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C&B News

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**Bumper
Spring
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516 ◦ MAY 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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Colinton: Vacant.

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c/o 11, Turner Avenue, Balerno, EH14 7BS.



DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE
ADVERTISING & LISTINGS: 12 MAY
EDITORIAL: 17 MAY
IN THE SHOPS: 29 MAY

Picture News



Above: Alastair Dickson's new railway model of the former Kinleith Paper Mill in Currie – see last issue for more details of its construction – won the public vote for “Best in Show” at last month's Lothians Model Railway Exhibition, held at Heriot-Watt University. Right: Alastair with his trophy. Below: The model certainly attracted the crowds during the two day-event. Photos: Paul Fisher Cockburn.



BRIEFLY NEWS



• **NO ‘ART IN THE PARK’:** *C&B News* understands that, with their focus currently being on the redevelopment of “the Shed” in Spylaw Park, the volunteers at Colinton Village Enterprise (CVE) will not be organising an Art in the Park summer fete this year.

• **RATS:** A somewhat sensational *Edinburgh Evening News* story published on Monday 20 April leapt eagerly on an issue initially raised at Balerno Community Council on 5 March—the sudden large numbers of rats attracted from the surrounding fields to houses and gardens round the southern and western edges of the village. Council officials had already responded to initial resident requests for action and/or advice in March, but insisted they could not bait open areas. One of the triggers for the incursion, it was suggested, is the easily available food intended for local birds.

• **CANCER LIBRARY:** Currie Library, with the support of Macmillan Cancer Support, now offers lots of information on cancer and its impacts, as well as reading material which can help on topics such as healthy eating and physical activity.

• **COOS:** In April, *Edinburgh Live* reported how “reckless” tourists were posing for “Highland Coo selfies” within the Pentland Hills Regional Park, risking being trampled by the animals. This is despite the owners of Swanston Farm, which keeps a “fold” of Highland Cows as “conservation grazers”, stating on their website: “We ask that visitors, to help preserve the wild nature of our Highland Cows, do not approach them and to please respect their personal space.”

• **BUTTERFLIES:** Currie Library currently hosts a new photography exhibition by Bob Douglas in the community room, until Monday 8 June, offering a great insight into local wildlife, ecology and the various species of butterflies found in the Pentlands.

• **PENTLAND HILLS CAR PARKS:** Strips which have recently



Above: The Friends of Campbell Park had another very successful Bonaly P4 Tree Planting on Tuesday 24 March, during which the pupils planted 105 evergreen Oregon Grapes into the orchard “shelter belt”, writes *FCP's Shona Harrower*. “It’s fortunate for us that the P4 curriculum on Sustainable Development coincides with the best time of year for planting bare root trees. Having 60 willing hands for two hours makes light work of such tasks; the children spent the last 15 minutes gathering several buckets of wind damaged daffodils in support of our rescue scheme. The four parent helpers took several buckets full of blooms to share at school.”

Right: Oriam Walking Football are proud to announce their charity partner for 2026, writes *OWF's Paul Rendall*. Care & Repair Edinburgh, which provides practical help around the homes of elderly and disabled people across the capital. “We have been particularly busy in the Currie, Balerno and Baberton area and we did 296 jobs last year in these areas alone,” said Care & Repair Edinburgh’s fundraiser Susan Irwin. “It is wonderful to be collaborating with the Oriam Walking Football to not only raise the profile of our work but also to help more older people in our community.” Dave Whitelaw, OWF’s Charity Co-ordinator, added: “This is the start of an exciting partnership and we’re looking forward to working with Care & Repair and helping support the fantastic work they do in communities all across Edinburgh.”



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139 Dundee Street, EH11 1BP

Advice Surgeries
I hold surgeries on the first Saturday of the month. Locations rotate each month, but include:
• Fountainbridge Library
• Wester Hailes Library
• Colinton Mains Tesco
• Oxbgangs Library
• Sighthill Library
• Colinton Library
• Currie Library
• Chesser ASDA

*No issue is too big or too small, so if you think I can help, please get in touch to check this month's locations and arrange an appointment.
Please note there are no surgeries in January or August.*



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Currie Chieftains Valiant in Scottish Cup Loss

TABATHA MCCREE-COX
OPERATIONS MANAGER, CURRIE CHIEFTAINS

Win or lose, the Chieftains always give it their very best wherever they play and Murrayfield is no exception. On Saturday 25 April, Currie Chieftains made the short journey from Mallyen to Murrayfield to take on Ayr RFC in the Scottish Cup Final on "Silver Saturday". This is the community club's fourth final in five weeks and our second against Ayr!

The Chieftains, in front of a roaring crowd of supporters at Murrayfield, battled hard—and, with 78 minutes on the clock, the score was tied at 26 - 26. However, in the last few minutes Ayr scored a final try, securing a 31 - 26 victory.

