

CURRIE◦BALERNO◦JUNIPER GREEN◦BABERTON MAINS◦COLINTON

C&B News

Championing Our Communities

Est. 1976

FREE!

Back in the Day...



We catch up with Homeless World Cup co-founder
MEL YOUNG MBE,
one of the original C&B News volunteers in 1976!



514◦MARCH 2026

INSIDE: NEWS◦VIEWS◦WHAT'S ON◦LOCAL HISTORY◦SPORTS

Launched in February 1976, *C&B News* is a volunteer-run, 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 traditional 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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DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE
ADVERTISING & LISTINGS: 17 MARCH
EDITORIAL: 22 MARCH
IN THE SHOPS: 3 APRIL



Donations time for The Meeting Place (TMP), the weekly community cafe for those 65+, all carers and “anyone looking for good company” in Currie. Above: Staff and patients at the Pentland Medical Centre recently raised more than £400, which will help cover the costs of a popular and beneficial “wee trip to the seaside”. Meantime (below) “very generous” donations from Young At Heart and The Monday Club will ensure TMP’s future for two years.

Below right: At the end of January, Oriam Walking Football proudly presented Alzheimer Scotland with a cheque for £6,264.77—raised through a range of fundraising activities held during the club’s 10th anniversary year (2025). Dave Whitelaw, the club’s Charity Co-ordinator (on the right), said: “We’ve been delighted to work in partnership with Alzheimer Scotland over the past year and are pleased to be able to support the fantastic work they carry out in communities across Scotland.”



February’s meeting of Colinton Community Council included a discussion about the slow but cumulative spread of graffiti around the area. Recognising that many of the visible “tags” crop up across the city, it was suggested that The City of Edinburgh Council’s graffiti policy is “not appropriate”. It was noted, however, that there was a genuine distinction between graffiti and “street art”, such as that (above) which has appeared on the hoardings along the Water of Leith Walkway during the redevelopment of “The Shed” in Spylaw Park—especially since, unlike the nearby Colinton Tunnel Mural, this work will eventually vanish along with the hoardings!

Below: Work to demolish the former Salvation Army-run Davidson House residential care home on Colinton Road began quickly after permission was given by The City of Edinburgh Council on Monday 12 January. Originally a Soldiers’ Home established by Miss Williamina Saida Davidson in 1914, which was granted “Royal” status following a visit by King George V and Queen Mary in 1920 (as reported in our September 2024 issue), the site will be developed – according to Dr Scott Arthur MP – into a new (private) care home.



The hired help would like to reassure any concerned readers that last issue’s front cover – featuring a montage of various headlines from past editions of *C&B News* – did not require the physical mutilation of any archived print copies. All the “cuttings” were generated digitally.

BRIEFLY NEWS

• **C&B AGM:** The Annual General Meeting of The Currie & Balerno News Limited – the private company, limited by guarantee and without shareholders which publishes *C&B News* – will take place on the evening of Monday 9 March. Members of the public are welcome to attend. For more details, email Gail Rankin: chairperson@candbnews.com

• **BURSARY:** Under 25, live in or near Balerno and planning to volunteer overseas this year for the benefit of disadvantaged communities? Applications now open for the *Louise Duncan Bursary* of £500 towards travel costs, in memory of the life and work of the former Balerno Parish Church minister. Email bpc-admin@balernochurch.org.uk for an application form: deadline, Wednesday 25 March.

• **GRANT:** Athletics Club Harmeny AC has been awarded £1,000 by the City of Edinburgh Council for their SuperSaturday activities, as part of a £60,000 funding pot shared among 27 local sports groups.

• **GREEN STAR:** Seasonal “farm to table” restaurant *The Free Company*, Balerno, was recently awarded a prestigious Michelin Green Star in the 2026 Great Britain & Ireland Guide for its “outstanding commitment to sustainable gastronomy”—specifically its ethical, eco-conscious focus on local seasonal ingredients, and as a leader in environmental stewardship within the culinary industry.

• **SCHOOL RUN:** Residents living on the approaches to Dean Park Primary School, Balerno, claim that parents driving their children to school in the morning “don’t care” about safety: speeding down narrow streets, parking on pavements and reversing without warning in “their rush to get their kids to and from school”. Similar reports have previously been made around schools in Colinton and Currie.

• **MYSTERY ROAD:** “Words are being exchanged” (hopefully **>p5**)

Advice Surgeries:

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

- Fountainbridge Library • Wester Hailes Library
- Colinton Mains Tesco • Oxgangs 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:

- ☎ 0131 322 3225
- ✉ scott.arthur.mp@parliament.uk
- 📘 facebook.com/DrScottArthur
- 🐦 @drscottarthurmp.bsky.social
- ✂ @DrScottArthurMP
- 📍 139 Dundee Street, EH11 1BP



Gordon Macdonald MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament
for Edinburgh Pentlands Constituency



Monthly Advice Surgeries

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

NB: NO SURGERIES DURING PUBLIC AND BANK HOLIDAYS

Contact Details

- By email** gordon.macdonald.msp@parliament.scot
- Home visit** Available for those who cannot travel
- By phone** 0131 443 0595
- By letter** 9 Kingsknowe Park, Edinburgh, EH14 2JQ

📘 Gordon Macdonald MSP 🐦 @GMacdonaldMSP

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BRIEFLY...

p3>>> positively) between The City of Edinburgh Council and the recently confirmed owners of the section of Bonaly Road close to Bobcat Alpacas and the Scouts centre; whether this will lead to a much-needed repair of the route up to the Pentland Hills Regional Park car park remains uncertain.

• **JUNCTION:** Long-hoped-for improvements to the Colinton Bridge Road junction with Spylaw Street are currently subject to “significant delay”, according to Colinton Community Council, which is maintaining “a holding position” on an issue they’ve been campaigning about since at least 2018.

• **NEW MINISTER:** The Service of Ordination and Induction for the new Edinburgh Pentlands Parish Church of Scotland minister, Callum Macfarlane-Grieve, was scheduled (as we went to press) for 7pm on Thursday 26 February, at Juniper Green Church.

• **WOOD YOU BELIEVE:** The University of Edinburgh has published a report on how it has contributed to local communities between 2020 and 2025, including improving biodiversity and access at Rullion Green Wood—their 30 hectare site in the Pentland Regional Park near Flotterstone. This included planting more than 37,000 trees – such as oak, birch, aspen, willow and Scots pine – on land previously used for livestock grazing. <https://tinyurl.com/y3f6y4wd>

• **CAR PARK:** In February Currie Community Council (CCC) members called on CEC to repaint the worn-out markings at the currently “quite stressful” Pentland View car park.

• **DOG ATTACKS:** Currie residents remain concerned about a local dog which has now attacked four other dogs, and also injured one of their owners. At the February CCC meeting there was disbelief that the dog had not been removed from its owner who, as we went to press, was expected to appear in court at the end of February.



Redevelopment Begins at Former Balerno Police Station

JASON NOONAN
COMMUNITY HUB OFFICER, BALERNO VILLAGE TRUST

Balerno Village Trust officially handed over the keys of the former Balerno Police Station to Maxi Construction on Thursday 12 February, marking the start of the building’s interior redevelopment.

Maxi Construction will now begin work to transform the interior of the building in preparation for opening this summer. The redevelopment will focus on

creating flexible, welcoming areas suitable for community use, ensuring the building is ready to support a range of activities once complete.

Following months of planning and preparation, the start of work signals visible progress on bringing the building back into active use for the community. The Trust was supported in acquiring the building by the Scottish Land Fund and the ongoing support of Harlaw Hydro allows us to redevelop the building.

As redevelopment gets underway, the Trust is now inviting local

groups, organisations, and individuals to get in touch to discuss how they might use the space. The building will offer room for community groups, meetings, events, and general hire, and early conversations will help shape how the space operates once it opens. The building has a large garage and an outside storage space for which the Trust is still seeking users.

• *Anyone interested in using the space or wishing to register their interest, is encouraged to contact Balerno Village Trust at jason@balernovt.org.uk*

‘Pride in Our City’ Teams are Coming

PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
C&B NEWS

A scheme “to spruce up Edinburgh’s neighbourhoods” – one council ward per month – is coming to south west Edinburgh.

The focus will be on Colinton/Fairmilehead (Ward 8) during March, and Pentland Hills (Ward 2) during June, although the team will also cover Almond (Ward 1) during the latter.

• *For more details or to highlight anything you think needs attention, email: cleanstreets@edinburgh.gov.uk or visit <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/litter-flytipping/pride-city>*

Balerno-based cyclist Daithi (AKA David) Heneghan is taking on one of Europe’s most iconic endurance challenges to celebrate his 60th birthday—and raise £60,000 for sustainable education charity COCO.

The 7,500 km (4,660 mile) route will take him from North Cape, Norway (the northernmost point of the continent) to Tarifa in southern Spain (the most southerly point). The unsupported ride spans 15 countries, 80,000 meters (262,467 feet) of climbing, and extreme environments.

“My milestone birthday felt like the perfect moment to do something big,” said Daithi. “COCO’s work transforms lives, and I hope this ride inspires people to support a cause that makes a real, long-term difference.”

The challenge will begin at one minute past midnight on Saturday 20 June and is expected to take approximately 36 days.

• *Supporters will be able to follow Daithi’s progress, and donate online, at <https://coco.enthuse.com/pf/daithi-heneghan-nct60460>*



Sue Webber MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament
for Lothian Region



Monthly Advice Surgeries

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

Contact Sue Webber

- ✉ sue.webber.msp@parliament.scot
- ☎ 0131 202 3005
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Visitor Levy Spending Primarily in City Centre

PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
 C&B NEWS

The City of Edinburgh Council agreed the first full set of spending programmes funded by the Edinburgh Visitor Levy, which comes into effect from Friday 24 July 2026.

As expected, most of the “package of transformational funding”, worth at least £90 million during the first three years, is being focused on Edinburgh’s city centre—including £3 million towards the transformation of the Old Royal High School building on Calton Hill into a national centre for music, £2.75 million to create a “Market Street Arts Hub” including a reinvigorated City Art Centre, and £3.85 million to “speed up” the Council’s Setted Streets renewal programme.

Funds have also been allocated to upgrade public toilets and ensure the city’s streets and open spaces are cleaned and kept to a high standard—including £500,000 a year to help tackle graffiti through extra support for private businesses.

South West Edinburgh may benefit indirectly from CEC’s proposed partnership with Police Scotland to create a new City Centre Policing Unit which, in addition to increasing public safety within the Old and New Towns, will free up existing resources enabling frontline officers “to be more present across other areas of the city”.

Councillors also agreed to allocate £2 million to support new “participatory budgeting” schemes across the city – similar to the existing “Leith Decides” – through which local people can vote on how public money is spent.

According to the Visitor Levy (Scotland) Act 2024, funds raised by the levy must be reinvested in local facilities and services substantially used by business and leisure visitors.

Whether or not this means any additional funds will be allocated to a recognised visitor attraction such as the Pentland Hills Regional Park is yet to be seen.

Edinburgh is the first city in the UK to introduce such a scheme.



Café by Day, Trattoria by Night

ALASON ROBERTS
 JUNIPER GREEN RESIDENT

It’s been a few years since Juniper Green had an Italian café, after the much loved Al Borgo closed, but now we’re back up and running!

The popular Molly’s Café is playing host to the Italian Trattoria in the evenings and at Sunday lunch times. Given the cost of starting up in dedicated premises, this is a great twist on sharing costs that Sarah of Molly’s Café proposed to her friends Debbie and Gianni.

The pair are no strangers to running a restaurant, having run La Campana restaurant at Bellsquarry and Murieston for many years. Gianni does the cooking while Debbie looks after service front of house.

The vibe is rustic, in keeping with the décor, while the food on offer is traditional Italian at heart, sometimes with a Scottish twist. There’s pasta of course, as well as interesting fish and meat dishes.

The Trattoria is a very welcome presence in Juniper Green alongside the existing takeaways, bar and restaurants. Here’s wishing Gianni and Debbie continued success in their venture.

• Check out the menu, including a fine collection of starters and puddings, at: <https://italiantrattoria.co.uk/>

• The Italian Trattoria doesn’t have a licence, but you can BYOB.

Kaimes Volunteers Continue to Help Campbell Park

SHONA HARROWER
 THE FRIENDS OF CAMPBELL PARK

Kaimes High School Duke of Edinburgh Volunteers continue to help the Friends of Campbell Park for an hour every Monday afternoon during term times. Their regular visits have helped to improve the soil conditions in all of the growing zones around Campbell Park, and in particular around the 30 orchard trees and surrounding edible hedgerows.

In February our Kaimes volunteers also helped us to establish a new 20 square meter wildflower area by planting 60 native wildflower plant plugs into a specially prepared patch of sandy topsoil.

The plants and sandy topsoil were purchased with a £250 Action Earth grant from Volunteering Matters,



aided by The Conservation Volunteers. The Action Earth grant has a high probability of being awarded for a further two years, so we hope to do more projects like this in future with the help of the Kaimes school pupils and teachers.

BRIEFLY...

p5>>>

• **FLOODING:** Repeated flooding since December at the Heriot-Watt roundabout was apparently down to problems with a damaged Scottish Water-owned pipe which the company didn’t know was there; a new manhole has been installed at the site, but problems clearly remain as some flooding continues.

• **SPENT A PENNY:** The sale of the former toilet block on Lanark Road, located opposite Currie Library, is apparently “very close” to being completed. Finally. Probably. (We’ll believe it when the “For Sale” notice comes down.)

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.

Note: C&B News now regularly publishes lists of current local planning applications and decisions on our Facebook page, usually every Tuesday.

BABERTON MAINS
 • Single-storey side extension to replace existing garage; 24 Baberton Mains Drive. (26/00440/FUL) Comments by Tuesday 3 March.

BALERNO
 • Construction of timber-frame-supported roof structure and timber cladding to the rear masonry wall elements of the existing boundary wall; land 70 metres north of Malleny House, 4 Malleny. (26/00407/LBC) Comments by Sunday 8 March.

• Erection of extension to side and partial garage

>p9

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60th Anniversary of Our Lady's Church, Currie

NORMA MITCHELL
OUR LADY'S PARISH COUNCIL

This year sees the 60th anniversary of the opening of Our Lady, Mother of the Church—the Roman Catholic church in Currie.

Our Lady's (as it is better known) was opened on 31 March 1966 by the then-Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh, Cardinal Gray. His current successor Archbishop Leo Cushley will lead a celebration mass to mark the anniversary, followed by a reception at the Gibson Craig Halls.

"It is an honour to celebrate the 60th anniversary of our lovely Parish with the most wonderful parishioners", said parish priest Fr



Francis Ututo, who arrived here from Nigeria in 2022. "The Parish has grown to become a big family that cares for people of faith and no faith alike. I pray that we will continue to grow in love, peace, unity, and care for one another."

