced. It is good that we have been able to recycle the hazel cuttings for use within the wood.

There are also a number of other



improvements that will be happening over coming months. A handrail is being installed which will help with access to the wood. We will be replacing the information board and installing some new perch seats, and will be planting more bulbs in the autumn so there should be a great display next year. We are really grateful to Asda Foundation which have awarded us £1,000 to help carry out these improvements.

Finally, all the work in the wood wouldn’t have happened had it not been for Emily Ronaldson of Edinburgh and Lothian Greenspace Trust, who has done a fabulous job overseeing the work—thank you, Emily.

Please do visit the wood if you are passing by!

• Future volunteer sessions at Dr Mackay’s Wood are between 10am and noon on the following Wednesdays: 4 June, 18 June, 2 July, 23 July and 6 August.





**Chief Inspector
NIVEN BULL**
Local Area
Commander, South
West Edinburgh



How would you say your career so far has prepared you for your current role in south-west Edinburgh?

I have extensive operational experience, having been a response police officer as a constable, and also as a response sergeant and community sergeant—so I've got a really good handle on operational and local policing. I've also got some really good experience in terms of national and specialist roles, that assist me in my [present] role every day. I've worked in strategic planning, which is a big part of policing—planning around upcoming events, and challenges. I've also experience in professional standards, dealing with complaints against the police, and I'm really keen to maintain that professionalism in the service that we provide to the public. Of course, integrity is absolutely key: I will support officers who do the right things for the right reasons but, if I see any evidence of them not showing integrity, that's absolutely a red line for me.

Also I've worked within the control room environment as the duty officer, where you deal with very high risk incidents and take command of them—which, again, puts me in a really good place for some of the things that come across my desk on a daily basis.

When did you start in the job?

Start of the year—so, five months ago. It goes in a flash. There's lots to do and lots of people to meet. Lots of partners to work with, but I'm really enjoying it.

What would you say are the main issues affecting the communities along the upper Water of Leith valley?

Locally – in Currie, Balerno, and around those areas – the better weather and lighter evenings mean we're seeing significant increases in footfall, people being out and about, especially around the Pentlands. Most people behave well, and they're just out enjoying the scenery, but there are a small number of people who can spoil it. We have had general antisocial behaviour—and we've had a few people going out onto the water, which presents its own risks to them and the emergency services that are called to support them.

Obviously the Pentlands includes farming, so we do have issues with sheep worrying. We've got a local operation – Operation Harefield – in place to address that. And we've not had any issues with that this year, but it's something that's historically been an issue.

This is a big one for this area, but also across the city in the south west and north west of Edinburgh in particular—the use of off-road bikes in public parks and on the roads. We also see a seasonal increase in the theft of motorbikes, especially from tourists—people visiting the city. So we've got Operation Pillar in place to address that; a lot of that's around prevention, trying to prevent bikes from being stolen in the first place, as well as targeting the areas that we know the bikes are being used, to try to disrupt and prevent that from happening.

Dangerous dogs is a topical issue—there were recently quite a few complaints in Currie. That's a good example of the work that we do; we investigated it thoroughly, we've identified the dog and the owner, he's been charged with offences and reported, and we've worked with the City of Edinburgh Council in terms of putting some conditions in place for the dog. We'll always respond as and when these issues pop up in communities; as we haven't had any further issues, it's safe to say it has been successful in this regard.

This is an issue for the south west as a whole, but also the city and Scotland—“county line” drug dealing. It's something that's

maybe not as visible to the communities here, but it is happening. We target gangs that are involved in dealing and moving the drugs across the country, but also try to support the vulnerable people who are being exploited by these groups—that's a significant piece of work, and it brings with it all the challenges around violence, use of weapons, and addiction.

How do you counter criticism that the police presence in our communities isn't what it once was, and is certainly less than many residents want?

What I would say is that we have a fantastic team in place locally; I'm supported by Inspector Paul Begley, who's the Community Inspector. We've got two community sergeants who are so committed and knowledgeable about the area, and we also have a team of community officers who are specifically focused on the Currie/Balerno area and are passionate about policing and are incredibly dedicated.

Also we have 24/7 response teams; they will respond at any given time of day or night to support; if there is an immediate need, then we will be there. There's also a whole army of background officers and staff who work around the clock that maybe are not seen by the public—I've got firsthand experience of that, having worked in the control room. We have a control room which risk-assesses and manages all of the policing resources on duty at any particular time. There's a host of specialist teams: CID, investigating teams, there's cyber-teams, firearms officers, dog-handlers—there's a whole suite of resources that are working nationally around the clock and will be available 24/7.

We'd always like more resources; if we had more resources we could do more, but we do have to prioritise, and what that does mean is sometimes there might be a delay before we get to certain calls. So, I suppose, from a policing point of view, what we need to make sure of is that we're communicating well with the public, explaining that and explaining to individuals if there is a delay. I think policing provides an incredibly important role in society and we provide a very good service, but we're always open to feedback on what we can do better.

Also, we police as a city. Edinburgh is divided into four – the north east, north west, south east, and south west – and resources will move across those boundaries depending on where the need is. So in the south west we will benefit from that when we have a need, but equally, when the need is elsewhere, then we will support other areas.

Do you have a message for C&B News readers?

Yes. Police officers are members of the public, in uniform. We are incredibly dedicated and passionate about serving the public, and every day I am blown away by the dedication and courage of my colleagues. Just the other day, I read a report of two officers from this area who pulled a person going through a mental health crisis off a bridge and, disregarding the risk to themselves, kept that person safe when they could've died or been seriously injured. That's an ordinary, everyday occurrence, which often doesn't make it into the mainstream media—or any media at all.

My colleagues provide an incredible service. We're not perfect, we do make mistakes. I've talked about integrity; the important thing is that we admit when we make mistakes, but we also rely on the public to do what we do, so please let us know, share your feedback.

We also rely on the information we get from the public to make sure that we're in the right place at the right time: so please make us aware of issues within the community, and you can do that by calling 101, or through Crimestoppers (0800 555111, <https://crimestoppers-uk.org>).

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Illustration: Marjorie Beaumont

LETTERS etc!

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

Oops!

It Wisnae' Me This Time! In our May issue, under "Briefly", our rather-too-trusting Hired Help copied an item from the City of Edinburgh Council's weekly planning lists concerning application 25/01887/FUL, for a "storey-and-a-half rear extension with glass link and single storey entrance porch with store," listed at 29 Belmont Road, Balerno. However, as many readers may well be aware, there is NO Belmont Road in Balerno; there is, however, one in Juniper Green—which, of course, is the actual site of the proposed work.

Meantime, apologies to new Currie Balerno Rotary member David Birks, who we typographically misnamed as David Briks in the headline. Sorry!

Graveyard Shift

A few editions ago I read that Currie Cemetery would soon be full, which we all knew about years ago, and burials would need to be carried out outside the district.

I recently wrote to Sue Webber MSP, a local lass of course, to say I was delighted to know that new Currie Community High School would open soon. I remember Currie folks also fighting for Balerno High School to be built.

Sue informed me that Ratho was suggested for future burials. I cannot believe that is acceptable to C&B News readers. That is a foreign land. The obvious solution was land alongside where horses are housed, but perhaps farmer unwilling to sell or CEC do not have the cash to do so. I felt it was perhaps Balerno's turn to find the solution, but space must be close enough to bus route for visitors to reach. I do not have a problem, as some day I will be laid to rest in Currie alongside my wife Nancy who died in 2008.

I had this light bulb moment which readers might not agree with, but here goes.

The Muirfield field between Currie and Juniper Green has to be kept as green belt and has a lot of space along with pylons. A new path being provided, I read.