The Chieftains are no stranger to finals, appearing in four of the last five Premiership play-offs; however, it's the first time we've been at Murrayfield for the Scottish Cup final since 2006. Watsonians were the victors last time winning 31-15.

It has been a tough journey, after edging a 100-point extra time thriller against Edinburgh Accies in the quarter-final, Chieftains faced



Watsonians in the semi-final on Saturday 11 April. In front of a busy and boisterous crowd, the home side raced into a 33-0 lead before Watsonians fought back to 33-21 with the Chieftains working hard to get a victory final score of 47-28 setting up a return contest with Ayr RFC.

The final proved to be another nail-biting brilliant game. The last side to beat Ayr was in fact the Chieftains, so it was some significant odds that met the players as they walked out on the hallowed turf of Murrayfield. The Chieftains were at their emphatic best, demonstrating that effort on the pitch is underpinned by the heart and soul

of the Chieftains' players, fans and sponsors to create an awesome game. It's the playing that counts and the Chieftains gave it their all. The Chieftain's family of supporters and sponsors are extremely proud of the team and what they have achieved this year. Well done to Ayr, but the Chieftains will be back next season committed to going again and bringing the silverware back to Mallyen!

The 2026 - 2027 season now looks set for a great start. If you are interested in getting involved or sponsoring the club/players please visit www.curriechieftains.org to find out more.

BRIEFLY...

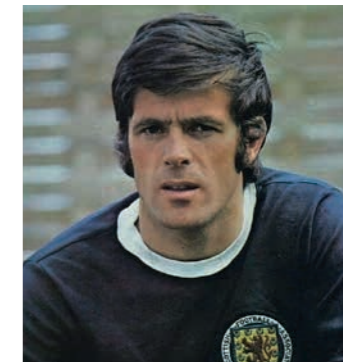
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appeared on the approach roads to car parks within the Pentland Hills Regional Park are not for monitoring speed but for recording the number of vehicles using the car parks, according to Pentland Hills Ward Cllr Graeme Bruce.

• **CLEAN DOGS:** Plans are in place to install "wash stations" for dogs in the Pentland Hills Regional Park car parks, according to Dr Scott Arthur MP at April's Currie Community Council meeting.

• **PATHS:** Volunteers from Currie Open Spaces have trimmed the edges of the paths on the large open space between the Currievale and Newmills Estates—with CEC's Parks Department providing bags and both uplifting and disposing of the refuse. As a result the paths are now considerably wider than they had been.

• **NEW CHURCH NAME:** The congregations of Balerno Parish Church and Currie Kirk, which are currently working towards a union, were invited during April to suggest a new name for the new church. The final choice must include: a geographical reference (city/town/village), an additional name to identify the congregation within that location, and the words "Church of Scotland". (So, for example, in 2024 Juniper Green Kirk and Colinton Parish came together as Edinburgh Pentlands Parish Church of Scotland.) Both congregations will have an opportunity to confirm the final choice of name when they vote on a Basis of Union agreement between the two churches.

• **WEST MILL ROAD:** Colinton Community Council submitted a written deputation to April's City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) Transport and Environment Committee (TEC) meeting, highlighting the "dangerously pitched road surface" of West Mill Road, which they declared to be "in a shocking condition which will increase the likelihood of accidents, particularly bicycle/car collisions". They requested that work to resurface "the most dangerous section of this road (the first 300 metres or so)" is added to the 2026-27 Capital Plan, and that transport



'Legend' Marks Group's Third Anniversary

PAUL MURPHY
PENTLANDS SPORTING MEMORIES GROUP

The Pentlands Sporting Memories group recently marked its third anniversary in memorable fashion, celebrating alongside one of Scottish football's most distinguished figures from the post-war period, Pat Stanton.

A legendary presence at Hibernian, Celtic and on the international stage with Scotland, Pat is widely regarded as one of the finest players in the nation's footballing history. Renowned for his composure, intelligence and versatility in both midfield or defence he proved an engaging

and generous guest of honour, sharing reflections on the game both past and present.

With a career rich in achievement, including more than 600 appearances for Hibernian FC, the distinction of having a stand named after him at Easter Road, and a spell assisting Alex Ferguson at Aberdeen FC during their first league triumph in a quarter of a century, Pat had no shortage of stories to share with members over the course of the afternoon.

Among the highlights was his recollection of facing Bobby Charlton of Manchester United and England, whom he named as the finest opponent

he encountered. While full of admiration for Charlton's extraordinary ability, Pat also recalled the physical toll of such encounters, vividly describing a moment when a typically fiercely struck shot left the imprint of a Mitre match ball across his face. Charlton, ever the sportsman, checked in with a wry "I bet that hurt, eh?" to which Pat's understated reply was simply, "Aye, it did."