• The celebration mass is at Our Lady's on Sunday 15 March, at 11:30am.

• Learn more about the parish and its history on their website: <https://ourladyscurrie.co.uk/>



Unique Abseil Opportunity with Harmeny Education Trust

ALI BAKER
SENIOR FUNDRAISER, HARMENY
EDUCATION TRUST

Be a Harmeny Hero on Sunday 10 May! Join Harmeny in an incredible adrenaline-fuelled experience and abseil 131 feet (40 metres) from the Port of Leith Distillery.

Towering majestically on the waterfront, the Port of Leith Distillery is the UK's first vertical distillery, a striking nine-storey tower nestled in the historic harbour. Volunteers will descend from the rooftop with exclusive access to amazing views across the city's skyline and the nearby Royal Yacht Britannia.

Participants are asked to try to raise £250 in sponsorship for Harmeny, to help children and young people overcome adversity and get the spaces, support and opportunities they need to help build a better future and thrive!

For further information and to register, call (0131) 449 3938, email: ali.baker@harmeny.org.uk or visit: www.harmeny.org.uk/distilleryabseil



In February, the City of Edinburgh Council planted three new crab-apple trees at Corslet Green. Photo: Moira Peterson

Volunteers Needed at Ravelrig RDA

FIONA GODLEY
RAVELRIG RIDING FOR THE DISABLED

Ravelrig Riding for the Disabled, based in Balerno, is looking for volunteers to join our fundraising team.

The volunteer-led charity offers therapeutic horse riding sessions to children and adults with physical and learning disabilities. We offer weekly riding sessions tailored to individual needs, led by qualified RDA instructors and supported by a dedicated group of volunteers. Participants benefit from improved balance, coordination, and wellbeing—all while forming meaningful connections with our specially trained team of seven horses. Our horses cost £7,500 each per year to keep them happy and healthy.

Can you give up a few hours a week to help with fundraising activities? Do you enjoy organising events or activities? No prior experience required—just a

willingness to help!

Ways You Can Get Involved: assist in planning and running fundraising events; help with online campaigns and social media outreach; engage with the local community to raise awareness; and support administrative tasks and donor communications.

Volunteering with us means you can make a positive difference in the lives of our participants and horses, be part of a supportive and friendly team (coffee/tea and biscuits provided), with flexible hours to fit your requirements.

Come be part of something truly rewarding — make friends, learn new skills, and help change lives for our wonderful participants.

• Interested in joining our fundraising team, or want more information? Email: fundraising@ravelrig-rda.org.uk or make an appointment to see us.

BRIEFLY...

p7>>>

conversion to form study; 6 Ravelrig Wynd, Ravelrig. (26/00471/FUL) Comments by Friday 13 March.

COLINTON

• Proposed rear single-storey extension; 48 Torphin Road. (26/00265/FUL) Comments by Thursday 5 March.

CURRIE

• Conversion of outbuildings, creating new studio from existing outbuildings and garage; 29 Riccarton Mains Road, Riccarton. (26/00466/FUL) Comments by Wednesday 4 March.

• Removal of redundant chimney breast to enable two-storey conversion to existing single-storey garage, bring infill for porch window and replacement double-glazed roof light; 2 Corslet Crescent. (26/00513/FUL) Comments by Wednesday 4 March.

JUNIPER GREEN

• Removal of existing porch panels and roof, retaining existing masonry base, with new hardwood panels and roof to be installed; 2 Juniper Park Road. (26/00302/FUL) Comments by Friday 27 February.

PLANNING DECISIONS

Information provided by The City of Edinburgh Council.

BALERNO

• Garden room/store; 52 Malley Avenue. (26/00036/CLP) Granted, Friday 13 February.

• Construction of single-storey rear extension; 45 Cairns Drive. (25/06342/FUL) Granted, Friday 13 February.

COLINTON

• Increase size of dormers to front and rear of property; 18 Redford Drive. (25/06047/FUL) REFUSED, Monday 9 February.

• Proposed single-storey extension to rear and side, reconfigure existing attic conversion with formers front, rear and side, and proposed garden room (as amended); 8 Redford Drive. (25/05623/FUL)

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New Female Changing Facilities at Currie Chieftains

NIALL ANGUS
CURRIE CHIEFTAINS

Currie Chieftains have officially opened their newly upgraded outdoor changing rooms, now transformed into a dedicated female changing facility.

The refurbishment, supported by a £1,000 award from Aldi Scotland's Sport Fund, has delivered significant improvements to the building, formerly and affectionately known as "the goulag". These include the replacement of urinals with two new cubicles, the installation of heaters, mirrors, and plug sockets, and a full redecoration. The result is a warm, inviting, and practical space that the girls can proudly call their own.

During the past couple of years, the Currie Chieftains Girls section has experienced remarkable growth, with player numbers almost quadrupling. The section now offers girls-only training from U10s (P5) right through to U18s—creating strong foundations toward the long-term goal of establishing a Currie Chieftains women's team, while continuing to strengthen the pathway for girls' rugby within the club.

The changing rooms were officially opened on Saturday 17 January by Karis Craig, one of the original Currie Chieftains Girls players who has since represented Scotland at U18 and U20 levels, playing for both Edinburgh and Glasgow Women, and currently playing for Premiership side Watsonians.

"It's been incredible to see how much the girls section has grown over the past few years," said Karis. "Seeing them finally get facilities of their own feels like a huge and well deserved step forward. It's so, so good to see their commitment and hard work being recognised by their club and community, this is such an exciting foundation for the future of girls' rugby at Currie."

Niall Angus, Head of Girls' Rugby, added: "Our girls' section has seen exceptional growth, and that comes down to the culture being created by the girls themselves, supported by our coaches and volunteers. It's not all about winning; our focus is on getting girls playing rugby and making sure they enjoy it when they do."

To permanently commemorate



the project, a bespoke plaque has been commissioned from Oak & Black, acknowledging the generous support from Aldi Scotland and the tireless efforts of the club's volunteers, many of whom gave up their time over the Christmas and New Year period to bring the project to completion.

• Currie Chieftains Girls Rugby welcomes new players of all abilities. Training takes place on Tuesdays and Thursdays, with sessions running 5.30pm - 6.30pm, extending to 7pm for U18s.

• For more information, visit www.curriechieftains.org



BRIEFLY...

pg>>>

Granted, Tuesday 10 February.

• Remove three low branches of elm opposite Underwoods Grove; West Mill Road. (26/0006/TPO) Granted, Thursday 12 February.

JUNIPER GREEN

• Install timber construction garden room in back garden to be used as personal home office; 4 Woodhall Terrace. (25/06579/FUL) Granted, Thursday 12 February.

SCHEDULED ROADWORKS & ROAD CLOSURES UPDATE

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. Information provided by The City of Edinburgh Council.

Note: C&B News now regularly publishes lists of scheduled roadworks and road closure updates on our Facebook page, usually every Tuesday/Friday.

OTHER:

• A70 between Kirknewton and Harburn, road closed for carriageway resurfacing (West Lothian Council); Monday 23 February for estimated eight weeks.

• MURRAYBURN ROAD at Murrayburn Gardens/ Hailesland Road, four-way temporary traffic lights for footway works (City of Edinburgh Council); Monday 16 February for five weeks (estimated).

• FROGSTON ROAD WEST between Margaret Rose Avenue and Fairmilehead crossroads, temporary traffic lights for carriageway resurfacing at bus stops (City of Edinburgh Council); Monday 2 March for five days (estimated).

• CLOVENSTONE ROAD at rail bridge, temporary traffic lights 10pm - 6am for bridge inspection (Network Rail); Monday 2 - Tuesday 3 March.

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LOCAL UPDATES • LOCAL UPDATES

A Celebration of Fairtrade

KAREN DOWNARD
BALERNO FAIRTRADE VILLAGE GROUP

Once again Fairtrade will be celebrated on the first Saturday morning of March in Balerno Parish Church Halls. This has very much become an annual event and includes a schools' art competition. The art display and prize-giving will be in St Joseph's Hall, along with various fair trade stalls from local retailers – including the One World Shop (right) and Hadeel. This is a great opportunity to buy products from these shops without having to make a journey into the city centre. Hadeel sell food and craft products from Palestine, providing people an opportunity



to still earn a living. Another favourite at the event is the Edinburgh Bicycle Co-operative's Smoothie Bike— you provide the pedal power to make you own smoothie, with

excellent baking skills. Proceeds from the morning will go to Transform Trade (which provides support to producers around the world) and the Scottish Fair Trade Youth Collective, which works with young people interested in getting involved with youth-led Fair Trade and climate projects. The Balerno Village Fairtrade Group have always been delighted with the support this event receives and hope to welcome many local people again this year.

Celebrate Fairtrade this year on Saturday 7 March, from 10am to noon, at Balerno Parish Church Halls, Main Street.

There's more information for any potential campaigners at <https://scottishfairtrade.org/young-campaigners/>

Balerno SWI February Update

ISOBEL JOHNSTONE
BALERNO SWI

Our speaker for February was local beekeeper Colin McKenzie. There are around 35,000 or more beekeepers in the UK, mostly keen amateurs with just a few hives each. In and around Balerno there are three seasons for honey collecting: spring, summer and autumn. It's not only flowers that the bees gather nectar from; trees also provide a great source, such as sycamores in the spring and lime trees in the summer. Ling heather is the main nectar source in the local area in autumn. We learnt that the average hive contains around 10,000 bees, including a queen, drones and

workers. A queen can live for two to three years on average, a drone 30 to 40 days and worker bees around five weeks before they die from exhaustion—although, if they make it to winter, they can survive for four or five months. We were all encouraged to avoid pesticides in our gardens and also not to over tidy in a few spots. We had a "taste and try" of blossom honey, heather honey and basic supermarket honey following Colin's talk. The basic supermarket honey has sugar syrup added to keep the cost down and the difference in taste is quite noticeable. We should all buy local honey if we can to support our local beekeepers.

• *February competitions. Bee (any craft): Moira Stewart (first), Phyllis Tait (second), Mary Robertson (third). Bee-related item: June Duff. Flower of the Month: Shelia Mason.*

Digital Security Training for Adults at the Hub@531

ANNETTE WILSON
DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, HUB@531

If you had thought about attending our recent IT training, but couldn't attend during the week, we're delighted to be able to offer a new course on Sunday 22 March. This free training course will

provide morning and afternoon interactive presentations from Digital Skills Education, aimed at older adults (50+) who would like to feel more informed and confident about their security when using the internet. A light lunch will be provided.

• *Digital Security Training for older adults (50+) is at the Hub@531, Juniper Green, on Sunday 22 March, 10.30am - 2pm.*

Please book your space online <https://hub531.appointedd.com/> or by email to hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com



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LOCAL UPDATES • LOCAL UPDATES

Abseil and Firewalk Adventures

ROSS COWE
THE CHRISTOPHER COWE MEMORIAL FUND
(CARDIAC RISK IN THE YOUNG)

As we head towards what would have been Christopher Cowe's 21st Birthday on Thursday 16 April, we have two exciting fundraising events coming up in March and April which we would love the Balerno and Currie community to get involved in, helping us to celebrate the life of our beautiful boy and continue to ensure his legacy through the funding of heart screenings for young people in the local area.

On Sunday 22 March a team of 10 will be undertaking The Falkirk Wheel Abseil. Team members include our neighbour Adam as well as three young ladies from Christopher's year group—Alannah, Lucy and Emma. This writer will also be confronting his fear of heights and making the leap for Christopher. If you are able to donate to support our team of young (and older) people to complete this challenge the link to do so is below.

FIREWALK

The following month, on Sunday 26 April, we will be hosting a Firewalk Scotland event at Currie Rugby Club at Malleny Park and are looking to get 50 people involved from across both the community and our wider friends and colleagues group—putting their best foot forward to help us raise funds for further heart screening events in the local area.

Entry for the event is £25 which, as well as giving you the opportunity to undertake the firewalk, will get you access to a 90 minute motivational and



confidence building workshop with Lee Walls from Firewalk Scotland and our "after event" party to celebrate Christopher's 21st where a finger buffet will be served, cake cut and the bar open for drinks.

We are looking for each participant to commit to a fundraising target of £150 and you can buy your ticket(s) for the event through Eventbrite: search Edinburgh events for "A Firewalk for Christopher".



This is a real bucket list opportunity at an affordable price. We would love to see as many people as possible at the event to participate, support and celebrate the life and legacy of Christopher Cowe.

• The team will be abseiling from the Falkirk Wheel between 2pm and 3pm on Sunday 22 March. To support us, please visit: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/rossshiva-cowe-13>

The Firewalk for Christopher starts at 7pm, on Sunday 26 April at Currie Rugby Club, Malleny Park. Entry £25, with a fundraising target of £150. To donate to the "Firewalk for Christopher", visit: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/firewalk-chris21>



Cancer Care Drop-in Event

ANNETTE WILSON
DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, HUB@531

If you or someone close to you is affected by cancer just now or in the recent past, and you would like to find out more about the sorts of support and help that is available in our local area, south west Edinburgh, then we'd like to invite you to a special drop-in event at the Hub@531, Juniper Green.

With a focus on local organisations who provide support for cancer sufferers or their families and friends, we invite you to have a chat and pick up information about what services are on offer that might help and support you and those close to you.

We will have representatives from:

Westerhaven: based at The Health Agency in Wester Hailes, they provide wide range of specialist support services to those affected by cancer and long-term conditions such as COPD and Long Covid, as well as service to relatives, carers, and friends of anyone who has received a diagnosis and who may need some support or anyone bereaved due to cancer.

House of Hope (Gorgie Road, Edinburgh) which offers invaluable and much-needed services and support for anyone in Scotland impacted by primary or secondary breast cancer.

Cancer Card: a Scottish charity who provide a first step to accessing support services and information

More participants yet to be confirmed, with plenty leaflets and information to pick up.

Plus, of course, a visit to the Hub@531 wouldn't be complete without a welcome cuppa with our own volunteers! Please do drop by.

• Cancer Care Drop-in Session is on the morning of Saturday 14 March, between 10.30am and noon.



Snapshots of the Past

On Mallyen House & 19th Century Changes

DOUGLAS LOWE
CURRIE & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

centuries. He also recalled certain plants in the garden, particularly colours in the trees and the scents of different seasons in the garden.

Anciently the Scott family acquired Mallyen estate in 1647. This included Mallyen, Balleny, Killeithe, Wester Lymphoy, Easter Lymphoy and the sundry Kirklands of Currie (alias Kildeleith), “with common pastures, lands and muir of Kildeleith, together with manor houses, biggins and orchards”. In other words, all of the land from the western end of Juniper Green, along the Water of Leith and south to the edge of the Pentlands including all of the houses, farms, mills, quarries and such.