I think the land belongs to Wimpey who have been refused house building. You cannot get more central than that and a graveyard would still be green belt surely, especially if strips are slowly taken in with the rest sown as wildflower meadow until another strip required.



What about the cash? Our Scottish Government is always pushing for locals to acquire community land and provide help. Then Wimpey could be pressed to play their part and Scottish Power wind farms and SSE Renewables have direct interests, with the big transformer station and the pylons overhead. Postcode Lottery, Heritage Funds and any local benefactor could put his name to the field. The City would be expected to help, with pressure from the community councils, the local MP and MSPs, and the four churches including Colinton.

Time to put the thinking caps on..

Bill Gordon
Former Currie Resident



Whenever the hired help sees a prominently-positioned "Polite Notice" – like this by the premises of the 108th Pentland Scouts in Colinton (by the entrance to Spylaw Park) – he can't help but wonder... what would a rude sign look like? And might it be more effective?

What the...?



katie

'MEANINGFUL MOVEMENT, or WINNING THE BAG RACE'

It's with some envy that I've been watching sprightly runners passing my house as they trained for The Edinburgh Marathon last month. Having run the race myself a few times, I remember the feeling of strength and freedom that comes with a strong, healthy body powering you wherever you want to go in the world.

I won't be running any races, getting in my 10,000 steps or achieving any other externally validated exercise measure any time soon, since Long Covid rumbled my health. Instead I focus now on meaningful movement which supports me in other ways.

Some days that is as small as the extreme sport of sitting outside listening to the birds, while other days it can be as large as my latest unusual weightlifting regime. In short stints I have been clearing rubbish

from beneath the strip of trees along my street. Emerging from the bushes, grinning from ear to ear, with a (sadly) usually quite large bag of rubbish, I can be quite a sight! I've scared many a passerby by waving and saying hello. So be it! Collecting rubbish from this patch of trees, which at this time of year has a carpet of bluebells and is a refuge for wildlife, makes me so happy that I feel like I have won a medal!

So especially if movement is not easy for you for whatever reason, take a moment to celebrate the creativity and adaptability it requires to feel your way into other less traditional ways of moving that are meaningful to you and which suit your specific body's needs better. This is certainly worth a medal!

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY katie



Parking on Main Street

The sign on the poles either side of the road as you enter Balerno's Main Street, just past the Scotmid Co-op, state: "Pedestrian zone. Except for loading and disabled."

Not that you would know. The main thoroughfare seems to have become an unofficial car park, judging by the amount of vehicles taking up space on a regular basis.

They are not loading or offloading goods. Children, yes, but not goods. It ebbs and flows, but the tide has been turning lately, and not for the better.

Word must be spreading that parking is OK there so you can pick up wee Katie or Jimmy or park on the double yellow lines and pop into the store to pick up a quick coffee or snack or even some wee odds and ends.

Lately, there have been up to 10 cars parked, particularly at busy times like kids collection from nursery or from classes in the community centre.

One mum was noted grabbing a youngster who had strayed just as a parked car moved away.

Simply, this is either a pedestrian zone or it is not.

Parking attendants visit and they apparently dish out fines.

However, word is not getting out there to enough people to stop this. Balerno's Main Street is not for traffic.

Yes, the car park adjacent to Scotmid Co-op does seem to be pretty full. Local gossip claims that some of the cars are there long stay so that occupants can catch the bus into town.

Without proper statistics, it is difficult to say if this is true. If it is, that is a disappointment.

A letter some months ago to the City of Edinburgh Council elicited a response. An official emailed back to say the letter was not the only one and that the matter was being dealt with. They did not say how. Meanwhile, the parking seems to have increased.

Does it need an accident to happen to a youngster or a pensioner before proper action is taken? One hopes not.

These pictures illustrate the situation better than words so Councillor Graeme Bruce (Scottish Conservatives), our local representative, and Councillor Stephen Jenkinson, transport and environment convener for the City of Edinburgh Council, who is the Labour Party councillor for Edinburgh Pentland Hills, please take note. This issue appears to take in both categories of Cllr Jenkinson's remit.

Indiscriminate parking in a this pedestrian area has to stop and soon.

Name and address supplied



PLANNING, ETC

Planning and Climate Change-4: Going All-Electric?

I'm unconvinced that a rapid change to all-electric heating, transport and communications is possible – or even desirable. Some seem to imagine that electric cars will save the planet. But "cutting edge" technology (which is out-of-date immediately manufacturers refine their products) requires a constant and sustainable infrastructure. When Spain and Portugal's electricity grid recently collapsed, everything stopped, including mobile phones.

Successive governments have ducked away from the crushing expense of providing a well-planned, reliable power distribution system - before we need to plug into it.

In November 2024, *The Telegraph* reported that Britain imported 26.3 terawatt hours of electricity from France, Germany and Norway between January and September 2024 (because it was cheaper) while more recently it reported how the UK paid £400m in 2024 to wind power providers because the grid couldn't cope with all the power being generated! How's that for forward planning?

At a time when USA President Trump is busily reorganising World Trading arrangements, note that a quarter of the UK's Electric Vehicles have been transported from China and that the electricity conductors

between the UK, its off-shore fields of wind turbines, and the continent could be broken by ships accidentally dragging their anchors across the sea bed. If interconnectors between the UK and the Continent get broken, then this country can expect blackouts as solar and wind generation coupled with biomass and gas-fired stations are hardly reliable alternatives—which raises the question as to whether over-reliance on electricity for travel and heating is sensible.

In my view, retaining existing systems that work well to run in parallel over a long period with emerging technology makes more sense than putting all our eggs in one half-woven basket. We remove noise and certain noxious gases from our internal combustion engines using exhausts so why are we not removing all polluting fossil fuel nasties from vehicle engines by developing better exhausts? That way existing reliable technology can continue to evolve for much longer, while electrical and hydrogen systems are refined to provide matching reliability.

It feels like government plans for long term baseload energy provision are that I change my 60 watt light bulb for a 25 watt one so that electricity can be diverted to more needy users. Not a clever strategy.

Clovenstone Housing Application Approved

In April 2024, I referred to application 24/00994/FUL for a three-storey block comprising three ground floor flats and five maisonettes in Clovenstone. The application included bike shelters and a reconfiguration of communal amenity land north west of 13 Clovenstone Gardens. This was substantially similar to another application by Prospect Community Housing that had been withdrawn. The site is adjacent to and occupies part

of what was claimed to be an underused car park. The elevations are 'active' and though outdoor uncovered staircases are 'interesting', they may not prove popular in inclement weather.

The proposals quickly drew 10 objections from people claiming there was insufficient parking; that the provision of outdoor bike storage is questionable; and that green space is already inadequate. Approval was granted on 25 March.

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PLANNING, ETC BY ARCHIE CLARK



MORE TRAMS: Following the picture attributed to Bob Pritchard [from Balerno, by the way] of what CEC may have in mind for future “active” transport, I offer these two from my collection. The picture on the left (taken in Christchurch, New Zealand) shows a moving tram (still active, I believe) with a tram suspended in front of the cab for training would-be future tram drivers. On the right, the Dundee equivalent where someone has pinched the wheels. Now what would be the most likely choice of tram if a line ever gets built to Edinburgh Royal Infirmary and the Bioquarter?



The Caledonian Brewery

In June 2024, I reported that application 24/02048/FUL had been submitted to develop the former Caledonian Brewery in Slateford for 168 private and affordable homes. The application was lodged when affordable housing provision was 25% under the previous Local Development Plan, though the reporters scrutinising the Council’s emerging City Plan 2030 had already confirmed that the affordable provision should be raised to 35%.