The club extends its sincere gratitude to Pat for helping to make this milestone celebration both special and entertaining. Thanks are also due to club member Peter Heatly for facilitating what proved to be a truly memorable occasion.



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Deadline for Community Chest Awards

ANDREA BREWSTER
PENTLAND COMMUNITY CHEST

The next deadline for applications to Pentland Community Chest is at the end of this month, Sunday 31 May. The Chest, a joint venture funded and run by Balerno Village Trust and Currie Balerno Rotary, makes grants of up to £600 to local community groups and organisations. So far grants totalling more than £50,000 have been awarded in response to 175 applications. Previous grants have provided resources for sports teams, Scout groups, local schools, charities (such as Balerno RDA, Pentland Men's Shed, Balerno Children's Gala, and Youth Vision) and many more.

- Visit pentlandcc.org.uk to check out the eligibility criteria and find an application form. The closing date for the next round of applications is 31 May 2026.
- More details: pentlandcc.org.uk



It's Almost Beer O'Clock!

HAZEL LUMSDAINE
CURRIE, BALERNO & DISTRICT ROUND TABLE

Spring is here, we have seen the start of the better weather and we can start to think about beer gardens and summer. But before all of that, you need to know what beer you would like to drink. Well, that's where the Currie Beer and Curry festival steps in! What better way to find your new tittle than by sampling a huge variety of beers from lots of different, small, independent breweries, all in one place? Throw in some delicious curry and a healthy serving of brilliant live

music and you've got one fantastic community party. Confirmed bands for this year are the fabulous Bedlam House Band and Blue Soul for Friday and the fantastic Jammy Devils and North Dogs on Saturday. The roof of the community centre won't know what's hit it!

- Tickets are hot property this year and we have already sold all of the early bird entries, so if you are planning to join us, don't wait too long.
- There is still time to get involved with sponsorship if you would like to showcase your business, please get in touch with us at <https://cbdr.com/> for more details.

Balerno Beekeeper Launches National Digital Marketplace

COLIN MACKIE
BALERNO HONEY

A familiar face at the Balerno Farmers Market has launched the first digital market for people across the UK to buy authentic honey directly from local beekeepers. Local beekeeper, coder, and digital entrepreneur Colin has officially launched Fine Local Honey, a national initiative that nevertheless has strong roots right here in our community. During the winter, Colin ran a successful pilot of the platform, developed closely with fellow beekeepers from Currie, Balerno, and the wider Edinburgh and Midlothian Beekeepers' Association. Supported by Techscaler, a Scottish Government programme for digital entrepreneurs, the platform is a genuinely unique innovation combining traditional beekeeping with modern digital solutions. The initiative aims to tackle the UK's reliance on supermarket honey. Currently, supermarkets import more than 80% of their

stock from overseas. Repeated studies have highlighted high levels of adulteration in imported honey, while the industrial mass-production techniques used to process commercially produced honey often destroy the delicate enzymes that give raw, local honey its unique health benefits and subtle flavours. "Fine Local Honey was created to offer lovers of raw honey a trustworthy alternative to what you find on supermarket shelves," explains Colin. "It's all about connecting food lovers with small, sustainable producers in their own area". Producers from across the UK are now registering, following the lead of the platform's very first producers right here in Currie and Balerno. Site visitor and producer numbers are growing steadily, with a significant jump expected when the first of this year's spring honey is harvested in May.

- To learn more about the project or to find authentic local honey, visit: www.finelocalhoney.co.uk



BRIEFLY...

ps>>> officers should consult with local community councils on project priorities "so that better outcomes are achieved".

• **DATA CENTRE PETITION:** Local residents "dedicated to halting Aputura's destructive 213MW mega data centre proposal at Wester Hermiston" (see our November 2025 edition for more details of the proposal) have launched a website and petition "to force a full Environmental Impact Assessment to expose the project's catastrophic impact on air quality, noise levels, and the local power grid". <https://tinyurl.com/4d6tem8v>

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 new and current local planning applications and decisions on our Facebook page every Wednesday.

BABERTON MAINS
• Existing garage to be removed, new single-storey pitched roof side extension to be formed; 20 Baberton Mains Dell. (26/01529/FUL) Comments by Tuesday 5 May.

• Proposed extension and garage conversion; 20 Baberton Mains Wood. (26/01347/FUL) Comments by Monday 4 May.

BALERNO
• Replace existing pantile roof with modern pantile equivalent (Sandtoft Country Pantile, mixed russet colour with

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BRIEFLY...

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lead flashing details); 10 Ladycroft, Deanpark. (26/01482/LBC) Comments by Friday 15 May.

• Reduce height of Spruce by 6 metres and cut back sides by no more than 2 metres to leave balanced shape, remove Silver Fir and Spruce; 15 Johnsburn Road. (26/0274/TCO) Registered on Wednesday 15 April.