The House’s Georgian Wing, the rounded extension on the eastern side of the building, was built in 1810. General Thomas Scott

also arranged for the building of the road and bridge (The General’s or Mutters Bridge) below Blinkbonny, linking the lower end of the estate to Lanark Road. Walkers will also have noticed a gravestone in the wee wood off Lymphoy Road which, if you take time to read it, will reveal Scott’s involvement. (I covered General Thomas Scott’s

Above: Mallyen House, Balerno, in more recent times—without ivy. Below, a postcard from c1900 shows the building with its green coat. Photos: Douglas Lowe, CDLHS.

distinguished military career in an article for the September 2021 edition of *C&B News*.)

Alastair Learmont also reminded us that the original drive for Mallyen House was along Lymphoy Avenue/Road, running from Currie Kirkgate the mile and a half along to the house.

The Scott family sold the whole Estate (Mallyen House plus 2,972 acres/1,203 hectares of farmland including nine farms) to Lord Rosebery in 1882 for £125,000 (or around £15.4 million in today’s money). Lord Rosebery then let Mallyen House and its grounds to a number of “high profile” individuals whom I covered in an article published in the February 2022 *C&B News*.

The house and grounds were subsequently sold by a later owner, Lord Geddes, to Commander and Mrs Gore Browne Henderson in 1960; some eight years later, the by-then widowed Mrs Peggy Gore-Browne-Henderson presented Mallyen House, its garden and policies to the National Trust for Scotland, along with a “generous” endowment.

That’s where it stands today—an NTS property, although we current day walkers are happy to make full use of Lymphoy Avenue, the Water of Leith Walkway and the paths and trails through the surrounding woodland for recreation.

• 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/>



When the Trams Came to Colinton

...but not Juniper Green!

PAUL F COCKBURN
C&B NEWS

The arrival of the first electric tram in Colinton on Sunday 21 March 1926 was final confirmation of the village’s amalgamation into “Greater Edinburgh”—with the physical tracks in the ground to prove it.

City motorbus services had, of course, reached Colinton (and indeed beyond to Juniper Green) as early as the summer of 1920, several months before Midlothian’s so-called “suburban” district (the neighbouring Parishes of Cramond, Corstorphine, Colinton and Liberton) were officially amalgamated into the city’s political structures from November 1920.

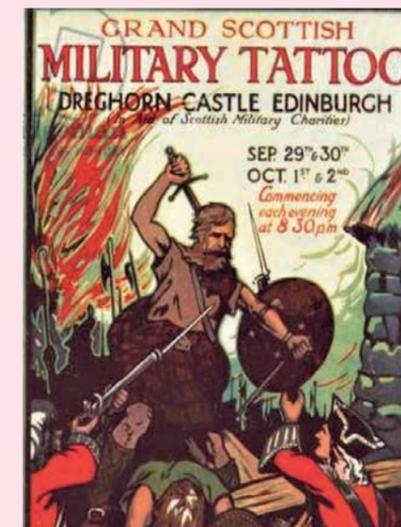
Arguably, those bus services played a part in ultimately bringing the “electric cars” to the village. On Tuesday 12 June 1923, the city’s Tramway Manager R Stuart Pilcher stated at a meeting of Edinburgh Town Council’s Tramway Committee that usage of those buses made “it quite clear that there was a considerable traffic between the City and Colinton, especially during the summer months”.

As subsequently reported in *The Edinburgh Evening News*, Pilcher suggested that “if a through service were provided by electric car [he] had no doubt that this traffic would be heavier”, stating that “the time had now come for Parliamentary sanction to be obtained for the construction of a tramway to Colinton Village”.

Bus services are, of course, relatively ephemeral: they can – and, indeed, are – easily changed, usually without any public consultation. The extension of the city’s now-electrified tramlines to the junction of Colinton Road and Westgarth Avenue was, in comparison, physical proof that the village was now part of the city’s public transport network; and that much of the work of the-then

controversial *Edinburgh Boundaries Extension and Tramways Act 1920* had been completed.

However, Pilcher’s 1923 report was not all good news for south west Edinburgh. As *The Edinburgh Evening News* reported: “With reference to the proposal to extend the tramway from Slateford to Juniper Green, Mr Pilcher does not think there is enough traffic to warrant this.”



The following day, at a special meeting of the Tramway Committee, councillors essentially agreed with him. The extension to Colinton was recommended to proceed, while they “resolved to take no action with regard to [...] extending the line from Slateford to Juniper Green”.

There continued to be occasional calls from both local residents and councillors for a tram extension out to Juniper Green, but it never happened. While several extensions were still being considered before the start of the Second

A Granton-bound Service 9 tram departs from the Colinton terminus. Photo: Colinton Local History Society.

World War – arguably the peak for the city’s tramway network – the residents of Juniper Green remained reliant on motor bus services which essentially used the village as a large roundabout to head back into town.

From March 1926, Colinton residents were served by tram routes 9 (to Granton Square via Merchiston, Princes Street, and Canonmills) and 10 (to Bernard Street in Leith via Merchiston, Princes Street and Leith Walk).

Around six weeks in, these new services were briefly interrupted by the 1926 General Strike (called between Tuesday 4 - Wednesday 12 May). However, thanks to volunteer labour, somewhat reduced motor bus and tram services continued across Edinburgh most days with (as *The Scotsman* newspaper subsequently reported) the Saturday featuring “a practically normal service” with trams reaching not just Colinton but also the likes of Corstorphine and Blackhall. Saturday shopping habits clearly overcame any social and industrial protest!

The new tram services soon proved their worth when they helped safely carry home many of the 60,000-plus attendees at the fourth and final performance of the 1926 Grand Scottish Military Tattoo (left) held at Dreichorn Castle on Saturday 2 October.

• *Edinburgh’s electric trams continued to serve Colinton until Sunday 23 October 1955, just over a year before the city’s final 20th century tram was finally withdrawn. Routes 9 and 10 were immediately switched to motor bus services, continuing relatively unchanged (apart from being extended west to Torphin) until at least the 1970s.*

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Cooking the Books



STEF LYONS

differently, complimenting each other well if you've decided to treat yourself to a wine that won't fight with your dinner. That doesn't have to be an expensive wine, but knowing a bit more about grapes, regions and flavour profiles you can turn a pretty good dinner into something smashing.

One of the notoriously tough foods to match wine with is curry. And to be honest, wine isn't really the type of beverage you should have with your lamb jalfrezi and aloo ghobi.

There's no culinary shared history there. But I love a challenge and set about trying to get the best match I could for a curry my friend was making for me.

These books have indices, they are well ordered, and you can look by grape, or food type, or region giving you lots of ways to find what you want. Some of the suggestions make me laugh (the assumption that I will spend £50 on a bottle of wine to have with my sausage pasta on a Monday night, or only champagne with my fish and chips on a Friday). But guess what? Not to toot my own horn but with the help of these books I smashed it. Never had such a good pairing with a meal, let alone a curry. Off-dry rieslings, vinho verde, light reds. They're what you want. Anything too dry will not taste good because the chilli and spices will give you more of a bitter, burning sensation. The vinho verde I got was great, as was the young beaujolais I went for. But it was the Heaven's Realm Grüner Veltliner which was absolutely spot on.

I'm now obsessed. Reading every bottle to see what it works with and learning how to make my meals sing. So yes, I'm older now and I've changed. And on the way I've learned that life is way too short to drink rubbish wine with dinner.



Nature's Medicine Box



URARA DONOHOE

Cleavers

Spring is about movement as everything starts to grow. Thus, it is also the season for the lymphatic system. An average adult body contains one-to-two litres of circulating lymph liquid but, unlike your blood, it has no heart to pump it. It circulates around the body through the contracting and releasing of your muscles, so without movement, it stagnates. Think about rivers and burns: where the water stagnates, it starts to go off. If that happens to your lymph liquid, your body will need to use immune and other resources to keep it healthy.

Thankfully, spring is also the season for a ubiquitous little native plant that helps move your lymph liquid. Almost every Scottish child has played with it in the woods. It is Cleavers, also called Sticky Willy (Gallium aparine). Nicholas Culpepper said of it: "It is a good remedy in the spring [...] to cleanse the blood and strengthen the liver [...] fitting it for that change of season that is coming." A spring clean herb, to help move that stagnating lymph, to clean and spruce you up for the new growing year to come.

It is an exceedingly safe herb, and many herbalists recommend juicing it—make sure to chop it up or the stringy fibres will burn out the motor! Simply placing a few springs in cold water is also nice, a more local version of cucumber water to go with your gin! For more cleavers recipe, please visit the recipe section of my website.

• Please forage responsibly, taking no more than 10% of any patch of plants/flowers/leaves/berries. Forage from area free from herb/pesticides, pollutants (e.g. heavy traffic), and mindful of dog poos!

• There are poisonous and deadly plants including lookalikes, so never consume any plant unless you are 100% certain of what it is.

Urara Donohoe is a Medical Herbalist at the Rose and Yarrow Clinic and Dispensary in Balerno: <https://www.roseandarrow.com>

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I've changed a bit since university. Sadly, decades have now passed since I wore my cap and gown, ready to go into the world which soon decided to go into recession. (A bit of advice, kids: do a music degree in times of guaranteed economic stability. You're welcome.)

Speaking of economics, in those days when I fancied a drink, cost was the main deciding factor. I could get a cheap white wine for £2 from the university Costcutter. Or even this wine-type thing called Lambrini (which I much later learned was actually pear cider) for £1.50 for a litre.

I like to think my tastes have improved since then. As I've got older I've actually decided to try and enjoy the wine I'm drinking, rather than just the cheapest thing that isn't vinegar. I'm lucky to have a number of friends who are into wine and have taken me to lovely tastings and dinners with wine flights. And they know what they are talking about. I have always had an interest, but generally bought a wine I liked and had it with whatever I was eating, accepting it just wouldn't taste as good with this or that or the other thing. I've levelled up a bit now and have decided that, where possible, the type of drink I have is as important as the food on my plate. It turns out what you eat with wine genuinely makes a difference.

That's where *The Wine Dine Dictionary* by Victoria Moore and *Wine: Taste, Pair, Pour* by Charlotte Kristensen have come into my life. I didn't buy them together, but I like both and they are formatted very



Wellbeing



ANNETTE WILSON

Complementary

Complementary healthcare is a collective term for a large and varied list of healthcare approaches that are not seen as “mainstream”. There has been a conscious movement away from the term “alternative” – regarded as divisive and unhelpful to therapists or patients – to try to integrate these approaches alongside traditional medical approaches.

Many complementary therapies are provided or recommended within the NHS: reflexologists work alongside cancer care nurses at the oncology department in Edinburgh’s Western General, offering calming treatments that support patients while their chemotherapy is administered.

Many complementary therapists deal with unpleasant side effects of medical treatment; pain management, perhaps while waiting to access medical treatments; supporting recovery from injury, or when other approaches just don’t seem to be helping.

If you are interested to access complementary therapies, it’s important to find practitioners who are qualified and insured. There is a national register, CNHC - Complementary & Natural Healthcare Council, but most therapies also have their own professional registers that predate CNHC and often have more registered professionals. I am a fellow member of FHT for example, founded in 1962, and the FHT website also contains useful information about lots of types of therapy. It’s important to find a therapist you feel comfortable with, someone you can build a positive relationship with in a way that supports your wellbeing. Ask around, find out who your friends recommend.

Over 26 years, my appreciation for a holistic approach to healthcare has only grown, alongside an ongoing appreciation for all that modern medicine can offer us when in need. I believe that both medicine and complementary therapy can co-exist, and should be better aligned to harness the best of both in an integrated healthcare system.

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

Eye on Health



JONATHAN JENNETT

Emmetropization

What is Emmetropization?

The ability to see to an adult level is something that matures in children and can take time. For this to happen, the eyes must emmetropize. This is the name of the process by which our eyes grow intelligently in a normal visual environment. The eyes recognize if there is an error in growth that would result in poor vision, so they compensate and grow in a way that gives perfect shape and vision.

How does the eye see?

Light passes into the eye through the cornea, which bends it and through the lens which again bends the light to come to a focus. The focal length is then hopefully equal to the length of the eye. Then the best possible information from this light is sent to the brain and the brain provides us with an image. The eye processes light and the brain “sees”. If the focal length is too long, long sightedness results, and short sightedness if the focal length is too short.

What stops the eyes from emmetropizing?

Sometimes this process can just stall for unknown reasons, but pathology and anomalous visual development (such as squint or a lazy eye) are the main reasons. Both will give an abnormal visual environment, so the intelligent auto-processing and growth of the eye fails. As a result, the prescription does not come down to zero and vision stalls.

Can this affect vision?

Yes, it is possible then for an eye not to “learn to see”. This is because light doesn’t focus where it should, information to the brain is subnormal and poor vision results. Nursery screening in schools can pick up a lazy eye. The earlier it’s caught, the better. Glasses are used like medicine to improve the vision over time.

Jonathan has 24 years of experience as an Optometrist, owns Clearvue Opticians in Currie and is a Director of Optometry Scotland.

Craft Corner



LUCIE NOVOVESKA

Candle Container

I had a large candle for nearly two years. It smelled like fresh laundry and it was housed in a chunky glass container with a lid. I would light the candle only occasionally, mostly around Christmas or when we had guests—hence the two-year life-span. When the candle finished, I did not know what to do with the container. It had wax all over it and there was black residue from the smoke. Eventually, I decided to upcycle it.

While the black residue was easy to wipe, the wax was naturally more stubborn to remove. I heated water on the stove and submerged the whole container for a couple of minutes. The sweet spot in this process is to loosen up the wax but not to melt it. Finally, I was able to remove the leftover wax in one piece, which was VERY satisfying. After cleaning the container, the world is your oyster.

You can use the new container for anything you want and the bonus is that most candle containers come with a lid, so the cleaned up container is



ideal for storage. I would not store food in it though. The smell of fresh laundry lingered around the container for quite some time and that is not a pasta flavour anyone wants—as I’m sure Stef Lyons can confirm! Here I am showing you two examples: yarn storage and a vase. The vase was very easy to make, I just wrapped some jute twine around the container and popped a ribbon on top. You can swap the ribbon on the vase to match the colour of the flowers which keeps it fresh and fun.

Next time you discover a dirty or worn out container, before you dispose of it (or recycle it), consider upcycling it. It can be quite satisfying and it is good for the environment too. Give it a go!



Balerno Ramblers: March Update



DETAILS OF FORTHCOMING WALKS NOW INCLUDED IN OUR WHAT'S ON LISTING ON PAGE 46

GAIL COUSINS
BALERNO RAMBLERS

So much for a Wednesday weather window for our Midweek walk. Another grey, dreich day which developed into heavy rain as the day progressed.