The affordable element for these proposals is 23.8% affordable on site (40 units), with a “commuted sum” of £420,000 in lieu of 11.2% paid to the Council to provide a further 18 units, but off site. Apparently this formula provides 35% affordable units. (So “affordables” cost £23,333 each?).

I estimated the total occupancy could be around 600. As there would be only two car parking spaces on-site, clearly car users would have to park in the nearby congested streets. However on-site parking would be provided for 365 cycles – including visitors’ bikes. There would be no designated temporary parking or drop off area for taxi, trade, delivery or visiting vehicles – thereby including carers.

Given the adjacent railway line, the only surprise is that the planners didn’t require the inclusion of a train station.

The planning department is recommending that the Development Management Sub-Committee approve the application.

The Planning Portal states that there were 152 objections and four letters of support.

Processing of Planning Applications

Readers might be surprised to learn that some planning applications remain undecided long after the public has been allowed to comment on the original proposals.

One example is for an hotel at Cameron Toll that dates back to June 2022; it would be no surprise to learn that people have forgotten about it and that, with the sale and purchase of houses in the area, new residents will be unaware of a proposal that once drew 144 objections. Shouldn’t regulations be introduced that require the

planning process to be completed and a decision issued within say 12-18 months? Whatever the reasons for the delay, it is unfair on the public to allow the processing of applications to become so protracted.

More locally, application 24/00621/FUL, for a path from the Heriot-Watt University Sports Academy to Curriehill Station, has seen little activity on the planning portal since it first appeared in the weekly list on 19 February 2024. Has it too got lost in the system?

Ravelrig Quarry

Tarmac’s Planning Application 24/06100/FUL “to operate not in compliance with Conditions 1, 10, 11, 15, 21, 34, 35 and 36 of planning permission 08/00140/FUL at Ravelrig Quarry” was granted by the Development Management Sub-Committee on 6th May 2025. The Conditions referred to relate to noise and vibration, timescale and removal of some landscaping conditions. The application relates to a large area stretching southwards from the existing quarry to Lanark Road West.

The applicant stated: “It is proposed that the overall reserve will be excavated at an average rate of 400,000 to 600,000 tonnes per annum over a period of some 24 years. A further 1 year will be required to complete restoration.”

In recommending approval, the planning officer stated: “Though amenity impacts to neighbouring residents are foreseen, the degree of impact

is to be sufficiently mitigated such that it is not unreasonable, secured by condition. Further conditions have been attached as appropriate to ensure the proposal will not result in a significant or unreasonable adverse impact to landscape, trees, soils or transport. The proposal has due regard to the climate and nature crisis as well as other aspects of sustainability and biodiversity, meeting the relevant policy requirements subject to conditions. The proposals are in accordance with the Development Plan.”

The proposal drew 121 objections, and no support.

Another application by Tarmac, 24/06106/FUL for the extension of Ravelrig quarry to allow further extraction of hard rock, change of use from woodland and grassland to quarry at Ravelrig Quarry, was granted on 6th May 2025. There were 74 objections and no letters of support.

Bonnington Mains Quarry

In March (C&B News, issue 504) I noted that Bredon Trading’s application 24/05865/FUL for a “Lateral extension to the quarry, erection and operation of Materials Recycling Plant (MRP), etc. at Bonnington Mains Quarry” attracted 349 objections – and 83 letters of support.

With the correspondence now posted on the planning portal, it is clear that many supporters used a standard letter, which is quite legitimate though unusual for this type of application. On the other hand, those objecting appear to reflect individual and local concerns, whether as long-term residents or from a knowledgeable technical perspective. Analysis of the addresses will reveal the extent of local support.

On 20 May, the Planning Committee REFUSED the application on the grounds that the proposed site is not allocated for either the expansion or formation of a new quarry in relation to LDP Policy Inf 20. While LDP Policy Env 18 supports expansion of existing uses within the countryside, the proposed environmental impact outweighs this consideration.

I expect an appeal will shortly be lodged with the Planning and Environmental Appeals Division.



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SCOTT ARTHUR MP
EDINBURGH SOUTH WEST

ASSISTED DYING

Margo MacDonald first proposed legalising assisted dying for people with terminal illnesses 15 years ago; we now see separate pieces of legislation progressing through both Holyrood and Westminster. On an issue as profound as this, is it really too much to ask that our Parliaments work together?

I will not comment on the Holyrood bill, but I do have serious reservations about the Westminster one, which applies only to England and Wales—especially at a time when palliative care remains critically underfunded. We must ask ourselves: are we truly offering people a real choice, or are we failing those who need compassionate care the most?

The bill has already attracted over 100 amendments, but my unease begins with how mental capacity is assessed. Parents of adults with learning disabilities have warned that the threshold is too low. They fear their adult child could go through the entire process—and the first they'd hear of it would be after their child had died.

There are no limits on how many doctors a person can approach for approval, nor on how many cases a single doctor can authorise in a year. While the bill restricts assisted dying to those over 18, it allows doctors to raise the topic with patients as young as 16. Seriously ill young people are especially vulnerable to the influence of authority figures.

Many are also concerned that the bill lacks a formal process for hospices and care homes to opt out of participating in assisted dying. Furthermore, the panel responsible for authorising an assisted death is not required to consider evidence from family members, carers, or treating clinicians.

For these reasons, I believe the stakes are too high and the safeguards too weak. I cannot support this bill in its current form—but I will use every opportunity to strengthen protections for the most vulnerable.



GORDON MACDONALD MSP
EDINBURGH PENTLANDS

VOCATIONAL CHOICES

Well done to all high school pupils who will be breathing a sigh of relief with the exam period all but ended for this academic year.

Many leaving school will be considering what to do next if they have not already secured a place at college, university or employment. I recently had the opportunity to lead my members' debate in Parliament on construction skills and how we need to address the skills gap that currently exists. To meet future demand, we need to encourage more young people to consider careers in construction to fill 26,000 vacancies over the next five years. In addition, there needs to be parity of esteem between the vocational and academic routes in further and higher education. Instead of referring to a four-year apprenticeship qualification as Scottish credit and qualifications framework level 6, we should refer to it as a vocational degree.

The vocational route has many benefits. Students are paid as they learn, they contribute to the country's economy, they pay income tax and national insurance contributions, which support public services, and when they qualify, they have no student debt. That is why over 90% of apprentices who complete their apprenticeships stay in the occupations that relate to them. The new Currie High School and the construction company Kier Group is a perfect example of what can be done to introduce young people into the construction industry. They opened an on-site construction academy, which offered training in industry and employability skills to local students. The constructing futures partnership, which included Kier, Currie High School, City of Edinburgh Council, Edinburgh College and local employability partner Rural & Urban Training Scheme, covered the full academic year and introduced students to the construction industry. More information can be found at <https://www.citb.co.uk/>



SUE WEBBER MSP
LOTHIAN REGION

ASSISTED DYING

It was the most emotional debate I have ever taken part in, and the vote on the first stage of the Assisted Dying Bill was going to be one of the hardest decisions MSPs had to make.

There were no party whips to guide us, just our own consciences. I was one of those whose views changed the more I thought about it, and the more I heard the arguments on both sides. Thousands of you, health professionals and charities contacted me making those arguments.

It was therefore a privilege to participate in such a vital debate, with many moving testimonies for and against – the SNP's Marie McNair, a former palliative care nurse, was particularly powerful – but at times it also felt as if death was being depersonalised and commoditised, which I found upsetting.

I was honoured to be asked to close on behalf of those opposed to the bill, and I was shaking like a leaf when I sat down.