• Demolition of existing conservatory to rear and construction of new extension, narrower and slightly longer window to front, existing render to be painted white, existing window frames painted grey, composite cladding to front; 17 Dalmahoy Crescent. (26/01543/CLP) Registered on Monday 13 April.

COLINTON

• Extension and alterations to dwelling; 76 Woodfield Avenue. (26/01547/FUL) Comments by Tuesday 5 May.

• Reduction of Betula pendular tree by 1 metre, reduction of vagus sylvatica by 1 metre, removal of multi-stemmed Ilex aquifolium in front garden; 68 Splyaw Bank Road. (26/0270/TCO) Registered on Thursday 16 April.

• Reduce Beech tree by 30% and cut back Birch tree no more than 1.5 metres from building; 23 Gillespie Road, Hailes. (26/0188/TCO) Registered on Tuesday 7 April.

CURRIE

• Proposed two-storey side extension, single-storey rear extension and internal alterations; 57 Nether Currie Crescent. (26/01556/FUL) Comments by Friday 8 May.

JUNIPER GREEN

• Advertisements (box sign, and illuminated projecting sign); 542 Lanark Road (The Railway Inn). (26/01532/ADV) Comments by Monday 4 May.

PLANNING DECISIONS

Information provided by The City of Edinburgh Council.

BALERNO

• Construction of timber



A new plaque in memory of "Civic Champion, Conservationist, Environmentalist, Family Man and Friend" Duncan Campbell, who died in 2023, was unveiled on the wall of the New Drivers' Path in the heart of Colinton village by local ward councillor Jason Rust, in recognition of "a former esteemed member of the Colinton community and beyond".

Organised by Colinton Amenity Association, with which Duncan Campbell was associated for many years in a variety of committee roles, the event on Easter Monday attracted a good crowd to celebrate Duncan's memory and his many achievements as part of both CAA and as a founding director of Colinton Community Conservation Trust.

CCCT projects which he helped instigate included: the re-planting of Colinton Triangle Garden and establishment of the New Drivers' Path; the restoration of the Phoebe Traquair Railings on Bridge Road; the replanting of the Long Steps Garden; the Robert Louis Stevenson statue outside Colinton Parish Church; and the RLS Poetry Trail, the Long Steps Arch, and Timeline Railings.

"Colinton in particular owes a debt of gratitude to Duncan Campbell for his hard work over decades, and it is a great privilege to unveil this plaque in his honour," said Councillor Rust.

Coffee Stop!

DIANE BROWN
CURRIE KIRK MISSION, OUTREACH & FELLOWSHIP TEAM

Coffee Stop! at Currie Kirk returns on Saturday 2 May and will continue every Saturday between 2pm and 4pm until the end of September.

There will be the usual selection of fantastic home baking, fresh coffee and tea. Acting on customers' observations and comments last year we have increased some of our prices: while teas and coffees remain £1 (including a refill!), the home baking will now be £2 to more fairly reflect current value and pricing. Cash only please!

Numbers coming along to Coffee Stop! have steadily increased since our first season. Some people come regularly; others stop off on their strolls along the Water of Leith Walkway. Some come as families, an opportunity to sit and catch up with one another; some come with friends and make new ones in the process. The sound of chatter and laughter is wonderful to hear.

Last year we were able to donate £500 to the local food bank, while our takings during August were donated to the British Red Cross Gaza Appeal along with other collections within in the church.

Everyone is welcome. Access to the Kirk is via the stairway just under the bridge at The Kirkgate, Currie, or by the footpath from the entrance to the Cemetery further up the road.

• If you have never been, or are new to the area, please do come along to Coffee Stop!—a warm welcome awaits you, and it's an easy way to meet people.



Sensory Garden Brings Calm and Joy to Local Nursery

LUCY ROSS & JACKIE TATTON
CURRIE PRIMARY NURSERY

Children at Currie Primary Nursery are enjoying a brand new sensory garden, created to support their health and wellbeing.

Thanks to generous funding from C&B News, the nursery has transformed its outdoor space into a calm, relaxing environment designed to engage the senses and encourage a love of nature. The garden features a variety of herbs, grasses, flowers and fruits, carefully chosen to attract wildlife and provide rich sensory experiences for the children.

The space has quickly become a favourite among the children, who enjoy bird watching and discovering the mini beasts that now thrive in the garden. One of

the most popular features is the water fountain, which creates a peaceful atmosphere, alongside a bird box that has already welcomed blue tits nesting nearby.

A special addition to the garden is the beautiful buddy bench kindly donated by Linda Hazelwood; this serves as a welcoming place for children to sit, relax and spend time with friends.

The Nursery would also like to thank Chris Cavens Ground-care, who generously donated woodchip for the polytunnel and wellbeing garden area.

Staff and children are incredibly grateful for the support from the local community in helping to create such a special place.

Thank you from everyone at Currie Primary Nursery.