We are Ramblers, though, so walks are only postponed due to extreme weather, such as danger from high winds or risk of lightning. If snow, then a local low level winter wonderland walk is a welcome alternative.

A good pair of walking boots, gaiters, overtrousers and a good gortex jacket are required as outer clothing, with a day sack cover and contents double bagged to keep possessions dry.

Oh for some sunshine, though; the last sunny Wednesday walk with blue sky was at the end of January. Low sunlight in winter reduces natural Vitamin D production in the skin, which is linked to lower mood, fatigue, and Seasonal Affective Disorder symptoms.

Sunshine certainly lifts your mood and walking in a group provides physical and mental health benefits, including lower blood

Main: Battle of Roslin memorial. Below left: Roley's Wood. Photos: Gail Cousins. Below right: We are Ramblers in the rain. Photo: Jongky Harlim

pressure, reduced cholesterol, improved cardiovascular health and lower depression rates. It promotes social links combating loneliness while providing friendship, motivation, and support to maintain a weekly walking routine.

So come and join us.

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

Remember to bring your ICE card.

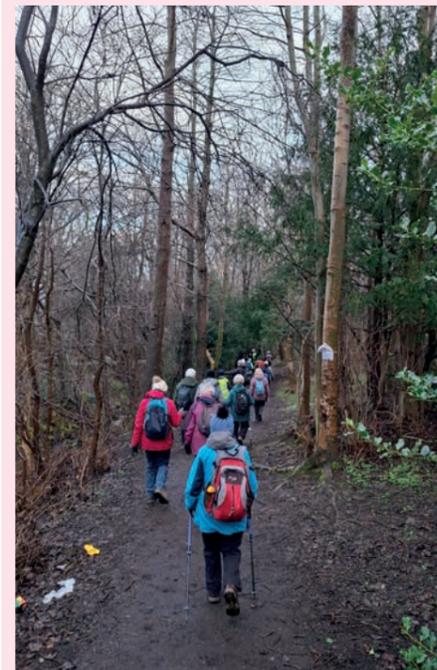
We regret no dogs are allowed on our walks.

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

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

• New members are always welcome. We offer you three “trial” walks as a non-member, hoping that your experience with us will 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 the information on forthcoming walks. Email: balerno-ramblers+subscribe@googlegroups.com





JAMES BELL
HEAD GARDENER, MALLENY GARDEN

January and February have been very wet at Malleny. It's a slight exaggeration to say it has rained every day this year, but it's not much of an overstatement! After the dry weather of last year, it's great for the ground to replenish that lost water. Hopefully it will aid our plants to grow well this coming year. Our woodland Snowdrops don't seem to care; they've flowered quite happily!

The rain presents challenges in our garden work. We started mulching our borders with compost in early January and didn't get back to it until the end of February. The ground too wet to work without make a right mess! Instead, we brought forward a lot of greenhouse potting work, earlier than intended, but it keeps our volunteers out the rain. We've repotted our Primula auricula collection, cleaned and tidied our nursery area and potted over 500 Cardiocrinum giganteum (giant Himalayan lily) bulbs. The latter destined to be planted around our woodland. We have managed to get some new roses planted out. Climbing and rambling roses planted with the intention of growing up through some of the larger shrubs.

The lack of sunlight has been noticeable in the greenhouse. Many of our plants are showing weak growth due to low light. Not unexpected in winter but more pronounced this year. They'll soon bounce back once light levels increase in spring. Seasonal sunlight

plays an important role in the garden. At this time of year, with the sun low in the sky, shining through the trees, the fountain pond sparkles as it is back lit by the morning sun. Perhaps intentional design when it was constructed in the mid-19th century, perhaps pure chance. Magical, nevertheless.

Elsewhere in the estate, we have removed an old Horse Chestnut tree—approximately 170 years old, an original 19th century planting which unfortunately succumbed to honey fungus. We have lost a few Horse Chestnuts for the same reason: they are all reaching maturity at the same time and have the same issues. The big Turkey Oak (about 180 years old) which Storm Amy brought down last year has been cleared. The surrounding area still needs tided once the ground is drier. We hope to put the wood to use in garden projects while Pentland Men's Shed will hopefully be able to use some for wood turning projects.

Finally, seed sowing is underway in the greenhouse. Always a joy to get new things growing for the year ahead, particularly the sweetpeas!

• *Volunteers make an enormous difference to the National Trust for Scotland and there are many benefits to volunteering with the Trust. If you, or someone you know, would like to volunteer with us, please get in touch at mallenygarden@nts.org.uk.*

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



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Mel Young MBE



Mel Young MBE is a leading social entrepreneur who has spent his career fighting exclusion and inequality. He is best known for co-founding the Homeless World Cup: under his leadership, this annual competition has grown into a globally recognised brand that has changed the lives of more than a million homeless people around the world. Back in 1975, however, he was Vice-President (External) of the Heriot-Watt Student Association, and editor of its student newspaper "Omega"—which is how he became involved with a proposed new community newspaper...



'Thanks Mel'

In the June 1976 edition of *Currie & Balerno News*, coordinating editor Graham Priestley contributed a short article – headlined "Thanks Mel" – praising the departing Mel Young "for all his hard work for the paper".

He wrote: "Mel has been head of Publications at the Students' Association for the past two years and was a prime mover in setting up *C&B News*. He has guided us through our infancy and helped smooth out many problems.

"We hope we can manage without him, but it will be hard. Mel has our warmest good wishes for future success and happiness."

Obviously, they DID manage without him, though we're sure it wasn't easy!

In any case, the hired help and the current management team echo the sentiment—Thanks, Mel!

How did you get involved with the launch of *Currie & Balerno News*?

The whole rationale around getting involved and starting *C&B News* at the time, from memory, was that the Heriot-Watt Riccarton campus was still very new—in some ways only three-quarters built. It was being built in stages; the students were moving out [from the city centre] in stages.

The view was that the students were actually quite isolated; [out-of-town] campuses like Riccarton were a relatively new phenomenon. There was only one bus into town, and you had to go up to Currie to get it, and most students weren't doing that. So the idea at the time was to try and build bridges between the local Currie-Balerno community and the students; we connected, I think, with Currie Residents Association.

I think it was good, having the Currie-Balerno committee come to Riccarton. It was grand ambition on all sides, to have Currie-Balerno residents and students to do something jointly. But then, of course, things developed. Riccarton developed. And *C&B News* became much more of its own thing.

Initially the connection with Heriot-Watt University was quiet strong; we had this overarching ambition, which I think was laudable at the time. That they kept coming down to do the layouts [until 2000—Editor], that was good.

Unlike today, where the editor compiles each issue on his laptop, early issues were physically cut and pasted together by as

many of the volunteer as possible. Any memories of those sessions?

All of the layout was done, put together in terms of design, with Letraset and all the text provided in columns. We'd stick that down on the pages. We used to have this gluing machine, which was hand-held, and you had slabs of wax, which you put in it; you plugged this thing in, which would melt the wax, and you would roll it behind the strips.

I remember the glue. Everyone was getting stoned on the glue.

Do you remember any of the big issues covered by the paper?

Buses were a really big thing, I seem to remember; there were always concerns, for students and residents. In the early early days, they didn't even go to Riccarton. You had to walk up to Lanark Road or down the other way, which was far. There was a real disquiet among the students about all of this. They tended to move faculties out together; they moved all the science and engineering bods out first. I was studying economics, so we were one of the last.

Even the bus services they did have going out to Currie were really infrequent and slow, so getting into the town centre—that was part of the whole feeling of isolation, out in the foothills of the Pentlands.

What are your thoughts about *C&B News*, then and now?

I'm really pleased that the whole thing has kept going.

Setting it up, that was the initial purpose; as students, we were very transient at the time, and this particular project was part of our strategy around communications. But you know what you're like at that age. I was ready for the next stage of my life; I hoped [*C&B News*] was still there and doing its function, but it wasn't something I was worried about. If I'd been older, I might have been wondering how it was doing, but in those days it was "on to the next stage of my life".

And what a life! You're now best known now for having co-founded the Homeless World Cup in 2001. How much are you still involved with that?

I'm still the chair and president, but am really taking a few steps back; other people are doing the heavy lifting at the moment. It keeps growing; we've got another member now in South Sudan, so it keeps growing. We're tackling really difficult issues, but football is something simple. We use it as a kind of tool, and it's an entrée, and it works, so we keep doing it. We have much more wins than losses.

So, dare we ask: what do you think of *C&B News* now, half a century on?

It's looking grand. Amazing. I am thrilled that *C&B News* is still being published, thriving and providing an important service for the community.

If I was living there, or if I was moving into the area and wanted to meet people, the What's On listings are the kind of thing I would dive into right away.

The Edinburgh Award

In October 2024, Mel Young MBE was officially presented with the coveted Edinburgh Award, given to individuals who have made a truly unique contribution to the city and brought the Scottish capital to national and international attention.

Alongside family, friends and invited guests, Young received an engraved Loving Cup from the Lord Provost, an official award certificate, and a set of his handprints preserved in stone in the City Chambers quadrangle was unveiled.

At the time, Lord Provost Robert Aldridge said: "From The Homeless World Cup to The Big Issue in Scotland, his passion and dedication to changing lives and advocating for fairness is admirable and inspiring. Through his work he has represented the Capital with pride, dedication, and skill."

At the official reception, Mel said: "I would like to share this Award with

the many hard-working people who have contributed to making the Homeless World Cup so impactful and successful. Also, this Award belongs to the real heroes of our work, the homeless people themselves who change their own lives through their involvement with our tournament and our operations across the world."

Mel Young receiving the Edinburgh Award, joined by Homeless World Cup volunteers, representatives from Homeless World Cup Member Countries, Homeless World Cup Foundation staff and board members. Photo: The City of Edinburgh Council.



THE TRUSTEES COLINTON VILLAGE ENTERPRISE SCIO

You might be wondering what's going on behind the extensive hoarding in Spylaw Park—and whether there's anything left of the building known locally as "The Shed" which, until recently, served as the Colinton Village Enterprise (CVE) base for Art in the Park and other community events.

The answer is Yes—and quite a lot!

For CVE, this marks an exciting period of transformation as the original building is carefully repurposed into Colinton's Heritage Hub.

For many years, we believed "The Shed" was built for James Gillespie as a coach house for Spylaw House (built in 1773). However, our archaeologists have provided fascinating new insight. The First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1855 shows Spylaw House and a building on the site of the current structure - but the building depicted at that time was L-shaped and of different proportions. It is therefore unlikely to be the same building that stands today.

Originally, a walled garden lay in front of Spylaw House, with a field beside it containing a separate dwelling in a similar position to the current "Shed". The archaeologists suggest this may have been an agricultural building. We like to imagine it as a small farmhouse supplying eggs and milk to the "big hoose."

In 1874 the Colinton Tunnel was completed as part of the Balerno Branch Line, an expansion of the Caledonian Railway Company. It is possible that between 1855 and 1874 the building was adapted into the coach house, with a loft above it for stable boys or grooms.

By 1894, when the Second Edition OS Map was published, the area around Spylaw House had changed significantly. The walled garden had been bisected and largely removed by the construction of the railway track. The bridge across the Water of Leith had also been formed. The building shown on this later map is the same size and proportions of our current building, including a small rear extension. It is likely therefore that the original building was demolished as part of the bridge construction.

The archaeologists note: "The alteration of the frontage of the building in the early 20th century could represent a change of use for the building from a coach house to a garage for motor vehicles which were becoming more desirable and common among the wealthy from the early 20th century onwards."

Research from the Colinton Tunnel Project suggests our building was later used as a storage shed for the railway, at which time the corrugated roof would have likely replaced the original slate tiles.

Conserving the Past Building the Future



Today, we know that the outer walls and the pillars/piers form the main part of the building's heritage value. Although at first glance from the overhead bridge, it may well look as if everything has disappeared, this is not the case. The three original stone walls remain intact, and every stone from the dismantled original pillars has been carefully numbered and set aside. These will be rebuilt - stronger and straight - once the foundations are fully reinforced.

The archaeologists believe that "the stone piers were likely built between 1908 and 1914 when the building was altered from having a solid frontage." Interestingly, our project will reinstate this aspect.

This evolving story reminds us that, while buildings naturally change over time, thoughtful preservation enables us to retain a tangible link with the past. Sensitive preservation balances progress with respect for heritage, enabling buildings to adapt without losing their identity.

Groundworks have taken longer than anticipated due to the discovery of bedrock, requiring the Rollo team to work tirelessly - often in relentless rain - to get us "out of the ground". However, we can be sure the building will stand on exceptionally robust foundations going forward.

If you've managed to peek inside recently, you'll have seen the impressive new concrete floor - approximately 25 cubic yards were poured!

Once this stage is complete it will be "all systems go" as we work towards quite literally "raising the roof" by the end of the year.

We Need Your Help!

The Shed's transformation into Colinton's Heritage Hub is a community project in the truest sense. To get to completion, we need your support. Every donation, large or small, helps secure the future of this historic building for generations to come.

You can contribute by scanning the QR code below, or donating by bank transfer.

• We are holding a public meeting on Wednesday 22 April from 7pm at Dregghorn Loan Hall, where you can hear more about our progress, upcoming works, and how you can get involved.



Currie Primary School celebrated everything Scottish at the end of January with their annual Scots Assembly, writes Head Teacher Sally Hourston. We were entertained by some of our learners showing off their talents in dancing, and hearing the representatives from each class reciting Scots and Burns verse. The children all did a fantastic job and we enjoyed welcoming some of our families to join us in Assembly.

Nether Currie Updates

CALA (P7) NETHER CURRIE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Internet Safety

Since we came back from the Christmas holiday it has been a nice calm few weeks. We did some internet safety with Jill Rogers from Fast Forward who taught us about how to be safer online. She advised us about different things from gaming to our digital footprint and what to do if someone we don't know sends us a friend request.

We did a quiz on what image is AI and what one is real. Big thanks to Jill for coming into Primary 7.

In our assembly at school Mrs McAndrew also spoke to us about how to be safe when using

the internet and social media apps. She told us if you ever felt unsafe or unsure to tell a trusted adult. Mrs McAndrew also told us it is important to block anyone who makes us feel unsafe and not go back onto the website, just in case that person is still there.

Journalism Talk

In Primary 7 we are doing a media topic, and we are learning about photography. Paul Fisher Cockburn, the editor of *C&B News*, came into our class to speak to us about journalism. Paul shared stories about his career and gave the class some tips about starting in journalism. It was very interesting and has helped us out with our topic work. We enjoyed having Paul in our class and appreciate him giving up his time to come and see us.