The result of the vote was 56 against and 70 for, meaning the bill passed at Stage One.

There is still a long way to go with more scrutiny at the committee stage and, in the final third reading, there will be opportunities to amend the legislation. This may persuade members to reconsider how they will vote.

I'm sure the committee will hear many more tragic stories, but heart-breaking personal stories should not be the only consideration in a decision with such vast implications, and when we must legislate for everyone.

There is no question that in bringing the bill forward, Orkney MSP Liam McArthur's intentions are honourable, but the risks it introduces are real.

While trying to solve suffering, this bill could ultimately multiply it. Instead, let's strengthen our duty to care.



CLLR GRAEME BRUCE
PENTLAND HILLS WARD

BRANCHING OUT

We are at that time of year when the trees take more life and expand their branches, so much so that this has been the month of complaints of trees/branches overhanging residents gardens, including trees from Roley's Wood in Currie. I have contacted the department responsible for the maintenance of these areas with a list across the ward that need attention where the tree originates on Council land.

I was alerted by residents of Harlaw March recently about the poor state of the entrance to this street and made the council aware of how bad it was. The feedback I received from residents was that the council have done a great job of patching this area. Rather than just fill some potholes, they scraped back the whole area to perform a good solid piece of tarmac.

At the recent Currie Community council there was a presentation on a possible new cycle route from Kirknewton to Balerno but it is somewhat in the distance as the route has not been finalised. Also, another presentation from the Active Travel Team at the council provided a number of proposed initiatives within the Currie to help with walking and cycling en route to local facilities. Hopefully, there will be more information provided by the council on their website by the time you read this article via the 'Have your say' section of their website and I would encourage everyone to submit their views in due course. Once more detail is presented, I would be very interested to hear any thoughts from residents in this area so please do get in touch with me at my council email address.

By the time you read this Balerno Gala activities will have kicked off with the Rigg Race (which I used to help marshal in the many years I was on the committee) followed by the Balerno Children's Gala Parade and Gala day itself. Hoping the weather will hold out for a bit longer!

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CLLR NEIL CUTHBERT
COLINTON/FAIRMILEHEAD WARD

PRESERVING HERITAGE

As an aspiring councillor, protecting Edinburgh's architectural heritage from vandalism and graffiti was always one of my key priorities. This is why, at its full meeting in May, I brought forward a motion to the City of Edinburgh Council focusing specifically on the Union Canal's built heritage.

The Union Canal, a Scheduled Ancient Monument under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, represents a superlative achievement of Georgian civil engineering. However, in recent years, portions have increasingly fallen victim to graffiti and vandalism, detracting from both its historical significance and the enjoyment of those who visit.

Many residents in the west of Edinburgh, including Colinton and Balerno, cherish the canal as a place to walk, cycle, and immerse themselves in nature. The canal corridor provides a tranquil environment where people can appreciate both natural beauty and remarkable historic engineering. This special character deserves our protection.

I'm pleased to report that my motion was approved with minor amendments from Labour and Liberal Democrat colleagues. The Council has committed to working collaboratively with Scottish Canals and Historic Environment Scotland to develop and implement a specific action plan for protecting and restoring the canal's built heritage. We will look closely at best practices from other UK monuments, consider appropriate resource allocation for anti-graffiti measures, and enhance community engagement initiatives.

The existing canal strategy, while comprehensive in many areas, lacked specific measures to protect the built heritage from graffiti. As we move forward, I look forward to working with council officers and partner organisations to help preserve this important element of our city's heritage.



CLLR FIONA GLASGOW
PENTLAND HILLS WARD

LOSSES AND GAINS

The good weather finally arrived and I managed a lovely visit to Balerno Farmers' Market, leaving with a selection of gifts and plants that will hopefully thrive over the summer.

On the same day, the inaugural Edinburgh Tartan Parade took place in the city centre; there was a great atmosphere, with pipe bands and free entertainment at the Ross Bandstand. It will be a great addition to Edinburgh's cultural activities in future.

Since last issue, we at the council have lost one of our members, the convener of the Culture and Communities Committee, Cllr Val Walker. A lovely service was held at Mortonhall. Val was committed to supporting libraries and oversaw the decision that kept our wonderful libraries open. Val was a kind and hard working colleague who worked hard to get consensus around some of the difficult decisions that were needed to be made as a result of budget constraints.

In my role as councillor I have participated in a number of appeal committees, including out-of-catchment schools appeals; this can be a challenging aspect of the councillor role as each family has strong and compelling reasons for making their requests. Our local high schools receive a number of placing requests due to them being seen as quality providers of education.

I attended training for the Community Fund; this is open to locally constituted groups to help them with local events and activities. The aim is to provide funding for small scale activities that benefit the local communities and meet the councils strategic aims and those of the local improvement or place plan. Local representatives and elected members oversee the process and make recommendations based on their knowledge of local communities. If you know of any groups looking for funding, please encourage them to apply!



RICHARD M HENDERSON
BALERNO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

ONLY A MILE...

Balerno Community Council agreed in May that it would look again at preparation of a statutory Local Place Plan. CEC encourages those as part of the CityPlan2040 process. Among the things the Council suggests we comment on is "moving around the area and connections to the rest of Edinburgh and beyond".

So, local connectivity within Balerno, like footpaths, and also transport to and from; it would definitely include safe routes to schools, and to the Pentland Hills, as well as getting to and from local services.

Neither planners nor developers have actively supported ensuring paths actually connect across the community. Take Ravelrig; there are several developments along Lanark Road West but each is insulated from its neighbour. That makes Lanark Road West the main pedestrian route, albeit it's more than a mile into the village, then take the well-trodden but muddy path through the old Ravelrig estate (undoubtedly a right of way), through the old Arboretum, past the 17th century dovecot and walled garden, emerging down steep steps opposite the High School. It is high time this thoroughfare was made safe and useable.

As for transport, Sustrans refer us to guidance encouraging planners to ensure developments are within a walkable distance of 800 metres from most services; remember the "Twenty Minute Neighbourhood"? We all know there are places in Balerno village – including recent housing developments, let alone the outlying areas – which are a mile or more from the nearest bus stop.

Planning should be much more than simply building houses. For a start it involves recognition that people live here too. Leaving aside everything else, if we want people to use their feet and public transport, then planners, developers and our City Council also have to build into their plans the paths to walk on, and realistic access to bus services.



DR KEITH JAMES SYMINGTON
CURRIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

ACTIVE TRAVEL

Cycling dominated this month's CCC meeting as consultants AECOM unveiled ideas for an active-travel corridor linking Currie with Kirknewton. Funded by Sustrans, five routes are being assessed as an enhancement of National Cycle Route 75. Designs, which were budgeted at £112,000, promise a four-metre wide track segregated from traffic "wherever land and ecology allow", running alongside but not through parkland. Residents asked about pedestrian priority which turned out to be part of the dual use design. The officers responded that demand surveys would be shared with CCC. Ecological studies will follow landowner talks, with work expected to continue through 2025.

Closer to home, Edinburgh's Senior Transport officer, Gert Rijdsdijk, explained how money from three housing developments will be invested in walking, wheeling and cycling around Currie. A public survey will be backed by a drop-in at the library, to shape priorities that already include adjustments to the steep path to Curriehill station, extra cycle parking and clearer station signage. Of particular interest are the Curriehill Road adjustments where it meets Forth View Crescent and Riccarton Avenue, with the addition of zebra/tiger crossings and a filter to manage traffic flow.

The long-running dog control issue re-emerged with one resident voicing frustration at conflicting information from officials. However, CCC has received an update: police report no fresh incidents, and the council has repaired the damaged fence. Yet anxiety lingers in the community.