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0131 629 0215

Beware Over-Feeding Wild Birds This Summer

PRESS OFFICE
SCOTTISH SPCA

Animal welfare charity the Scottish SPCA is urging the public to follow new updated guidelines from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) on when and what to feed garden birds during the warmer summer months, following outbreaks of disease including the parasite trichomonosis.

The spread of this serious and often

fatal disease has already contributed to major declines in garden birds such as greenfinches, whose population has dropped by more than 65% during the last 30 years.

Trichomonosis affects the mouth, throat and digestive tract, and is spread primarily through regurgitated food and saliva, including indirectly by infected birds contaminating food and water sources.

From Friday 1 May until Saturday 31 October, the RSPB advises people to cut down on the food put out to

small amounts of mealworm, fat balls or suet. The "Feed Seasonally, Feed Safely" guidance also recommends cleaning bird feeders and water baths at least once a week to remove old food and droppings.

Feeders should also be moved regularly to prevent a built-up of contaminated debris underneath, and not placed under areas where birds roost, such as trees.

• <https://www.scottishspca.org/>,
<https://www.rspb.org.uk/>



When Pauline and I decided that what the Pentlands needed was a community dementia-friendly cafe, the obvious choice of venue was the 42nd Pentland Scout Hall in Currie, writes *Allister McKillop*. Five years on, with more than 40 members aged 64 years and older, who are living with dementia or isolation and loneliness, we are now definitely a fixture! As a not-for-profit group, run by volunteers, we can offer a unique, friendly casual space to relax and enjoy games, as well as organised trips and lots more. So, if you are feeling a bit lost, why not pop into the hall any Monday between 10am and 4pm? We even offer lunch for £5, but basic refreshments are always free.

New Audio-Described Canal Cruises from Seagull Trust Cruises

GORDON MACDONALD
PUBLICITY TEAM, RATHO BRANCH,
SEAGULL TRUST CRUISES

Seagull Trust Cruises, based at Ratho, have launched a new series of audio-described canal cruises, developed in partnership with RNIB Scotland, intended to make Scotland's waterways more accessible to people who are blind or partially sighted.

Designed in conjunction with Netherlands firm Great Guide Magic, the audio system holds more than 50 tracks which are triggered automatically by GPS and provides vivid, real-time narration that brings the canal environment to life by describing wildlife, historic landmarks, boat movements and the unique sounds and sensations of travelling by water.

"Our mission has always been to offer free, therapeutic cruises for people who need them most," explained Stuart Rennie, immediate past Chair of Seagull



Trust Cruises Ratho Branch.

"Working with RNIB Scotland allows us to extend that mission even further. These audio-described cruises open up the canal in a new way, ensuring that passengers are not restricted to their seats and are able to enjoy the open foredeck while still listening to the commentary on the wireless headsets."

RNIB Scotland has supported the project with specialist guidance to ensure the narration meets the needs of blind and partially sighted passengers.

"Accessible leisure opportunities are vital for wellbeing and social inclusion," said Jane Coates, Senior

Social Action Community Manager at RNIB Scotland. "We're delighted to work with Seagull Trust Cruises to create an experience that is not only enjoyable but genuinely empowering."

The cruises will run on selected dates throughout the season from the Ratho base, with advance booking recommended. As with all Seagull Trust Cruises outings, the audio-described cruises are completely free of charge, supported by volunteers and charitable donations.

• For more details, call: 07511 055081 or email: rathobookings@seagulltrustcruises.org.uk

BRIEFLY...

p9>>>

frame-supported roof structure and timber cladding to rear masonry wall elements of the existing boundary wall at Mallyen Gardens; land 70 metres north of Mallyen House, 4 Mallyen. (26/00407/LBC) Granted, Friday 10 April.

COLINTON

• Remove three holly trees on west boundary with number 41B, one too close to oak tree, two straggly/lopsided. (26/0222/TCO) Tree preservation order not made, Tuesday 14 April.

• Installation of vacuum glazing to front windows and replacement non-original rear windows and door with traditionally-detailed windows and door using vacuum glazing, replacement of roof light with conservation type roof light within original opening; 12 Spylaw Street. (26/00665/FUL & 26/00666/LBC) Granted, Thursday 16 April.

• Erection of two-storey side extension in place of existing attached garage; 24 Bonaly Terrace. (26/00685/FUL) Granted, Thursday 16 April.

CURRIE

• Alterations and extensions to dwelling house, new detached garage; Mount Parnassus, Harlaw Road. (26/00583/FUL) Granted, Monday 13 April.

JUNIPER GREEN

Reduce height of west stem of Elm by approx 2 metres and roadside spread by 1.5 - 2 metres reduce low limb by 2 metres, remove lowest limb of Ash overhanging neighbour's back garden to main trunk and crown lift remaining canopy, remove two stems of Beech growing over neighbour's property back to main trunk to contain; 22 Belmont Road. (26/0199/TCO) Tree preservation order not made, Wednesday 15 April.