We had a team of P6 and P7 pupils over at Meadowbank Stadium last month taking part in the Edinburgh Schools Sportshall Athletics competition, writes Sally Hourston, Head Teacher at Currie Primary School. Sportshall Athletics is an indoor, team-based track and field programme for primary aged children. The team took part in a various running, jumping and throwing events and we were delighted to come second overall. Our whole team performed and supported each other so well and we are very proud of how hard they all worked to achieve our best ever result in this competition.



Currie CHS Launches Digital Newspaper

REETI PATEL
S3, CCHS

Pupils at Currie Community High School have released the first edition of a digital newspaper – *A.R.E Digital Diary*. The project, led by Reeti Patel (S3), focuses on bringing Currie High together through school news and updates written and designed by other pupils. The edition was published on Friday 30 January and was read by 310 individuals on that day alone! You

can expect more of these fantastic newspapers to come out within the next few months. *A.R.E Digital Diary* gained its name in the most genuine way possible — from a student voice. During one of our early meetings, Zainab Ghafoor (S3) suggested the name, explaining that Ambition, Respect, and Equality perfectly reflect Currie’s values and the voices we wanted

this newspaper to represent. The idea immediately stood out. We later put the name to a club vote, where it quickly became the clear favourite. The newspaper’s team of nearly 30 is split into six groups: writing and editorial; interviews and outreach; leadership and management; photography and media; science and health; and design and layout. Each team

focuses on a different aspect of the newspaper. “The science and health team aim to provide information on recent and ongoing scientific research, advances, and discoveries in each issue,” said Hoi Ching (Annabel) Lam. “Along with that, they write a science joke section, which is highly regarded by all members of the team.” “As members of the interview and outreach team, we have a vital role in the *A.R.E Digital Diary* newspaper. Our job is to collect as much information as possible through interviews, then pass the information on to the very skilled writers who are able to turn this

information into something amazing. We learn and build very important skills such as journaling, note-taking, and social skills,” said Malak Askar. “In writing and editorial, we focus on taking the content of the interviews and creating an interesting article,” said Elissa Savidge. “In order to do this, we need to remain truthful to the contents of the interview and rewrite the article multiple times so it appears concise and well-structured.” “In the photography and media team, we take photos and collect images of events and other relevant things related to the

topics in our newspaper,” said Hannah Black. “We add visuals to the articles that help provide a greater understanding of the topic, which makes us a big part of our newspaper.” The first edition of the newspaper is 20 pages long and features 13 full articles. They include “Musical Madness” by Shamaeilah Ferouz Saad, a “Staff Spotlight” featuring Currie High’s very own head teacher, Jenny Hutchinson (by Katie McLaren and Juliet MacDonald), and a Creative Writing Feature about a writing competition. As for the future, Reeti hopes to add more thought-provoking

articles, as well as an advice column for all students so they can share their opinions anonymously. She also plans to add a music/book/film review page so that students can feel more connected to their peers. Another idea she had was to add a study tips section in order to help readers who are struggling to study for tests find the strategies that work for them. “I wanted to give pupils a real platform where they can share their thoughts and ideas about school life,” said Reeti. “*A.R.E Digital Diary* has filled that gap and has really made an impact at Currie Community High School.”

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Children Lending with Care

MIKE ROWE
CURRIE BALERNO ROTARY

Two local primary schools – Balerno’s Dean

Park Primary and Ratho Primary – have joined with Currie Balerno Rotary in making loans to a in developing countries through LendwithCare and the pupils have engaged with this with enthusiasm.

LendwithCare is a scheme run by Care International, one of the world’s leading aid and development organisations, which arranges for individuals and groups to lend to small entrepreneurs who present business plans which include loan repayment schedules. Repayments can then fund further loans.

Care International launched LendwithCare in 2010 and Currie Balerno Rotary became a member in November 2011 (the first Rotary Club in the UK to

do so) at which time we loaded our account with £500. More has since been added by personal contributions from members and friends. During the 25 years, we have made 578 loans, totalling nearly £26,500, of which 524 have completed repayment at this stage, with a very small number of defaults.

Most of the recipients have been women and this help has given them a way out of poverty through their own efforts. In 2024, we invited local primary schools to consider joining in the scheme and Balerno’s Dean Park Primary and Ratho Primary took up the offer. We then donated £300 to each school from our LendwithCare fund to enable the pupils to make their first loans.

initiative has been received by the children. It is seen as adding a new dimension to their education, giving them an insight into a world so different from their own and into the needs experienced in less advantaged parts of the world.

This year Dean Park Primary won the UNICEF Gold Award for the fourth consecutive year and Laura saw the LendwithCare initiative as a significant factor in this accreditation.

If you want to know more about LendwithCare, about the schools’ experience with LendwithCare, about how to contribute to LendwithCare – or just about Currie Balerno Rotary – contact Mike Rowe at PR@cbrotary.org

Laura Jackson, Deputy Head Teacher at Dean Park Primary, says she is delighted with the enthusiasm with which this



One of Nether Currie’s parents Mrs Anna Barber has kindly offered to run two half marathons to raise money for Nether Currie Primary School, which is amazing, writes Head Teacher Mrs Michelle McAndrew. Mrs Barber’s first half marathon is on 1 March at the Meadows while her second is on 4 May as part of the Edinburgh Half Marathon.

She has given herself a target of raising £2,000 to support Nether Currie Primary School and she would really appreciate any support.

You can donate to her JustGiving page going to: <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/anna-barber-3>

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PLANNING, ETC BY ARCHIE CLARK

Planning and Climate Change-11: Protecting our Coastlines

A photograph of a Cold War era lookout station, built 70 years ago 100 yards inland which subsequently collapsed into the sea in January, shows how rapidly our coastline is crumbling. Apparently East Riding Council has no statutory responsibilities relating to the structure. Their Shoreline Management Plan doesn't require active intervention "which allows coastal processes to continue".

While there is evidence that groynes (essentially walls built at right angles to the shoreline) have been deployed nearby, none seem to feature in this area. (You can see refurbished groynes at Portobello beach installed to keep sand in place and resist coastline erosion.)

The revelation that the UK has perhaps 13,000 illegal waste sites, containing 13m tonnes of rubbish, makes me wonder whether we can diminish the rate of coastal erosion while simultaneously dealing with clearing the land of those unwanted tips, at a reasonable cost. Assuming that it would be possible to construct groynes using concrete, brick and stone from demolition



Photo: The Holderness & Hornsea Gazette/John Prince.

sites, incorporating ship hulks along vulnerable lengths of coastline, coupled with placing sorted waste into the bays thus created and covering them with topsoil, one could not only protect the seashore, but restore the countryside and provide useful employment for some of the staggering number of 95,500 people held in prison. At least, the UK landmass would decrease more slowly.

When you consider that Peterhead breakwater, constructed by the Admiralty between 1892 and 1956 to

form a Harbour of Refuge, was built using convict labour, there is a precedent for employing this enormous captive workforce. In Peterhead's case, the adjacent prison (built c1888) provided a labourforce that was transported by a dedicated train to nearby Stirling hill to quarry the hard granite that was then taken to the prison workshops. There they constructed massive concrete blocks that were craned along the wide breakwater.

An internet search reveals that there are several Shore

Management Plans for England. SEPA has produced a map showing many 'Potentially Vulnerable Areas' round Scotland. Around 2018, a Marine Scotland Assessment estimated that £18bn of buildings were within 50m of the shoreline with 28,000 properties at coastal flood risk. But we hear little about reinforcing our coastline. Why not? Perhaps we should *recycle, restore while rehabilitating* the Rescivists.

An Oddly Flexible Affordable Policy?

Edinburgh's 2030 Plan was approved in November 2024. Policy Hou2 "Affordable Housing" states: "Developments including conversions, consisting of 12 or more units should normally provide affordable housing amounting to 35% of the total number of units proposed." That seems pretty clear.

In April 2025, a planning application was lodged for 228 houses. One would have expected that 35% of these (80) would be in the "affordable" category. However in January 2026, an "Affordable Housing Statement" appeared on the Planning portal revising the

total number of houses up to 250 houses, 188 being identified as "Open Market" and 62 being "Affordable Housing". So the affordable provision dropped to 25%, with more houses being proposed and fewer "Affordables" being provided.

Perhaps our councillors would describe how we should interpret affordable policy, when the "normal" 35% affordable housing provision, approved by the Council long before this application was lodged, has been reduced. Is the Council providing the missing 10% elsewhere in the City, and if so, where?

'Green' Data Centre Refused

Last October, I recorded that an application had been lodged to build a Green Data Centre at Redheughs Avenue. The works would include the formation of a public park with sports facilities. The large building would incorporate office space. While details were lacking on how the building might look, the planning department recommended that the application be granted. However on Tuesday 10 February, the Development Management Sub-Committee refused the application because:

1: The proposal is contrary to NPF4 Policy 1 as it does not

adequately address the climate emergency;

2: The proposal is contrary to NPF4 Policy 2 as it does not demonstrate lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions can be minimised;

3: The proposal is contrary to CityPlan 2030 Place Policy 19 - EP1 criteria as it does not incorporate a mix of business and residential uses and does not extend the existing grid layout to ensure a cohesive townscape or deliver sustainable movement through the site.

The DMSC added that the proposal was not considered to be a green data centre as defined in NPF4.

MORE PLANNING, ETC BY ARCHIE CLARK

Last month, I said that the 1956 Development Plan identified the Public Open Space requirement for our locality.

During the 2001 Muir Wood Field public inquiry, the City Council's planning policy witness calculated that our "Open Space" requirement was 28.55 hectares but, far from being met, there was a shortfall of 14 hectares which he said would justify safeguarding the entire Muir Wood Field for "Open Space".

This wasn't the only Currie site allocated for recreation that the house builders wanted to develop. In October 1981, *Currie & Balerno News* (issue 64) had Currie Community Council (CCC) recording that "at the far end of Currie High School playing fields next to Currievale, a strip of 'green acres' has been handed back by the local authorities to Wimpey

For the Record: Land Lost for Recreation in Currie

who intend to erect houses on the site. Due to the great concern of those whose houses overlook this strip, the Council – presumably CCC – "are looking into this matter as it is felt that every effort must be made to retain as much 'green' space in Currie as possible."

Two months later, CCC reported the main themes raised at a public meeting: "(a) a recreation area is badly needed; (b) 'green acres' – already below the laid down acreage in this area – must be retained; (c) if building was allowed the access/exit roads would lead to still more congestion and hazard to the already overloaded streets."

The next recorded activity was in May 1990 (*C&B News* 156) when CCC recorded that an application had been lodged "to build a further 11 houses

at Currievale Park Grove. This land had been earmarked for recreation purposes and the Community

Council are of the opinion that this land should be used for that purpose only as we suffer from a shortage of recreation facilities within the Currie area." This issue also revealed that by 1983, it appeared that Currie High School wouldn't need all its allocated ground so 1.67 hectares (4.12 acres) would be released for housing, noting that houses had already been built on two-thirds of the site.

In September 1994, *C&B News* (199) recorded that Wimpey had applied to "develop seven serviced plots at Currievale Park Grove". The article concluded with the comment: "The 'Public Open Space' remaining would be so small and irregular in shape that it is difficult to see how it could be used except by the canine population."



DR SCOTT ARTHUR MP
EDINBURGH SOUTH WEST

HELD IN OUR HEARTS

One of the great privileges of being an MP is meeting the remarkable people and groups who make Edinburgh South West such a special place. I recently had the honour of visiting Held In Our Hearts, a charity offering compassionate support to women and couples who have experienced pregnancy, baby, or infant loss.

I met with their CEO, Nicola Welsh, and our conversation was deeply moving. By coincidence, it was the 17th anniversary of the day her three-week-old son, Theo, died in her arms. Nicola spoke openly about those final moments and the grief that followed. Beyond a single health visitor appointment, she received little support.

Today, Nicola leads Held In Our Hearts from Craiglockhart, supporting hundreds of women every year through counselling and peer support from people who truly understand this unique kind of loss.

Nicola and her colleague, Rossi Craig, told me about their powerful Hospital to Home approach, an early intervention service that supports women from the moment they leave the hospital, ensuring women are supported at a time when life has changed forever.

Their support includes guidance in planning a funeral or memorial, help with attending medical appointments, and advice for the whole family, including siblings who may be struggling. They also assist with returning to work and provide resources for use at home or school, ensuring families are supported throughout their healing.

After a successful three year pilot in NHS Lothian, the service is now expanding to NHS Fife, Forth Valley, and Highland. The impact is clear: 100% of families felt emotionally supported, 100% valued funeral guidance, and 97% felt better prepared for medical appointments.

Compassionate support should never depend on where a parent lives. That's why I have written to the Scottish Government advocating for nationwide access to this care.



GORDON MACDONALD MSP
EDINBURGH PENTLANDS

FAREWELL

Sadly, this will be my final piece for *C&B News* as I retire from frontline politics and my role as the MSP for Edinburgh Pentlands.

It has been an honour and a privilege to represent the area. I have, during my time in office, tried to serve diligently and I am deeply thankful for the trust and support extended to me over the years. I will be forever grateful to all the staff I have employed over the past 15 years who have consistently supported my work in providing an empathetic and professional service for constituents seeking assistance. From housing problems to health enquiries to education issues, my staff have supported thousands of people, businesses and local organisations, finding solutions to their problems, and I thank them.

Since my election in 2011, I have strived to be a voice for our community, working on issues ranging from the need for local affordable housing to national policy that affects our daily lives. Whether it was advocating for local retail businesses, pushing for better health services, or ensuring our education system serves every child, I have sought to represent the spirit and needs of Edinburgh Pentlands with integrity and passion.

I remain grateful to residents, community groups and stakeholders whose support and engagement have been the cornerstone of my work here. I also want to thank *C&B News* which has given me the opportunity to speak to you all directly for many years through this column.

I have worked tirelessly for 50 years to achieve independence and will continue to campaign for Scotland to join the family of nations. Thank you, once again, for the privilege of serving as your MSP.



SUE WEBBER MSP
LOTHIAN REGION

BUS-INNESS AS USUAL?

For too long, communities across Edinburgh have had to put up with unacceptable behaviour on our buses. I have heard directly from constituents who have experienced intimidation, abuse and disruption – in extreme circumstances even services being cancelled. It is not fair, and it is not sustainable.

For more than two years, I have pressed the Scottish Government to recognise the scale of the problem. I have raised the issue repeatedly at Holyrood, lodged parliamentary questions demanding data on incidents linked to the free bus travel scheme, and met with bus operators and trade unions to gather frontline evidence. I also spent an evening with Edinburgh Police and Lothian Buses to see their partnership working first hand. I have written directly to Ministers urging meaningful consequences for repeat offenders, after they initially downplayed concerns and resisted calls for reform.

Progress was then further delayed when the responsible Minister failed to present his promised Draft Code of Conduct in January, as indicated. Once again, drivers and passengers were left waiting while disruption continued. Although the Draft Code has now finally been published, it was not worth the delay. What was needed was decisive action—and that should have come sooner.