Finally, Ken Brown updated members on Currie's green spaces. Verges will be cut fortnightly, core amenity grass every six weeks and designated biodiverse strips just twice a year. Feedback will be reviewed at a public meeting on 11 June. Many thanks to Ken Brown and Robyn Wisbey for their efforts coordinating with the community!

Local Resident Publishes Holocaust Memoir

PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
C&B NEWS

Juniper Green resident Miriam Landor, who describes herself as “a descendant of Holocaust victims and survivors”, has published a new memoir in which she looks back upon the 80 years since Victory in Europe Day.

In *Stumbling Stones: the Holocaust, my family and me*, Miriam reflects on the long-lasting impact of the Nazi era on “second generation” Jews.

Miriam has spent most of her adult life in Scotland, but she grew up travelling the world with her German Jewish father and English mother. She subsequently worked in education as a teacher, lecturer and psychologist, and is now married with three adult children.

Having previously published professional and academic work, she is now turning to memoir to reflect on her family’s history.

• *Stumbling Stones: the Holocaust, my family and me*, published by Wordswim Press.



Art Trail Connects Community with Local Artists

JOHN ELLIOTT
POST

The Pentlands Open Studio (POST) Art Trail is thrilled to announce that “Stop Number One” on this year’s trail will be the picturesque greenhouse at Malleny Garden in Balerno.

Generously offered by the National Trust for Scotland, this special venue will host an exhibition by acclaimed botanical artist and Balerno resident Janet Dyer.

Janet, a professional botanical illustrator, is a member of the Edinburgh Society of Botanical Artists (ESBA) and has a distinguished background, including work



for botanists at Oxford and the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh.

In recent years, she has shifted her focus to colour painting, earning distinction and “Best in Year” in the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh’s diploma course in 2011. Her recent work highlights the spread of invasive non-native plant species along the Water of Leith.

Janet will be working closely with Malleny’s Head Gardener (and C&B News contributor) James Bell to creatively showcase her work in harmony with the greenhouse setting.

Meantime, another notable addition to this year’s trail is Tiphereth Print Studio, featured as “Stop Number 10”. Based in Hoyland House near the terminus of Lothian Buses route 16, Tiphereth is part of the Camphill community supporting individuals with learning disabilities. This inclusive studio is home to a diverse group of artists – both with and without additional support needs – who work together to foster creativity, personal growth, and connection through the arts.

Choir Open Rehearsals in September

MARGARET KIERAN
COLINTON & MERCHISTON COMMUNITY CHOIR

The Colinton & Merchiston Community Choir warmly invites local residents to experience what it would be like to sing with our welcoming and non-auditioning community choir, by joining us for either or both of our open rehearsals.

There will be no commitment or pressure to join or any charge unless you decide to join the choir for the full term. We are a very friendly choir with a mixed range of ages and singing and sight-reading abilities. You do not need to have any experience at all of choral



Main image: Founding artist Gill Walton (left) with Janet Dyer in the Malleny Greenhouse. Above left: Janet Dyer. Above right: the POST Tiphereth Print Studio.

• The Pentlands Open Studio (POST) Art Trail runs on Saturday 30 and Sunday 31 August 2025, inviting the public to explore the vibrant creativity of local artists in unique and inspiring settings.

• Details of all 10 trail venues, along with artist profiles and visitor information, are available on our website. The POST Art Trail is entirely volunteer-run and proudly supported by the donation of three exhibition spaces, as well as generous community grants from the Currie and Balerno District Round Table (CBDRT) and Scotmid Co-op.

• For updates and to sign up for our newsletter, visit: linktr.ee/POSTstudios or find us on Instagram: @PentlandsOpenStudios

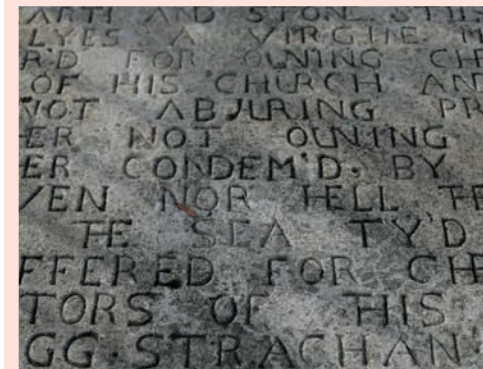
singing to enjoy singing with us.

We will be rehearsing for our Christmas Concert on Monday evenings from 7.15pm to 9 pm in the Memorial Hall at Merchiston Castle School, but it is not a problem if you can’t be there for 7.15 pm or have to leave a bit early.

Our rehearsals with our enthusiastic Director of Music, Tim Coleman, and our Accompanist, the excellent Morley Whitehead, are really good and great fun. We also have some social events.

• The Open Rehearsals are at 7pm on Monday 8 and Monday 15 September, in the Memorial Hall at Merchiston Castle School.

• For more information about our choir, please visit: www.colintonchoir.org, or our Facebook page.



New Exhibition and Book Explore Family Tragedy

PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
C&B NEWS

Landscape photographer and Juniper Green resident Iain Stewart is launching an exhibition and book this month, inspired by his family connection to the 17th century Solway Martyrs.

The Killing Time focuses on two Covenanter women – Margaret McLaughlin (63) and Margaret Wilson (18) – who were tied to stakes and drowned for their refusal to swear the Oath of Supremacy which declared the then-King James VII as head of the Church. Three men were also hung for refusing to take the oath: these included 25-year old John Milroy, the younger brother of Iain’s nine-times great-grandfather. Together with William Johnston and George Walker, the five Covenanters share a common grave in Wigtown Old Kirk.

“Since learning of their stories, and my family connection, I have been compelled to share them forward,” said Iain. “Sadly, little has been learned from the zeal with which many hundreds of Covenanters were persecuted for their beliefs during this dark period in Scottish history; the barbarity with which the women were treated; imprisonment, torture, the exile of families, the theft of lands—all these cruelties still echo to this day.”

Iain has spent two years visiting locations and meeting other descendants of the five martyrs. The result is the exhibition and book, published by Studies in Photography, who have a gallery on Edinburgh’s William Street.

In a specially composed forward to the book, Scottish author James Robertson describes Iain’s landscape photography as “haunted by people long departed from them. The story he tells is personal, communal and very Scottish, but it is also universal.”

• The Killing Time runs from Friday 13 June to Sunday 13 July (not Mondays and Tuesdays) at Studies in Photography, 6 William Street, Edinburgh, EH3 7NH: noon - 5pm.

• The exhibition will also run from Friday 29 August to Sunday 5 October at Dalkeith Palace, Via King’s Gate, Dalkeith, EH22 1ST, as part of PhotoDalkeith 2025.

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To enter, please scan or photograph the completed puzzle and email it to: editor@candbnews.com before noon, Friday 13 June 2025. The winner is picked at random from all correct entries received.