LOCAL UPDATES • LOCAL UPDATES

Bikes For Refugees at Currie Community Centre

HAZEL LUMSDAINE
CURRIE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Do you have old bikes lying unloved and gathering dust the garage? Did you know that they can be given a whole new lease of life and could be used to help someone who can't afford to buy their own bike or have no other means of transport. Bikes for Refugees Scotland take donated bikes, carry out any repairs needed and then gift these to people who need them, free of charge! This could be the difference between getting to work or not so can be a real life line.

Currie Community Centre have partnered with the amazing Bikes For Refugees Scotland to be a drop of point in the West of Edinburgh and we are super proud to share that to date, we have helped to collect over 70 bikes for the charity. There is always space for more though. So if your cycling days are behind you or you have upgraded to the next new thing, we would be happy to help clear that space in the garage and pass on your old bike to a new home.

• You can find out more about Bikes for Refugees Scotland on their website, <https://www.bikesforrefugees.scot/>

If you would like to donate a bike, you can complete the form on our website: <https://www.curriecommunitycentre.org/community-projects-and-someone-from-the-charity-will-be-in-touch-with-you-to-arrange-a-suitable-drop-of-time>

Please do note that we can only accept bikes that have been previewed by the charity via the online form.



FRONT COVER STORY

Great Big Green Week at Hub@531

ANNETTE WILSON
DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, HUB@531

Every June, thousands of events take place all over the UK, from repair cafes and nature walks to community clean ups and film screenings; the Great Big Green Week brings communities together to share action that makes a difference.

Last year, in 2025, more than a million people took part and the Hub@531 played a small part here in our south west corner of Edinburgh. This year, between Friday 5 to Sunday 14 June, we plan to host even more events and activities—and we invite everyone to get involved and come along!

Our kick off event is on Saturday 6 June when we will

host stalls including a plant sale from our own gardening group, interactive information with a local beekeeper, hands-on with Edinburgh Tool Library, and a chance to browse and buy from the Fairtrade stall. Our own Hub@531 volunteers will be on hand to offer a cuppa, and a chance to make your own healthy dips.

On the same day, we're delighted to be joined once again by the team from Earth Calling, who will offer river dipping in the Water of Leith for young people, and a botanical bletcher along the river banks for adults.

There will also be family-friendly crafts to book on Friday 5 and Saturday 6 June. Throughout the following week, there'll be guest speakers including Edinburgh Thriving Greenspaces and the author Helen Boden.

including bric-a-brac, small furniture, gardening equipment, toys, books, nearly new and clothes will be on sale at great prices—so don't miss this opportunity.

With electricity costs being as high as they are, the Sale – our main fundraiser of the year – just about covers a year's worth of electricity for the Scout Hall.

Due to safety and availability issues, we no longer collect door-to-door. However, donations of items will be accepted at the Scout Hall between 6.30pm and 8.30pm from Monday 1 June to Thursday 4 June.

THE GREAT BIG GREEN WEEK

On Sunday 7 June, we will screen the 2025 documentary film Ocean, with David Attenborough, with the opportunity to join a post-screening discussion on the issues raised.

Watch out too for a local history walk on footpaths old and new, a temporary drop-off point for the Kids Love Clothes charity, and lots more.

• Our full programme will be available very soon. Please take a look at our Facebook page The Hub at 531 for full details of what's on and how to book, or email hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com for more information.

Please do not bring items on the Friday or Saturday as we need time to sort it all. Please do not leave items outside the hall outside these times.

• The sale takes place on Saturday 6 June between 2pm and 4pm in the Scout Hall, 45 Lanark Road West, Currie—just east of the Sainsbury's garage and shop.

• Please note we only take CASH – NO cards – and it would be helpful if you brought small change as there are only so many £10 and £20 notes we can change before our coins run out!

LOCAL UPDATES • LOCAL UPDATES



Pentland Probus Club meets every Wednesday morning throughout the year, with fortnightly speaker meetings held in the Juniper Green Church Hall, writes Billy Wheelan. On the other Wednesdays we meet in the Kinleith Mill Bar from 10am for coffee and biscuits, attempting to right the

world's problems... but it never works! Gillian McIntee took on the lease of the Kinleith Bar back on 28 April 2005, meaning she has been our "hostess" for the last 21 years—and an excellent one she has been too. During that time we have had about 400 coffee mornings, dozens of lunches and

Burns Suppers, etc. Unfortunately Gillian decided not to renew her lease and is moving on to pastures new at the Neidpath Inn in Peebles. Our members decided that we could not let Gillian leave empty handed, so we organised a photoshoot of us together, and

we were so lucky with the weather. At her final coffee morning with us, we presented Gillian with a framed copy of the resulting photograph, along with another keepsake, to show our grateful appreciation for the service that she has given us over all these years.