Acknowledging a problem is not an attack on free bus travel; it is about protecting it. The vast majority of pass holders use the scheme responsibly and should not have their journeys blighted by a disruptive minority.

The long-awaited legislation allowing free bus passes to be removed from those who repeatedly engage in anti-social behaviour sends a clear message: rights come with responsibilities. Bus drivers deserve a safe workplace, and passengers deserve to travel without fear. I will continue to ensure these powers are implemented fairly and effectively for communities across the city.



CLLR GRAEME BRUCE
PENTLAND HILLS WARD

SAVING LIVES

I put a motion to Full Council recently on defibrillators which was passed with a few helpful additions from other parties. The City of Edinburgh Council did not have a single standalone policy on this subject, but rather had guidance on the provision and management of these machines. I asked the Council to bring back a report to review the current approach for installing defibrillators to increase the availability of these devices across the city and whether they could be fitted to streetlights or even solar powered units.

Staying at Full Council we had a special meeting to decide what we do with the income generated from the tourist tax which will be activated from 24 July. I made a passionate speech as to why Princes Street should be revamped because, quite frankly, the state of that street is an absolute embarrassment to everyone including tourists. Thankfully the decision on the full pedestrianisation of George Street, along with a cycle super highway, has been postponed for at least a year. In my opinion, it's all the current roads and pavements that the money should be spent on. As someone said recently, it's like walking on marbles with all the grit being kicked up by deteriorating roads.

Talking of deteriorating roads, and in particular, Lanark Road West, you are supposed to drive in a straight line along a road not negotiate it like a ride on the dodgems at a fun fair. CEC will need to prioritise this as an emergency trip to the dentist: get something in quick to stop the pain but then follow it up with full extraction, ie. complete resurfacing. As always, there is no gain without pain. Beware of more temporary lights further down the road!



CLLR NEIL GARDINER
PENTLAND HILLS WARD

MONEY MATTERS

Edinburgh's new Visitor Levy is revenue collected from tourists which must be invested in projects and services related to tourism. The SNP Group's council motion proposed reviewing investment in George Street, in order to reprioritise Princes Street, which has been impacted by the revamped St James Quarter and online shopping. While its spectacular situation contributes to Edinburgh as an international tourist destination, the street now needs to be in tiptop condition for the half million people calling Edinburgh home.

Investments in pathways could connect the Water of Leith to the Pentlands and help local businesses. Investing in our communities reduces pressure from the old town, spreading tourist pounds across our city. We also supported a bus service to the council-owned International Climbing Arena and to Lost Shore Surf Resort, creating opportunities across the city.

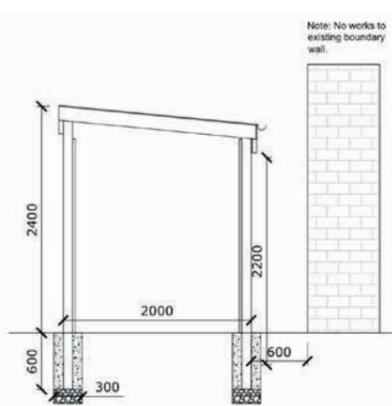
Local workers, running our pubs and restaurants also need places to live. We advocated quadrupling proposed Levy investment in affordable housing. While not all parties either in Council or Holyrood supported implementing the Levy, they're all happy to discuss allocating the revenue! On the day the SNP Group priorities were seen to be best for our city and supported by a majority.

At the time of writing there's a separate Council Budget meeting coming. Edinburgh's proposed council tax increase is one of Scotland's lowest. Our group proposes that the Scottish Government's additional £17m supports housing affordability. We propose increased investment in community centres: parks – including funding local Friends Groups; more Additional Support Needs for our schools; investing in safer routes to schools; Third Sector funding and supporting families with caring responsibilities. I'm hoping some of our balanced budget proposals for families and wellbeing are accepted.

Planning Permission Sought for a Compost Heap

I am faced with a dilemma, debating whether this application is worth writing about. 26/00407/LBC is for Listed Building Consent for "The construction of a timber frame supported roof structure and timber cladding to the rear masonry wall elements of the existing boundary wall at Malleny Gardens at Land 70 metres North of Malleny House". The site is Category A listed. The open covered erection is for a "freestanding compost production structure" to replace the existing masonry bays. It would be "contractor designed" to be lower than the wall behind it, virtually hidden from both the main house and curious eyes. No, I don't think it's worth writing about—it's much the same as what's in my garden.

On the other hand, this is a National Trust for Scotland property, and I pay a fairly large subscription as a member. So perhaps I should be



interested in how my money's being spent—a client briefing, a site visit, a week's work for a draughtsman, obtaining planning permission, selecting contractors, vetting their designs, instructing the work, notifying the City of Edinburgh Council when the works don't run over budget and issuing all the necessary certificates. Yes I could lodge an objection, but no, it's not worth writing about.

Then I discovered two

previous applications for the same site, lodged earlier. Shouldn't a "compost production structure" be exempt? Meanwhile, the CEC has not begun assessing applications 25/04013/LBC and 25/04016/FUL for Alterations and repairs to return Malleny House to good quality tenanted accommodation, including fabric repairs and upgrades, internal refurbishments, reinstatement of the historical octagonal chimney to the Georgian Wing, necessary services upgrades, installation of an air source heat pump with external enclosure, new fire-fighting water tank, new opening to garden at rear and landscaping works. That appeared in the Weekly list on Monday 11 August 2025.

I'll leave it to you to decide whether it's worth writing about the Compost Heap. Like STLs, at least the Council (and others) should make enough money out of the process to employ more staff.

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CLLR FIONA GLASGOW
PENTLAND HILLS WARD

COMMUNITY ACTIVISM

The year has started off with a busy schedule of budget planning for the year ahead and consideration of what's important to the people of Edinburgh. Edinburgh's visitor levy has been debated and agreed and there are great hopes to improve the city offerings to both visitors and residents. The Culture and Communities committee discussed the importance of investing in activities that benefit our local communities as well as the to visitors to our city.

I attended Currie Community Council where a range of issues was discussed and residents voices were heard. Of particular interest is a group of local people who have taken on the beautification of a neglected lane over the past few years. The lane is a main thoroughfare leading to Lanark Road. Local residents propose to replace the wood, make good and paint the fence with help from local volunteers. Their aim is to have the work completed before spring, when the wildflowers that have been planted will start to grow. This is community activism in action and volunteers are sought to assist. If interested in getting involved please contact Currie Community Council for details.

Local residents in Juniper Green have set up a tenants association to look into coordinating repairs and maintenance to their council houses. This small group will work together with officers to improve the way that work is carried out and ensure that future repairs happen in a way that meets the needs of tenants.

If you have any issues that affect your area please contact your local community council where issues can be addressed. I would also ask that residents take part in the consultation around local place plans, this is your opportunity to have your say about how your community will look in the future. Your voice is important!



CLLR STEPHEN JENKINSON
PENTLAND HILLS WARD

VISITOR LEVY

Last month, the City of Edinburgh Council decided on how we are going to spend Visitor Levy money—a move that will shape how our capital manages tourism for years to come. It was a significant moment for the city and one that followed extensive consultation and debate.

As your Councillor, I regularly hear that residents value living in a world-class city, but want to see that success work better for local communities. This levy is about achieving that balance.

Tourism is central to Edinburgh's economy. It sustains jobs, supports local businesses and underpins our cultural life. However, the sheer volume of visitors also places significant pressure on public services, infrastructure, waste collection, roads, parks and public spaces. Until now, much of that cost has largely fallen on local taxpayers.

The visitor levy will ask overnight guests to make a modest contribution towards maintaining the city they come to enjoy. While much of the direct investment will focus on managing pressures in the city centre, the additional income will ease demand on existing council budgets. That creates the opportunity to redirect resources into neighbourhoods beyond the centre—including communities like ours.

In practical terms, this could support improvements to roads and pavements, better upkeep of parks and green spaces, enhancements to cleansing, and strengthened community facilities. It offers a fairer funding model, where tourism helps sustain the whole city rather than placing disproportionate strain on residents.

This decision is not about discouraging visitors. It is about planning responsibly for the future—ensuring Edinburgh remains both a great place to visit and a great place to live, with benefits shared more evenly across all our communities.



RICHARD M HENDERSON
BALERNO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

REALITY CHECK?

Back in 2016/17 Balerno Community Council and Balerno Village Trust consulted jointly with residents about the community's vision for the future. As a result BCC published Balerno's Community Plan, *Our Village, Our Community* in 2019.

Several of its community-driven recommendations have since been achieved. Since 2016 Balerno has also expanded, and community plans have acquired a new status and authority. In short, The City of Edinburgh Council now has to have regard to statutory Local Place Plans (LPPs) – the new Community Plans – when making planning decisions including in its preparation of City Plan 2040, which will govern the City's planning aspirations and decisions from the mid-2030s.

Yes, that sounds years away (and it is) but there are immediate benefits from preparing an LPP, in particular in terms of community cohesion—highlighting areas for protection as well as identifying public support for action now, on issues of concern.

BCC's new LPP will focus on the following subject areas: infrastructure; young people; encouraging local business; active and safe travel; green belt; and the Pentlands.

Looking at just one of those, active travel, CEC believes in the "20 minute neighbourhood"; that is to say, all your local services within 20 minutes of your front door (10 minutes travel on foot or bike each way). Realistic in Balerno?

The LPP allows us to say what we think is necessary and achievable. For example, if CEC wishes to encourage active travel – and that is an integral part of the 20 minute scheme – it must create the safe environment in which people can have confidence to walk or cycle. And CEC must recognise that, if this approach isn't realistic, we are entitled to ask that – for example – public transport is improved.

An LPP is a useful tool to make the arguments



MOIRA PETERSON
CURRIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

FEBRUARY UPDATE

Since our last report, Currie Community Council have been working on the following issues. We communicated with the City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) regarding flooding opposite Baberton Road, off Riccarton Mains Road, reporting issues residents had with being passed back and forth between CEC and Scottish Water. The two bodies conducted multi-layered investigations and found that this was a Scottish Water issue. Scottish Water have installed a new manhole cover to investigate further.

We put in a request to CEC, through Councillor Stephen Jenkinson, to request the Pentland View Car Park lines be repainted to hopefully reduce ongoing problems with bad parking.

We liaised with CEC and the Police about the dangerous dog remaining with the owner until their case is heard. The dog could not be removed from its owner until the Procurator Fiscal reviewed the reports. We wrote to the Procurator Fiscal about the community impact of this situation.

We completed the CEC Play Sufficiency Assessment Questionnaire to let CEC know what improvements we need for our local play parks and green spaces. We will add the responses received from that consultation into the Local Place Plan.

A Local Place Plan (LPP) is a community-led document that allows local communities to set out proposals for the development and use of land in their area. It empowers residents to influence local development, improve places, and directly inform local authority development plans.

With this in mind, we will be seeking your opinion on local housing, healthcare, transport, community facilities, provision for young and older people, play parks and green spaces, paths and tracks, local food provision, flooding, protecting nature and open spaces.

We will be launching an online questionnaire and setting up events to get your views. Make sure your voice is heard!



Volunteers Needed for Pentlands Open Studios Art Trail

NICOLA BRISLEY
POST VOLUNTEERS COORDINATOR

Pentlands Open Studios (POSt) is seeking friendly, enthusiastic volunteers to help deliver this year's Art Trail.

Set in and around the villages of Balerno, Currie, Juniper Green and Colinton in the shadow of the beautiful Pentland Hills, the annual trail invites visitors to explore working studios, meet professional artists and discover a wide range of artwork. Volunteers play a vital role in making the weekend welcoming and enjoyable for all.

We are looking for: flyer and poster distributors to help publicise the event in local villages ahead of the trail; trail wardens to guide visitors between studios and villages during the trail weekend; information hub volunteers to answer questions and hand out printed materials during the trail weekend; and studio support volunteers to assist artists in welcoming visitors and managing footfall during the trail weekend.

Shifts during the art trail are available in the morning or afternoon on one or both days.

Volunteering is a great way to support a much-loved local arts event, meet talented artists, experience the trail from behind the scenes and spend time in inspiring surroundings. As a thank you, volunteers will receive free coffee and cake during their shift.

• *This year's Pentlands Open Art Studios Trail is on Saturday 15 and Sunday 16 August, from 10am to 4pm.*

• *No previous experience is required — just a positive attitude and willingness to help.*

• *To register your interest and indicate your preferred role and availability, please email volunteers@postudios.org.*



Sold-Out Jazz Night with Seonaid Aitken

JOHN ELLIOTT
THE JUNIPER GREEN NOTE

The Juniper Green Note, a grassroots jazz club based at Baberton Golf Club, has marked another milestone with a sold-out concert headlined by acclaimed Scottish violinist and vocalist Seonaid Aitken.

The club, founded by pianist John Elliott, has quickly built a reputation for presenting high-quality live jazz in an intimate, welcoming setting. What began as

a small pop-up jazz night has grown steadily through word of mouth, attracting respected musicians and a loyal local audience.

Aitken's appearance was a standout evening, with her expressive playing and engaging presence perfectly matched to the close-up nature of the room. The relaxed atmosphere also allowed for something increasingly rare at live jazz events—space for dancing, which several audience members enthusiastically took advantage of as the night unfolded.



In Memory of Burns

MIKE ERSKINE
LET IT BLAW

In keeping with over 145 years of tradition, members of the Balerno Burns Club – “Let it Blaw” – met in January to celebrate the

life of Robert Burns, to remember his literary genius, eat good food and toast with a dram.

Held this year at Currie Rugby Club, the supper was attended by almost 90 members and guests. Toasts, songs and poetry were performed and presented by many of the club's members which made for an exceptional night.

Some notable mentions: Euan Gosney, member of only a few years, gave an exceptional toast to the club and received two standing ovations; Alex Hood, exiting



“The idea was always to create a room where the music feels personal,” says Elliott. “Not background music, not a distant stage, but an evening people can really take part in—whether that's listening closely or getting up to dance.”

The Juniper Green Note's success reflects a growing appetite for shared, live experiences rooted in community. Audiences value the club's consistency, trust its programming, and return knowing they'll be part of a genuinely attentive and friendly crowd.

“That sense of connection is what keeps

people coming back,” Elliott adds. “It's incredibly encouraging to see nights selling out and the audience growing so organically.”

Demand has been such that acts are now booked up until June 2026, underlining the club's rapid emergence as a notable grassroots jazz success in Edinburgh.

• *Tickets for upcoming concerts, along with the opportunity to sign up to The Juniper Green Note email list, are available via the club's website: <https://greennote.club>*



as secretary but continuing his great efforts on the committee, proposed the toast to the haggis, which like the Beast itself beside the Neeps and tatties, was well met and applauded by the assembled party.