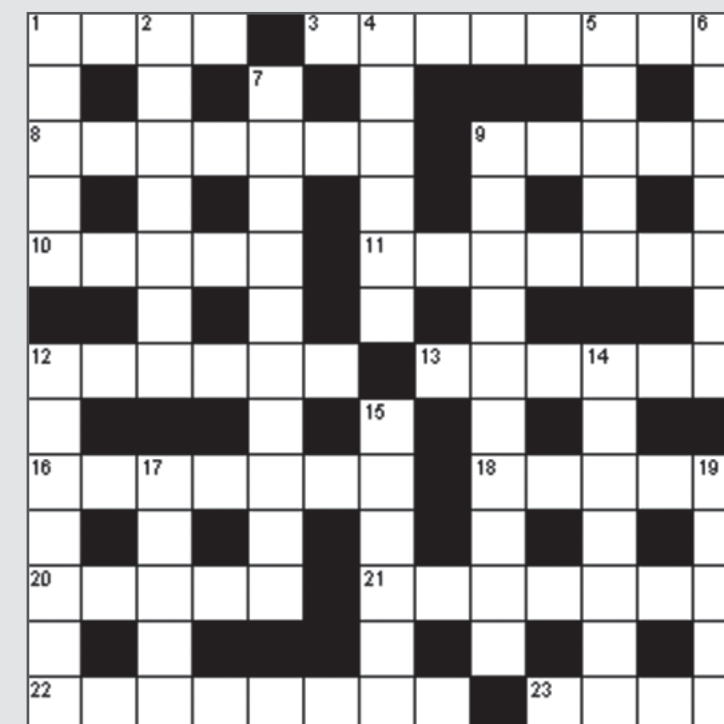
Good luck everyone!

ACROSS

1. Gusto. (4)
3. Brings to an address. (8)
8. Feast. (7)
9. Tag. (5)
10. Performer. (5)
11. Trade Barrier. (7)
12. Voice box. (6)
13. Large number of people. (6)
16. Closest. (7)
18. One of the senses. (5)
20. Cajoled. (5)
21. Before. (7)
22. Fragile. (8)
23. Unsightly. (4)

DOWN

1. Striped equine. (5)
2. US legislator. (7)
4. One or the other. (6)
5. Hot remnants of a fire. (5)
6. Bars. (7)
7. Secured by written agreement. (10)
9. Research workplace. (10)
12. Lackadaisical. (7)
14. Hoping for. (7)
15. Certify. (6)
17. Spiritual being. (5)
19. Ahead of time. (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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MEDIUM

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HARD

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LAST ISSUE'S SOLUTIONS

Last issue's prize crossword was won by Mark Chadwick from Balerno. Congratulations!

G	E	L	I	D	P	A	S	S	E	M
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EASY

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3	4	7	9	5	2	1	8	6
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MEDIUM

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HARD

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

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What's ON

JUNE 2025

WHAT'S ON 41

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 as appropriate.
Details correct at time of going to press. Inclusion should not be assumed
to be a recommendation by C&B News.

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 you feel ready—the tile game is like rummy with layers of complexity but easy to start!
- **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
- **MONDAY MORNING POP IN CAFÉ:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 10.30am - noon. Come for a cuppa every Monday morning; our volunteers will welcome you for a cup, a chat and perhaps a game of scrabble. Donations welcomed but not required.
- **COFFEE, CAKE & COMPANY:** Redeemer Church Edinburgh, 64 Bridge Road, Colinton; 10.30am - noon. Drop in for free coffee, tea, a cake and a chat every Monday morning. All welcome. For further information see: www.redeemeredinburgh.org/ccf/
- **LUNCHTIME RELAXATION:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 12.15pm - 1pm. Join Raymond at lunchtime to enjoy a guided relaxation to calm the mind and ease stress. No booking required, 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 share 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, please email: cubs@babertonscouts.org
- **MONTHLY BOOK GROUP:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 7pm - 9pm. We have a waitlist in place for this popular group, and we'd love to start a new social book group to meet monthly, later in the week or at the weekend, but we need a small group of friends to perhaps kick this off. If this is of interest to you, please get in touch: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

TUESDAYS

- **ACE IT DIGITAL SKILLS:** Currie Library, Lanark Road; 10am - noon. Free, friendly digital skills coaching for over 50s. For total beginners or just needing a refresher, we are here to help. Call (0131) 667 2053 for more information.
- **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 enquire by email: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com
- **ITALIAN CONVERATION 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

- **BALERNO RAMBLERS MIDWEEK GROUP:** Meet for walks in the Lothians, Fife, the Borders and further afield. For walk details contact M Timmins on 07917878955. Follow Balerno Ramblers on Facebook.
- **PENTLANDS SPORTING MEMORIES CLUB:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 1.30pm - 3pm. 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. Contact Donna Mackey on 07340 560306
- **BOOKBUG AT BALERNO LIBRARY:** 1 Main Street; 3.30pm. Come and join us for songs, stories and rhymes! To book your place call: (0131) 529 5500 or email: balerno.library@edinburgh.gov.uk
- **THE OCTAGON CLUB for Adults with learning disabilities:** Gibson Craig Halls, 158 Lanark Road West; 7pm - 9pm. Contact Claire Maloney: 07999 410721

THURSDAYS

- **BOOKBUG AT CURRIE LIBRARY:** 210 Lanark Road West; 10.30am. Come and join us for songs, stories and rhymes! To book your place call (0131) 529 5609 or email: currie.library@edinburgh.gov.uk
- **ACCESSIBLE YOGA COMMUNITY CLASS:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 2.45pm - 3.45pm. Accessible Yoga community class—free, donations 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 Road West; 6pm - 7.30pm. For more details, contact Bill Brown: bill.brown53@yahoo.com
- **PENTLAND BRIDGE CLUB:** St Margaret's Court, Juniper Green; 7pm. We play competitive bridge in a friendly atmosphere. Less experienced players welcome. For further information visit: www.bridgewebs.com/pentland/ or

email: mthkjb@gmail.com

FRIDAYS

- **THE MEN'S SHED at the Scout Hall:** 99 Forthview Crescent, Currie; from 9.30am. We offer various activities and a chat over a cuppa with new and old friends. Come on down! <https://pentlandsmensshed.org>
- **BABERTON BEAVERS AND CUBS:** Juniper Green Church Hall; 6pm - 7pm (Beavers) and 7.15pm - 8.45pm (Cubs). Please email: information@babertonscouts.org
- **PENTLAND CALEDONIA PIPE BAND:** Balerno Community Centre, Main Street; 7pm. Regular weekly band practice open to new members and visitors. Tuition and a friendly atmosphere offered for all players and learners. Contact via Facebook, Tiktok or Instagram.

SATURDAYS

- **BOOKBUG AT COLINTON LIBRARY:** 14 Thorburn Road; 11am. Come and join us for songs, stories and rhymes! To book your place call (0131) 529 5603 or email: colinton.library@edinburgh.gov.uk
- **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; 6pm - 8.30pm. For more details, contact Bill Brown: brown53@yahoo.com

FORTNIGHTLY

FIRST & THIRD MONDAYS

- **FORGET ME NOTES GROUP:** St. Cuthbert's Church Hall, Westgarth Avenue, Colinton, 2pm-4pm. Join us for an hour of music and memories. Bring a friend or come and meet new ones. Followed by refreshments. Contact: stcuthbertscomms@gmail.com for more information.

>p43

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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

• **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, Juniper Green Board-Gamers: @boardjg - www.boardjg.co.uk

ALTERNATE SATURDAYS

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

TUESDAY 3 JUNE

• **MONTHLY MENOPAUSE GROUP:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 8pm - 9.30pm. A chance to get together for friendly chat and support with others who understand. You don't need to do this alone!

FRIDAY 6 JUNE

• **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. This friendly group welcomes enthusiasts to share common love of gardens and gardening. This month, a visit to Saughton Gardens—please meet at the Hub at 10.30am to travel together to the gardens. Please email for details and to join us: hubs31lanarkroad@gmail.com

• **CURRIE BEER & CURRY FESTIVAL:** Currie Community Centre, 280 Lanark Road West; 6pm - midnight. 40 tasty real ales, lager, wines, cider, prosecco and alcohol-free offerings. Live music. Organised by Currie, Balerno and District Round Table and volunteers. All profits are given to local charities and good causes. Tickets in advance at: cbdrt.com/events/beer-festival/2025/

SATURDAY 7 JUNE

• **SUMMER FAIR:** Nether Currie Primary School, 23 Thomson Crescent; 11am - 3pm. Come and enjoy all the fun of the fair with BBQ, face-painting, games and refreshments.