What's Going on at Currie Kirk?

DIANE BROWN
CURRIE KIRK MISSION, OUTREACH & FELLOWSHIP TEAM

As Currie Kirk and Balerno Parish Church steer their way to a union, things continue as normal.

On Saturday 4 April, Currie Kirk's Mission Outreach and Fellowship Team hosted a morning of Easter Crafts (with teas and coffee and tasty treats) at the Gibson Craig Halls. More than 50 people, adults and children, attended and the event was hailed as a great success, enjoyed by participants and those facilitating the event.

Our regular Coffee Stop! community cafe starts up on Saturday 2 May, running between 2pm and 4pm in Currie Kirk on The Kirkgate.

SPRING CLEANING / DECLUTTERING?

Fresh Start is a charity which supports those who are setting up their first home after a period of homelessness by providing "Starter Packs" and

other household goods.

Our work with the charity continues. Donations of household items, bedding and kitchen goods that are in good condition are welcome, and can be handed in at the Gibson Craig Halls during office hours (9.30am - 12.30pm) on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

MESSY CHURCH

Currie Kirk and Balerno Parish Church have jointly hosted entertaining and successful "Messy Churches" on Friday afternoons at the Gibson Craig Halls.

These events are a great way for children and their adults to socialise and to participate in craft and story activities. Teas, coffees, and juice are available. More children-focused activities will be held in the coming months.

GIBSON CRAIG HALLS

The Halls are a fantastic local resource and host a variety of groups including Currie Creative, Octagon Club, Boys Brigade, Pilates and Fitness Training groups and The Guild.

The halls also host social events and are available for hire at very reasonable rates.

• Details are available from the Halls Convenor Viola McPhail: gibsoncraigbooking@gmail.com

• Further details about these groups are available from the Church Office: email admin@curriekirk.co.uk or call (0131) 451 5141.

THE PATH TO UNION

To promote integration and fellowship among the two congregations, Currie Kirk and Balerno Parish Church have organised joint social gatherings.

Our next occasion will be on Friday 29 May, when the Gibson Craig Halls host a wine tasting and associated quiz. It promises to be great fun.

• Keep up to date with what's going on over the Spring and Summer months by checking our website: www.curriekirk.org, on the noticeboard outside the Gibson Craig Halls, and our Facebook page.

'Code-Breaking at Balerno SWI

EDINGELL THOMSON
BALERNO SWI

At our April meeting, we had a fascinating talk on Code Breaking at Bletchley Park, the Government Code and Cypher School during the Second World War, given by the immensely knowledgeable Derek Douglas from the Colinton Local History Society.

We all found his account very interesting, and our main competition this month was the solving of a sheet of code breaking problems—the results of which we will receive next month.

• The "Buttons" competition for war memorabilia: Christine Moodie and Mary Robertson (Joint first); Margaret Lindsell (third); Flower of the Month, Moira Stewart.

• Our May meeting will be an Open Night with guest speaker Lynn Sneadon, on the topic of Fenced Fleece. There will also be a raffle, sales table and refreshments.

LOCAL UPDATES • LOCAL UPDATES

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Heart Screening Event Success

ROSS COWE
 FUNDRAISER – CARDIAC RISK IN THE YOUNG

A third heart screening event hosted by the Christopher Cowe Memorial fund at Balerno High School, proved a great success.

The event again was well attended with 197 Young People aged 14 to 35 screened with futures secured or any concerns identified and individuals referred for further support or action if required. As always if we helped to save one life over the weekend then what a difference to make.

Through the screening prize draw, the sale of Heart Light Catchers from Harmonies in Wood, and further donations made over the weekend, we raised a further £1,400 which goes straight to the Memorial Fund to help fund further heart screenings in the near future.

Also over the weekend The Grey Horse Inn, Balerno hosted what may be the first annual “ladies day” in aid of Christopher’s fund, raising an absolutely mind blowing £2,850 for the fund. The weekend has ensured that we are now more than halfway towards funding another 2027/28 event with the previous week’s abseil event ensuring enough money has been raised to fund an additional day’s screening for more than 100 young people alone. Everyone involved in all these events had so much fun, celebrating Christopher’s life and



raising money for such an important cause.

We were humbled over the weekend to meet another family who have recently been affected by the loss of a young person aged 15 to a sudden cardiac event and it just emphasises why what we are doing is so important—so much more could be done to prevent the loss of young lives.

The positive news is that we now have another weekend booked for Saturday 8 - Sunday 9 May 2027 at the Oriam Health Clinic at Heriot-Watt University to screen another 200 young people and, due to the recent success of the aforementioned events, we may be in a position to fund an additional heart screening later next year. That would mean our target of screening 1,000 local young people



is achieved well within our initial timescale.