The effort of the chairman, Iain McSporrán KC, committee and those members able to offer themselves to propose some verse, is a big undertaking and one that they do, not only to honour the rich history of Burns, but also to honour the club itself. Everyone who attends the suppers leaves feeling enriched and grateful for time with friends new and old.

A primary endeavour of the club is to preserve the works and to encourage the study of them and the man himself—a character, appreciated and respected by all levels of



society, and a key figure in the preservation of the Scots language.

We continue to raise funds to support the local school competitions and provide judging and prizes. We hope to continue this relationship for the foreseeable future with Dean Park Primary school and hope future generations will continue on the traditions.

We look forward to celebrating again next year on the 23 January 2027 and welcome interest from anyone who may wish to attend as a guest.

• *For more, visit: <https://letitblaw.org/>*

• *To contact our Club Secretary, please email Alex Hood: ravelrig.balerno@gmail.com*



Spring Concert and Singing in the Summer

MARGARET KIERAN
COLINTON & MERCHISTON COMMUNITY CHOIR

Readers are invited to join Colinton & Merchiston Community Choir for our Spring concert this month.

We will be performing Mozart's Requiem, accompanied not only by the excellent Morley Whitehead on the organ but also by a small orchestra, all under the direction of our inspiring Director of Music, Timothy Coleman.

We remain very grateful to Merchiston Castle School for the use of the Memorial Hall.

• *The Colinton & Merchiston Community Choir Spring Concert is on Monday 23 March, starting at the later time of 8pm, in the Memorial Hall at Merchiston Castle School, 294 Colinton Road.*

• *Tickets £10 (adult) and £5 (under 16s) available from choir members or at the door (cash only).*

Also please save the dates for our eight fun “Singing in the Summer” sessions, held in St Cuthbert's Episcopal Church, Westgarth Avenue from 7.20pm - 9pm on Mondays between 20 April and 8 June. We will learn and sing a wide variety of classical, popular and folk songs, with a break each evening for tea, coffee and biscuits.

No previous experience of choral singing is required, nor do you have to be able to read music.

Further details on how to book will be in the April edition of *C&B News*, on our website (www.colintonchoir.org) and our Facebook page.

• *The cost for the eight sessions is £47, including music hire.*

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Merchiston Celebrates Opening of New Golf Centre

GIADA CANDERLE
MARKETING MANAGER, MERCHISTON CASTLE SCHOOL

Merchiston Castle School officially opened its new Golf Performance Centre on Tuesday 10 February, in an event attended by key figures from the school community including governors, parents, and members of the school's Golf Academy.

Also attending was former pupil and DP World Tour golfer Cameron Adam, who toured the facility and met current pupils, highlighting the ongoing connection between past and present members of the Merchiston Golf programme.

Head of Merchiston Castle School Huw Jones said: "It was a pleasure to welcome Cameron and our parents to the launch. The event was about celebrating a significant milestone for the school and giving those involved in our Golf Academy a chance to see the facility first-hand."

The centre includes indoor practice areas and advanced Foresight simulator technology, enabling pupils to train year-round, regardless of weather conditions. The technology also enables a data-driven approach to practice, providing detailed feedback on each swing

and helping pupils refine their technique within the academy setting.

Fraser Hutchison, Director of Golf at Merchiston, added: "The day gave us a chance to showcase the facility to those most involved in our golf programme. It was a great opportunity to bring everyone together and see the reaction to the centre."

Parents and staff expressed enthusiasm for the new facility, highlighting how it enhances the experience for pupils in the Golf Academy and supports the school's broader sporting provision.

Parents and staff expressed enthusiasm for the new facility, highlighting how it enhances the experience for pupils in the Golf Academy and supports the school's broader sporting provision.

• For additional information, contact: gcanderle@merchiston.co.uk

Above: Left to right: Present Merchiston Castle School pupil Adam Al-B, captain of the Golf Academy, chats with DP World Tour player and former Merchiston pupil Cameron Adam, while Director of Golf Fraser Hutchison looks on. Below: Cameron Adam and Fraser Hutchison.



Six months into the history of the Hailes Quarry Junior Parkrun and race organisers report numbers just keep on growing, writes Nigel Duncan. More than 1,500 youngsters have taken part and the event has encouraged nearly 120 volunteers to help run the Sunday morning sessions. Juniper Green Primary are the latest additions to the list and bosses of the Hailes Quarry Junior Parkrun have invited more schools in Colinton, Currie and Balerno to join in the popular event which takes place every at 9.30am. All entrants must register on the website. <https://www.parkrun.org.uk/register/hailesquarry-juniors/> before they come along for their first event. The organisation also has a Facebook page and entrants can also register there at <https://www.facebook.com/hailesquarryjuniorparkrun/> For more information email: hailesquarryjuniors@parkrun.com



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Currie Chieftains in Hunt for Silverware

EWAN MCCALLUM
CURRIE CHIEFTAINS

It has been a hugely positive period for everyone involved at Currie Chieftains, with success across all areas of the club as we move into a busy and exciting spell in the season.

We are delighted to have secured second place in the Arnold Clark Premiership league (the highest level of league competition for men's rugby in Scotland) confirming a home semi-final on Friday 27 February. This achievement is a real credit to the commitment, consistency and hard work shown by the squad throughout the campaign. Earning the opportunity to host a semi-final at home is significant for the club as we aim to take the next step in the playoffs.

We are also set to host Edinburgh Accies in the cup on Saturday 28 March, a fixture which will also include a Past Players' Lunch ahead of kick-off. It promises to be a fantastic occasion, bringing former players back together to celebrate the club's history while

supporting the current squad.

We are extremely proud to see several of our players gaining recognition at national level. Gregor Christie, Ryan Daley and Fraser Sayers have all been involved in training with the Scotland Club XV, highlighting the standards within our senior squad. Cameron Getting's involvement with Scotland Under-20s is also excellent recognition of his development and potential.

It has also been fantastic to see former Currie players continuing to thrive on the professional stage. Robyn Allan made her wdebut for Glasgow Warriors, while Niamh Waters earned her first appearance for Edinburgh Rugby. Both began their rugby journeys at Currie, and we are incredibly proud to see them progressing at the highest level.

Our youth section continues to flourish, with many of our young players representing district teams across all age groups. The strength of our development pathway remains something we take great pride in as a club.

Off the field, the recent Tony Singh fundraising dinner was a tremendous success. The event, aimed at raising funds for essential kitchen refurbishments, was very well supported and demonstrated the strong community spirit that underpins Currie Chieftains.

Looking ahead to the summer, we are excited to host our annual Sevens Festival on Saturday 30 May. It promises to be a fantastic day out for families, packed with action-filled 7s rugby, music, food, drinks and entertainment throughout the day. It's always one of the highlights of the club calendar and a great opportunity for the wider community to come together and enjoy everything Currie has to offer.

With cup rugby ahead and plenty happening across the club, there is a real sense of momentum and excitement around Currie Chieftains.

• For all the latest fixtures, results, and booking information, visit our website: <https://www.curriechieftains.org>

Hailles Swimming Club, based in Currie and Balerno, became Forth Valley Junior League swimming Champions in December 2025—the first time, in the 40 year history of the Club, that it has won the championship, writes Club President Duncan Fraser. Swimmers competed in all eight galas throughout the year, culminating in the Final—it even involved a swim-off relay to finalise the result!

The Champions Cup was presented to the Lead Coach, Geraldine Simpson, at the Annual Awards event in February 2026 by local MSP Sue Webber. The Club Champions were also awarded their medals, trophies

and shields by Sue – who kindly gave up her Saturday evening to join us.

Our swimmers are aged between eight and 18 and are drawn from the local primary and secondary schools. In the main they are coached by senior pupils, still in school. It is a fantastic achievement.

The Club competes in entry level galas, and increasingly at Regional and District levels.

• If you want to join a thriving club, please email to arrange a trial swim: membership@haillesswimclub.co.uk





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To enter, please scan or photograph the completed puzzle and email it to: editor@candbnews.com before noon, Friday 20 March 2026. The winner is picked at random from all correct entries received.

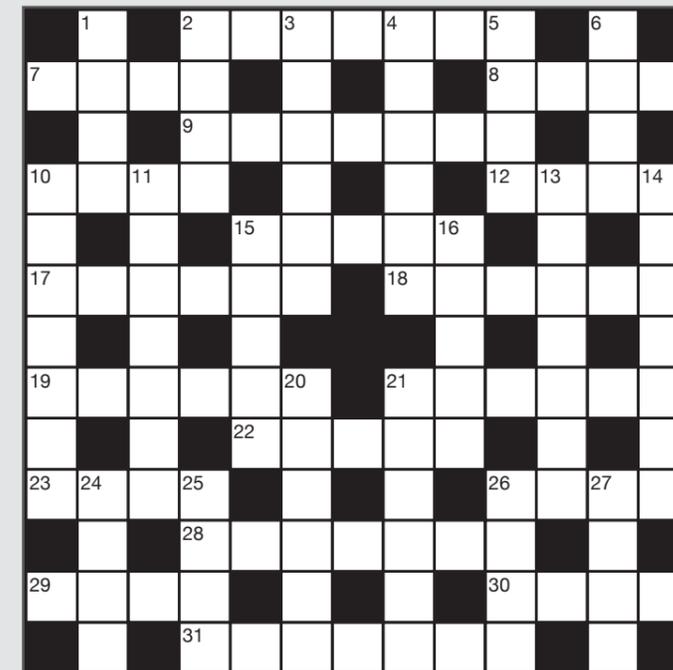
Good luck everyone!

ACROSS

- 2 Extend (7)
- 7 Metric weight (4)
- 8 Religious image (4)
- 9 Stays (7)
- 10 Valise (4)
- 12 Healing skin (4)
- 15 Food pulp (5)
- 17 Curved structures (6)
- 18 Inn (6)
- 19 Seas (6)
- 21 Seek (6)
- 22 Vertical line on graph (1-4)
- 23 Corrode (4)
- 26 Golf warning (4)
- 28 Idiomatic (7)
- 29 Gloomy (4)
- 30 Large-headed nail (4)
- 31 Come before (7)

DOWN

- 1 Silicate mineral (4)
- 2 Painful (4)
- 3 Disturbance (6)
- 4 Lavatory (6)
- 5 Snake's sound (4)
- 6 Relaxing exercise (4)
- 10 Uproar (7)
- 11 Positive outcome (7)
- 13 Farewell remark (7)
- 14 Wailing spirit (7)
- 15 Bronze coin (5)
- 16 Roof overhang (5)
- 20 Irony (6)
- 21 Figure of speech (6)
- 24 Hideous (4)
- 25 Press down tightly (4)
- 26 Gala (4)
- 27 Wealthy (4)



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

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

MEDIUM

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

HARD

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

LAST ISSUE'S SOLUTIONS

Last issue's prize crossword was won by David Smith from Currie. Congratulations!

A	T	T	E	S	T	B	A	T	T	E	R
T	H	H				T	H	E			
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H	U	N	T	E	D	M	A	R	I	N	A
I	G	E				D	N	I			
D	U	E	N	N	A	B	E	G	G	A	R

EASY

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

MEDIUM

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

HARD

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

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Community and not-for-profit listings are free of charge. Email whatson@candbnews.com, including: Day/Date, Event Title, Venue, Time, brief details, and contact phone/email as appropriate. Details correct at time of going to press; please check to be sure. Inclusion is not a recommendation by C&B News.

WEEKLY

MONDAYS

- **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>
- **ST CUTHBERT'S PLAYGROUP: Church Hall, St Cuthbert's Scottish Episcopal Church, Westgarth Avenue, Colinton; 10am - 11.30am.** Every Monday during term time **EXCEPT 16 March.** Contact: stcuthbertscomms@gmail.com for more information. Only £2 per family.
- **MONDAY MAHJONG: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 10am - noon.** The group is almost full, please get in touch if you'd like to join or pop along to our relaxed monthly sessions on Wednesday afternoon instead. Please get in touch if you'd like to join. hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com
- **MONDAY MORNING POP IN CAFÉ: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 10.30am - noon.** Community Cafe. Come for a cuppa every Monday morning, our volunteers will welcome you for a cuppa, a chat and an optional game of scrabble.
- **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/cccl/
- **THE MEETING PLACE: Scout Hall, Forth View Crescent, Currie; 10am - 4pm.** A community café for those 65 and over, all carers and anyone looking for good company. Free exercise class, refreshments and games. For further information email: themeetingplacejcb@outlook.com
- **LUNCHTIME RELAXATION: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 12.15pm - 1pm.** Taking a break on 2 and 9 March, back as usual on 16 March. Guided relaxation to calm the

mind and ease stress. No booking required, please drop in.

- **BALERNO BRIDGE CLUB: Gibson Craig Halls, 156-158 Lanark Road West; 1.20pm for 1.30pm start.** Contact 07999 528524 if interested.
- **BOOKBUG AND BABY GROUP: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 1.30pm - 2.45pm.** Stories and songs for babies and toddlers. Drop-in to meet other parents/carers for friendship, peer support and share a cuppa. Lovely warm and welcoming space.
- **BABERTON SCOUTS GROUP: Edinburgh Pentlands Parish 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.** Please email to join the waitlist in place for this popular group. hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

TUESDAYS

- **KNITTING GROUP: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 10.30am - noon.** Our knitting group is so popular, we've opened a waiting list for newcomers! Please email Anne at colinanne7@aol.com
- **ACE IT DIGITAL SKILLS: Currie Library, 210 Lanark Road West; 10am - noon.** Digital Skills Coaching for over-50s. Free, friendly one-to-one sessions help people over 50 gain confidence online.
- **COMMUNITY YOGA CLASS: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 1pm - 2pm.** Spaces may be available for this popular lunchtime class with Monica from Karma Tree yoga. Cost £6. Please enquire by email: karmatreeyoga@gmail.com
- **PENTLAND JUNIOR SINGERS: Balerno Parish Church, Main Street; 6pm - 7pm.** Fun, friendship and singing for ages 8-14. New members welcome! For more information, visit: pentlandjuniors.org
- **PENTLAND SINGERS COMMUNITY CHOIR: Balerno**

Parish Church, Main Street; 7.30pm - 9.30pm. Come and share the joy of singing! New members welcome. For further information, visit: pentlandsingers.org.uk

WEDNESDAYS

- **BALERNO RAMBLERS MIDWEEK GROUP: Meet for walks in the Lothians, Fife, the Borders and further afield.** For walk details contact P. Harper 07738486416. 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. The group is popular. Anyone interested in joining, please contact Donna Mackey on 07340 560306 before coming along.
- **BOOKBUG @ BALERNO LIBRARY: 1 Main Street; 3.30pm - 4pm.** Call (0131) 529 5500 to book a place.
- **THE OCTAGON CLUB for Adults with learning disabilities: Gibson Craig Halls, 156-158 Lanark Road West; 7pm - 9pm.** Contact Claire Maloney: 07999 410721

THURSDAYS

- **BOOKBUG @ CURRIE LIBRARY (ENGLISH): 210 Lanark Road West; 10.30am - 11am.** No booking required.
- **ACCESSIBLE YOGA • COMMUNITY CLASS: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green, 2.45pm - 3.45pm.** Accessible Yoga community class (free, donation welcome) Join experienced yoga teacher Bijam who offers a fully accessible class, suitable to anyone including

wheelchair users or those with chronic health conditions who may find benefit from gentle exercise, breathwork and meditation. Class now full but please contact us to join the waitlist: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

- **65th EDINBURGH COMPANY, BOYS' BRIGADE Anchor Boys (P2 & P3) and Junior Section (P4-P6): Gibson Craig Halls, 158 Lanark Rd West, Currie; 6pm - 7.30pm.** For more details, contact Bill Brown: bill.brown53@yahoo.com
- **PENTLAND 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.** Our Beaver Group meets 6pm - 7pm and the Cubs Group meets 7.15pm - 8.45pm. Please email for more information@ babertonscouts.org

SATURDAYS

- **BOOKBUG @ COLINTON LIBRARY: 14 Thorburn Road; 11am - 11.30am.** No booking required.