• **CURRIE BEER & CURRY FESTIVAL:** Currie Community Centre, 280 Lanark Road West; 6pm - midnight. See Friday 6 June.

• **MUSIC FOR A SUMMER EVENING:** Currie Kirk, 7 Kirkgate; 7.30pm - 8.30pm. The

LOCAL COMMUNITY CAFES

SATURDAYS

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

• **THE COFFEE STOP:** Currie Kirk, Kirkgate; 2pm - 4pm. Tea, coffee, home baking and a warm welcome.

TUESDAYS - FRIDAYS (& FARMERS' MARKET SATURDAYS)

• **THE MILL CAFE:** 2 Main Street, Balerno; 9am - 2pm. Balerno Parish Church Community Cafe provides a sociable warm space with home-made baking, Fairtrade barista-style coffee and a light breakfast and lunch menu.

TUESDAYS - SATURDAYS

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



GREAT BIG GREEN WEEK:

SATURDAY 7 JUNE

Venue: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 10am - 2.30pm. A host of free activities, stalls and information. Online booking is available at <https://hub531.appointedd.com/>

• **RIVER DIPPING;** 9.45am - 11am. Meet at 9.45 at the Hub@531. Children 8+ prepare to get wet! Not just a chance for a stroll along the riverbank but a chance to get into the river and take an up-close look at what lives there! Booking essential.

• **DROP IN STALLS;** 10am - 11.30am. Info, tasters from Fairtrade, Edinburgh Tool Library, Hub Gardening Group, Eco table, Co-op plus vegan snacks to try and Fairtrade tea/coffee and cake.

• **BOTANICAL BLETHER;** 11.30am - noon. Meet at hub@531 at 11.15am to join Gus for a botanical bletcher as you take a stroll along the riverside to explore the diversity of plants and animals that live there. Booking essential.

• **EDINBURGH SOLAR COMMUNITY CO-OP;** 11.45am - 12.15pm. Meet the Co-operative and find out what's happening with solar power in our area, how to get involved and maybe even invest. Drop in.

• **CREATE BEESWAX WRAPS;** 1.15pm (child and parent) and 2pm (adult, over 16). Free 30-minute sessions to create your own beeswax wrap, a more environmentally-friendly alternative to plastic food wrap. Limited spaces. Booking essential.

Heriot-Watt Chamber Choir presents a summer concert of uplifting choral music including Standord, Finzi, Richard Rodgers, Chilcott and Rutter. Free admission with retiring collection.

FRIDAY 13 JUNE

• **ROCK ART:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 2.30pm - 4pm. Paint pebbles or learn how to wrap stones using string (Japanese stone wrapping), our multi generational craft gives an opportunity for old and young to get together and enjoy some creative time. Free, donations welcome. Online booking is available at: <https://hub531.appointedd.com/> or by email: hubs31lanarkroad@gmail.com

>p45

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JUNE 2025

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• **CURRIE RIDING OF THE MARCHES FAMILY FUN RIDE:** starting Wester Kinleith Farm; 6 pm. Route: down Kirkgate, along Lymphoy Road then back along the Water of Leith Walkway, Waulkmill Loan, Stewart Road, Dolphin Road (after 7pm), Dolphin Avenue and on to George V Park (about 7.30pm), then back to Waulkmill Loan and the Walkway to Kirkgate and back up the hill. Join anywhere on foot or on horseback. Email: currie-ridingofthemarches@hotmail.com for more details.

MONDAY 16 JUNE

• **PUBLIC CONSULTATION:** Currie Library, 210 Lanark Road West; 2pm - 5pm. City of Edinburgh Council's Active Travel team will be on hand to share and discuss proposed improvements to active travel connections to and around Curriehill Station. Pick up a paper copy of their questionnaire or visit: <https://tinyurl.com/yp9vxadz> Deadline for feedback: Sunday 6 July 2025.

WEDNESDAY 18 JUNE

• **MACRAME PLANT POT HOLDERS:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 7.30pm - 9.30pm. Join us to have a go at creating your own plant pot holders using twine. Free, donations welcome. Online booking is available at: <https://hub531.appointedd.com/> or by email: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

SATURDAY 21 JUNE

• **MAKE MUSIC DAY:** Currie Library, 210 Lanark Road West; 11am - 5pm. Are you a local musician or group? Would you like to come and play at Currie Library as part of our Make Music Day Festival? Completely different from a typical music festival, this is a fun day for all the community open to anyone who wants to take part. Every kind of musician welcome—young and old, amateur

and professional, of every musical persuasion!; To take part, get in touch via the library's Facebook page or email: currie.library@edinburgh.gov.uk

• **THE SECRET BOOK SWAP:** ABC Chiropractic, 350B Lanark Road West; 7pm - 9pm. Wrapped book swapping, chat, games and local guest author readings! For more information email: hello@happybarnet.com

MONDAY 23 JUNE

• **FREE HOME ORGANISATION WORKSHOP:** the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 6.45pm - 7.45pm. Free home organisation workshop with Lighten the Load. Spaces limited, please book: <https://tinyurl.com/mr458j92>

TUESDAY 24 MAY

• **PALM DEMENTIA CAFE:** St Joseph's Centre, Balerno; 3pm - 4.30pm. The cafe serves the communities of Currie, Balerno and Juniper Green providing a space for people with dementia and their carers to meet others for support and social contact. For more information please contact Clare Dow: palmcafebalerno@gmail.com

• **BALERNO FOLK CLUB:** Balerno Bowling Club, 5 Ladycroft; doors open 7.30pm for an 8.15pm start. This month the highly popular Duncan McCrone Band make a welcome return to the Club. A great night expected from this Scottish Band. Members and Guests welcome.

SATURDAY 28 JUNE

• **MALLENY GARDEN PLANT FAIR:** Malleny Garden, Malleny Park; 10am - 3pm. Join us for a plant-focused day with local plant nurseries, horticultural organisations, local community groups and food and drink. For more information email: MallenyGarden@nts.org.uk



Sporting Success for Currie Primary School

ALLY DONALDSON
PE TEACHER, CURRIE PRIMARY SCHOOL

INTERSCHOLASTICS

Thirteen Currie Primary School pupils competed in the Interscholastics on Monday 12 May.

This was our best result during my time at Currie Primary. We managed to qualify for the Mixed 4 x 100 metre Relay Final, Girls 4 x 100 metre Relay Final, and Girls 80 metre Final. We secured

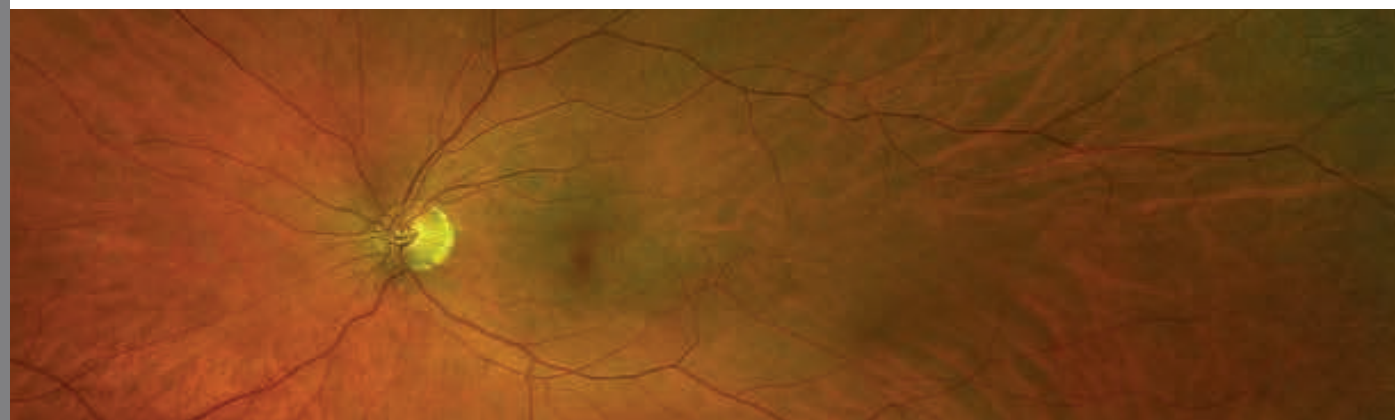
second place overall: a silver, in both the Girls 4 x 100 metre Relay and Girls 80 metre. This was a superb effort as it was against schools from across Edinburgh.

CROSS-COUNTRY

The previous month, on Saturday 26 April, two pupils competed in the Scottish Schools Athletics Cross-Country Championships, held at Kircaldy High School, against pupils from all over the country. Ella Tatum finished 19th in the P6 Girls race and Mark Hendry finished 18th in the P6 Boys.

Above: 4 x 100 metre Girls Relay Team: Abigail Brown (P7A), Ellie Pye (P7B), Ella Tatum (P6A), Karys Wylie (P7C).
Below: 80m Girl Ellie Pye (P7B)





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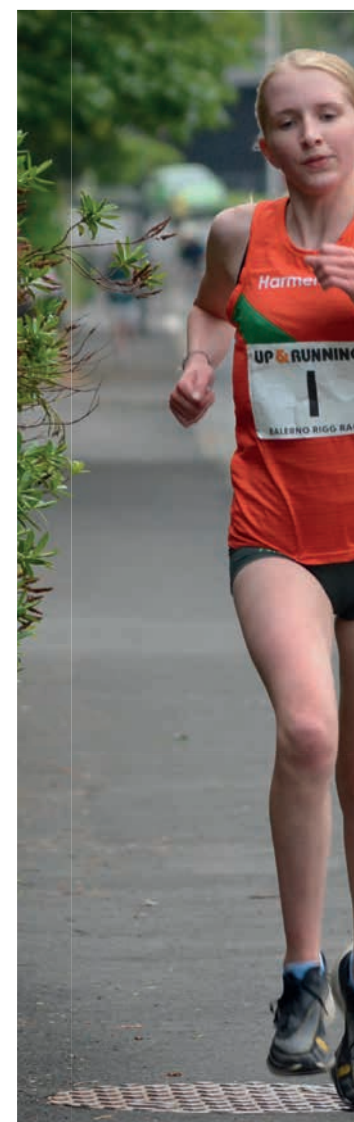
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New Record Set for Annual Rigg Race



NIGEL DUNCAN
C&B NEWS

Rachel Caves (left) smashed the female course record in the annual Balerno Rigg Race, covering the distance of around six miles (9.7 km) in a tremendous time of 35 minutes 3 seconds.

The Harmer Athletic Club athlete was seventh overall and slashed 22 seconds off the previous best set in 2006. Furthermore, the Balerno resident was just under four minutes adrift of race winner Robert Simpson (of Shettleston Harriers). He clocked a time of 31 minutes 23 seconds, not far behind the current record of 29 minutes 46 seconds set in 2010.

Another Balerno-based runner, Ewan Mitchell (Harmer Athletic Club), was third on 32 minutes 3 seconds.

He edged James Wright (Lothian Running Club) into fourth place, crossing the finishing line just nine seconds behind the local athlete.

A total of 175 runners took part this year, with the last-

placed finisher coming home in a time of one hour, 9 minutes and 29 seconds—but the organisers congratulated every entrant.

Each finisher received a medal including Rachel's mother, Marian, who came home in 66th position (44 minutes 13 seconds) to win the female 50-plus division.

Entrants came from well-known clubs like Hunters Bog Trotters and Carnegie Harriers and from as far afield as Glasgow, Penicuik, the Borders, Fife, Linlithgow, Portobello and Musselburgh.

Mark Doughty, listed as South Melbourne Running Club, finished in 40th position in a time of 41 minutes 53 seconds.

Historically, the race is traditionally held on the Monday evening of the Balerno Children's Gala towards the end of May and the event dates back to a walking race held for workers at Balerno Mill and held on Gala Day.

It evolved into a running race in 1963, turning into a popular local event, traditionally attracting runners of all abilities.

The route of the tough race has changed many times and, for several years, it was run in the reverse direction to the current event which starts at Malleny Park, near the centre of the village.

The runners head up through Balerno and climb over 200m

towards Threipmuir Reservoir where they turn right at Red Moss, a protected site of scientific interest.

Runners then head along East Rigg, offering panoramic views of the Pentland Hills, and sometimes into a tough west wind, before plunging back down to a steep descent at Cockburnhill.

A long straight follows before the athletes turn left into Johnsburn Road and a gentle downhill slope back towards Malleny Park.

Traditionally, locals stand on street corners to cheer on the athletes, and there were knots of people dotted around the course this year, despite the biting wind and dull conditions.

Steven Brown, the race director, said the weather was not as pleasant as in previous years, but running conditions were good. "There were some great performances throughout the field," he added.

"Particularly noteworthy was the incredible performance of Rachel Caves, breaking the female course record.

"It was a very tough competition in the men's event with a great win for Robert Simpson. Ewan Mitchell won a tight battle for second overall—and the first local. Congratulations to everybody who finished."

New Chapter for Juniper Green Tennis Club

PAUL MURPHY
JGTC

Juniper Green Tennis Club reopened for play on Saturday 3 May, following the multi-month refurbishment programme recently completed by the acrylic painting of the courts. This was the start of a new chapter in the long history of our much moved local community sporting asset, now with vastly improved playing facilities.

Everyone with a tie to the club, both in the recent and more distant past, is invited to reconnect and enjoy the new courts. Similarly, new members are most welcome

to join our fun and friendly club.

The improvements mean that the club's tennis coach, Kenny Petrie, has been able to expand his range of coaching opportunities, including weekly beginners' classes for women, men and mixed and the re-introduction of cardio tennis. Furthermore, a free hour of coached tennis, aimed primarily at those who have never picked up a tennis racquet before, will shortly be launched on Sunday mornings, with tennis equipment provided to help expand the club's reach into the local community.

With the building project behind us, we will now turn our immediate attention to organising an official opening day in the summer which we will announce full details of shortly. This will be an authentic local community event with free tennis clinics—because it was the local community that supported and funded the transformation of our playing facilities.

Further ahead, the club plans to move forward with the next stage in the regeneration of the venue by organising essential repairs to our vintage wooden clubhouse, which underscores the heritage of the site where tennis was first played in 1907.

• To contact the club, email: junipergreentennis@gmail.com or follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/junipergreentennis>

• Coaching details can be found at <https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/>

JuniperGreenTennisCourts/Coaching



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**DAYS TO
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PHOTOS: BALERNO & DISTRICT PIPE BAND; CURRIE PRIMARY SCHOOL; JUNIPER GREEN TENNIS CLUB; NIGEL DUNCAN MEDIA

INSIDE: NEWS p2 LOCAL HISTORY p16 FEATURES p19 VIEWS p28 WHAT'S ON p41