SATURDAYS/SUNDAYS

- **BALERNO RAMBLERS WEEKEND WALKING GROUP: a busy walking group with a**

LOCAL COMMUNITY CAFES

SATURDAYS (DURING TERM TIME)

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

TUESDAYS - FRIDAYS (& DURING FARMERS' MARKET SATURDAY)

- **THE MILL CAFE: 2 Main Street, Balerno; 9am - 2pm.** A sociable warm space with home-made baking, Fairtrade barista-style coffee and light breakfast and lunch menus. Last orders, 1.30pm.

TUESDAYS - SATURDAYS

- **THE SWING CAFE: Colinton Parish Church, Dell Road; 10am - 2pm.** Why not come and try sumptuous soups, savoury sandwiches or delicious home baking? Last hot food orders: 1.40pm.



BALERNO RAMBLERS Upcoming Walks

The midweek group is planning to offer four walks:

- **Wednesday 4 March: Ratho circular:** on paths, roads and woodland paths from Bridge Inn Ratho and taking in Lost Shore Surf Resort, trail through woods with views of Pentlands and bridges, finishing along the Union Canal to Edinburgh International Climbing Centre and return via the canal basin.
- **Wednesday 11 March: Fairmilehead circular:** from Fairmilehead church, through the houses, along Winton, and coffee at Mortonhall, then round the Braids and through Buckstone.
- **Wednesday 18 March: Route to be confirmed.**
- **Wednesday 25 March: A Peebles walk.**

Once the reces have been completed the walk details will be published on our website.

The weekend group is offering:

- **Saturday 7 March: Regent Terrace to Portobello:** a pleasant 6.5 mile (10.5 km) linear walk from Regent Road through the cemetery to Holyrood Palace and the Scottish Parliament, anticlockwise around the base of Arthur's Seat, on a slight incline, to reach steep steps heading down to the lovely old Duddingston village (including an opportunity to wander around Dr Neil's garden with its beautiful views over Duddingston Loch), then continuing to Portobello via a golf course and parks. Conclude with a walk along the esplanade towards Joppa for a bus home, though possible to get bus back from Portobello High Street—remember your bus pass if you have one.
- **Sunday 15 March: Linlithgow Circular:** a strenuous 13 mile (20.9 km) route including Linlithgow, the Union Canal, Avon Aqueduct, Muiravonside, Lochcote Reservoir, and Cockeroy Hill, Linlithgow; a mix of pavement, canal towpath, path and track. Route may be muddy/slippery in places; includes one stile and one gate to climb over, plus two sets of steep steps.
- **Saturday 21 March: Pentland Circular:** Currie to Phantom Cleugh, a 10 mile (16 km) with 1,214 feet (370 metre) ascent. Route: from Pentland View Car Park walk to Clubbiedean Reservoir (via Poet's Glen), Torduff Reservoir, then ascend up to Bonaly Reservoir. Return via Phantom Cleugh, Maiden Cleugh and Kirkgate.
- **Sunday 29 March: South Pentlands.** Check website for route details.

programme of interesting walks in a variety of locations. Some walks may be more challenging than the mid-week programme. Visit: www.ramblers.org.uk/balerno, www.facebook.com/Balerno-Ramblers, email: enquiries@balernoramblers.org.uk

SUNDAYS

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

FORTNIGHTLY

MONDAYS 2, 16 & 30 MARCH

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

FRIDAYS 6 & 20 MARCH

- **BOOKBUG @ CURRIE LIBRARY (EN ESPAÑOL):** 210 Lanark Road West; 10.30am - 11am. No booking required.
- **TABLETOP GAMING IN JUNIPER GREEN / BABERTON / CURRIE:** Edinburgh Pentlands Parish Church Hall, Juniper Green; 6pm - 9pm. Play board-games, card games and wargames. Everyone welcome, adults, children and their families. For more information contact Eric Ducreux Juniper Green Board-Gamers @boardjg; www.boardjg.co.uk

FRIDAYS 13 & 27 MARCH

- **FRENCH CONVERSATION GROUP:** the Hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; noon - 1pm. New group meeting fortnightly for people who would like to practise and improve their French. Newcomers welcome. For more information see our Facebook page @The Hub at 531 or email hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

DAY BY DAY

MONDAY 2 MARCH

- **COLINTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY: Dreghorn Loan Hall, 22 Dreghorn Loan; 8pm.** "The story of Edinburgh Printmakers." The speaker is Ilaria Casin. For more information visit www.colintonhistory.org.uk

TUESDAY 3 MARCH

- **CURRIE KIRK GUILD: Gibson Craig Halls, 156-158 Lanark Road West; 10am.** Meetings commence with refreshments. "Golden Threads." The speaker is Jackie Grant. All Welcome.

WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH

- **PENTLAND MEN'S PROBUS CLUB: Edinburgh Pentlands Parish Church Hall, Juniper Green; 10am.** "A Virtual Walk through 1950s and 1960s Edinburgh," an illustrated talk by Stuart Sinclair. New members welcome. Further enquiries from Club Secretary Leslie Hannaford on (0131) 453 3012 or email: lesliehannaford@blueyonder.co.uk
- **BALERNO PARISH CHURCH GUILD: Ogston Hall; 7.30pm.** One World shop/Fair Trade with Karen Downard. For further information contact Kay Coull on 07415 506947 or email: coullkay@hotmail.com

FRIDAY 6 MARCH

- **'THE LIT' (COLINTON LITERARY SOCIETY): Dreghorn Loan Hall, 22 Dreghorn Loan; 7.30pm.** After a brief AGM Professor Christopher Whatley will tell the remarkable story of one of the country's earliest rights of way campaigns, "Harvie's Dyke: The People, Their Liberty and the Banks of the Clyde." For more information visit: www.colintonhistory.org.uk

FRIDAY 6 MARCH

- **GARDENING GROUP: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 11.30am - 1pm.** Gardening Group (1st Friday of each month) All Welcome—experienced or novice, pot planters or allotments. Please email for details and to join us: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

SATURDAY 7 MARCH

- **BALERNO FAIRTRADE MORNING: St Joseph's Hall, Main Street; 10am - noon.**

There will be Fairtrade stalls, an exhibition of children's artwork from the recent Balerno Schools Fairtrade-themed art competition and, at 11am, a presentation of prizes. Plus the ever-popular Fairtrade Banana Smoothie Bike.

MONDAY 9 MARCH

- **BALERNO PARISH CHURCH GUILD: Bathgate Parish Church; 2pm.** LGTG (Lothians Guilds Together Group) AGM. All Welcome. For further information contact Kay Coull on 07415 506947 or email: coullkay@hotmail.com
- **CURRIE & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY: Gibson Craig Halls (back hall), 156-158 Lanark Road West; 7.30 pm prompt.** "Balloons, Bombers and Brave Men, a Flight to the Dawn of Military Aviation" The speaker is Ian Gardiner. For further details see <https://www.curriehistory.org/>

WEDNESDAY 11 MARCH

- **'ALL EARS' BOOK CLUB; the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green, 7-9pm.** Calling all audiobook and podcast lovers we have a new group who meet monthly to discuss latest favourites. For more information see our Facebook Page @The Hub at 531 or email hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

SATURDAY 14 MARCH

- **BALERNO FARMERS' MARKET: Main Street; 9am - 1pm.**
- **CANCER CARE DROP IN EVENT: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 10.30am - noon.** For any individual or family member affected by cancer, we have invited some of the local organisations and charities who offer support in SW Edinburgh. Pop along to meet them, have a chat and see what's available that might help you. Tea/Coffee/Cake available.

MONDAY 16 MARCH

- **COLINTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY: Dreghorn Loan Hall, 22 Dreghorn Loan; 8pm.** "The tumbling Lassie." The speaker is Alan McLean KC. For more information visit: www.colintonhistory.org.uk

TUESDAY 17 MARCH

- **CURRIE KIRK GUILD: Address details to be confirmed; 2pm.** "St Margaret's Chapel", a

talk by Olivia Begbie. All welcome.

WEDNESDAY 18 MARCH

- **PENTLAND MEN'S PROBUS CLUB: Edinburgh Pentlands Parish Church Hall, Juniper Green; 10am.** "Scotland's Charity Air Ambulance," an illustrated talk by Neil Malcolm and Alan Hunter. New members welcome. Further enquiries from Club Secretary Leslie Hannaford on (0131) 453 3012 or email lesliehannaford@blueyonder.co.uk
- **BALERNO PARISH CHURCH GUILD: Ogston Hall; 7.30pm.** AGM and Social evening. For further information contact Kay Coull on 07415 506947 or email: coullkay@hotmail.com

THURSDAY 19 MARCH

- **COSY CRAFTING: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 7.30pm - 9.30pm.** Paper folding to make beautiful things or glass painting, we offer a child free, adult only environment to enjoy some cosy crafts with company. Please book your space to join us. Online booking is available at <https://hub531.appointedd.com/> or by email hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com All materials provided.

SATURDAY 21 MARCH

- **SEWING SURVIVAL SKILLS: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 1pm - 2.30pm and 2.45pm - 4.15pm.** There may be a few spaces left for these sessions. Small groups (six) working to practise some basic skills alongside expert tuition. Please book your space to join us. Online booking is available at <https://hub531.appointedd.com/> or by email hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com
- **CURRIE KIRK GUILD DAFFODIL TEA: Gibson Craig Halls, 156-158 Lanark Road West; 2pm - 4pm.** Tickets £5 including tea/coffee and home baking. Daffodils will be on sale, along with book stall and tombola, in aid of the Guild Project.

SUNDAY 22 MARCH

- **IT SECURITY TRAINING FOR ADULTS: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 10.30-2pm.** Would you like to feel more confident and safe while using the internet? This one-day free training course provided by partners, Digital Skills Education, will help. Booking your space is essential. Lunch included. Online

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

MONDAY 23 MARCH

- **CURRIE & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY: Gibson Craig Halls (back hall), 156-158 Lanark Road West; 7.30pm prompt.** Annual General Meeting. For further details see <https://www.curriehistory.org/>
- **COLINTON GARDEN CLUB: Dreghorn Loan Hall, 22 Dreghorn Loan; 8pm.** John Marshall presents "Tattie Talks." More information on the website: colintongardens.org.uk

WEDNESDAY 25 MARCH

- **MONTHLY MAJONG: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 4.30pm - 6.30pm.** A new open mahjong session that welcomes newcomers as well as regulars. Come along to find out more about this ancient Chinese tile game. email: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com for more information.
- **THE SECRET BOOK SWAP: Crows Nest Collective, 350B Lanark Road West; 7pm - 9pm.** Bring a wrapped up book and pick one to take home, plus guest author Alex Howard. Find out more at: www.thesecretbookswap.com

THURSDAY 26 MARCH

- **HERIOT-WATT MUSICAL EVENT: Heriot-Watt Riccarton Campus; 7.30pm.** Join the Heriot-Watt Choirs, Orchestra, Wind Band and Musical Theatre vocalists for an evening of music from stage and screen from Hollywood to Broadway! Including music from Wicked, James Bond, Rodgers and Hammerstein, Waitress, Harry Potter and much more! Tickets priced £10 (£5 students) available from www.ticketsource.co.uk/heriot-watt-university

MONDAY 30 MARCH

- **COLLY BOOK CLUB: The Colinton Inn, 12-14 Bridge Road; 7.30pm.** Friendly and welcoming book club. For more details, including future choices of books, email: louisejeffrey14@gmail.com
- **COLINTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY: Dreghorn Loan Hall, 22 Dreghorn Loan; 8pm.** Annual General Meeting. For more information visit www.colintonhistory.org.uk

TUESDAY 31 MARCH

- **PALM DEMENTIA CAFE: St Joseph's Centre, Balerno; 3pm - 4.30pm.** Easter Celebrations. 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. Contact Clare Dow on palmcafebalerno@gmail.com
- **BALERNO FOLK CLUB: Balerno Bowling Club, 5 Ladycroft; doors open 7.30pm for 8.15pm start.** This month Dave Gibb, a singer of songs and a teller of tales (he does like a giggle). A great guitarist and all round entertainer. Members and Guests welcome.

WEDNESDAY 1 APRIL

- **PENTLAND MEN'S PROBUS CLUB: Edinburgh Pentlands Parish Church Hall, Juniper Green; 10am.** "The Mystery of the Stone of Destiny," an illustrated talk by David Maule. New members welcome. Further enquiries from Club Secretary Leslie Hannaford on (0131) 453 3012 or email lesliehannaford@blueyonder.co.uk

COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

THURSDAY 5 MARCH

- **BALERNO COMMUNITY COUNCIL: Community Centre, Main Street; 7pm - 9pm.** www.balerno-communitycouncil.org.uk; balernocc@gmail.com

TUESDAY 10 MARCH

- **COLINTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL: The Kennedy Lounge, Colinton Bowling Club, 49A Redford Road / Zoom; 7.30pm - 9pm.** <https://www.colintoncc.org.uk>

WEDNESDAY 11 MARCH

- **CURRIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL: Gibson Craig Halls (rear), 156-8 Lanark Road West; 7.30pm - 9pm.** <https://curriecommunitycouncil.wordpress.com>

WEDNESDAY 25 MARCH

- **JUNIPER GREEN & BABERTON MAINS COMMUNITY COUNCIL: the hub@531 Lanark Road; 7.30pm - 9pm.** <https://jgbmcc.org>



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