Our next event sees us continue to build our partnership with The Grey Horse Inn in 2026. Amy and her team will be hosting a charity quiz night at the pub on the evening of Friday 29 May. Look out for details on local socials and posters for more details on how you can enter a team for another evening of fun, laughter and fundraising.

Thank you everyone for your continued support and love.

Currie Balerno Rotary—Tell Us What You Think

MIKE ROWE
 CURRIE BALERNO ROTARY

As we approach the end of our Rotary year, here’s a look at what we’ve done so far in 2025 - 2026:

Receipts from our October Casino Night enabled us to donate £1,500 to the Royal Hospital for Children and Young People, while our Tree of Life raised some £3,000 for the Doddie Weir Foundation to support research into Motor Neurone Disease.

In December the Pentland

Community Chest, which we run with Balerno Village Trust, made grants to ten local charities and local projects.

We supported the two food banks in our area.

We worked with the Pentlands Ukrainian Support Group and with a project to support children in orphanages in Ukraine.

We supported ShelterBox, providing help for families made homeless in disaster areas across the world.

And we organised the local annual Primary Schools Quiz and the local Young Musicians competition.

That’s what we’ve been up to this year. To learn more, you can go to our website or contact Mike Rowe – details below – or better still, if you’re in the area, either

come and meet us at Balerno Farmers Market on Saturday 9 May or at the Gala a fortnight later on Saturday 23 May.

We’d love to meet you and we’d love to know what you think of what we do. In June we shall be celebrating our 45th anniversary. We’ll be looking back at the last 45 years and we’ll be looking at our aims for the future. You can make your contribution.

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

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

Pesticide-Free Balerno: ‘Let Us Know’

ANNIE MACDONALD
 PESTICIDE FREE BALERNO

Have you spotted a weedy area within Balerno that could do with some attention? After many requests, we have listened to local residents and added a “Let Us Know” form on the Pesticide Free Balerno website.

It is important to not only remember the importance of maintaining the upkeep and tidiness of Balerno but to do so safely, using non-harmful pesticide-free methods. Protecting the health and environment of our community are obvious priorities.

Pesticide Free Balerno Volunteers and Edinburgh Council will happily help.

• Please if it is safe and you are able to do so, please: manually remove the weeds in front of your own property; help less-able neighbours; and report “weedy areas” in Balerno to PFB by using our “Let us Know” form.

• Visit: <https://www.pesticidefreebalerno.com/contact-8>, email: Pesticidefreebalerno@gmail.com or text: 07979 717485.

CALL FOR SCOUTS LEADERS AND MEMBERS

The 31st Pentland (Juniper Green) Scouts is currently as popular as it has ever been. We offer Scouting for young people from ages four to 14, and have two sections at every level – Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts – offering a huge range of activities to more than 170 girls and boys every year.

This summer term alone, Friday Scouts will be completing their expedition challenge award in the Trossachs, going on a mountain biking weekend, taking part in the Pentjam camp with Scouts from all over our district, canoeing, summer camp and holding an end-of-term barbecue and awards party.

The one thing that keeps these sections going, though, is the willingness of adults to become leaders, even only for a year or two. Full training is provided so no experience is required but enthusiasm is a must.

• To learn more about volunteering as a leader, or to register your child (waiting lists may apply), please email: 31stpentlandscouts@gmail.com

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT ELECTION 2026

On Thursday 7 May 2026, Scotland's electorate will choose the members of the seventh Scottish Parliament since 1999. *C&B News* asked each of the five candidates standing for the (slightly reshaped) and re-named Edinburgh South Western constituency one simple question: "If elected, what will you do for the residents of south west Edinburgh?"

We are pleased to report that all five candidates responded. Note: although we had told them we were "looking for up to 300 words" in response, several did go beyond that word limit. Despite this, we've opted to reproduce their answers as they were submitted – without any editorial interference or subbing! The candidates are listed in alphabetical order by surname.

We also include, for your information, the full list of candidates standing for the Edinburgh and Lothians East Region: these are listed in the order they will likely be elected, depending on the proportion of votes received by each party.

You can vote in this election if you are registered to vote in Scotland, will be 16 years old or over on Thursday 7 May 2026, and are: a UK or Irish citizen; a qualifying Commonwealth citizen; or a qualifying foreign national who has permission to enter or stay in the UK or who does not need such permission, including EU citizens.

There are 129 elected Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs): 73 constituency MSPs (one for each constituency), and 56 regional MSPs (seven for each of the eight electoral regions in Scotland).

You will receive two ballot papers—you should vote once on each paper, by marking a cross (X) in the box opposite the name of one candidate/party. If you put a cross next to more than one box, your vote will be considered a "spoilt ballot" and not counted.

Polling stations will be open between 7am and 10pm on Thursday 7 May 2026. If you have successfully applied for a postal vote, the completed ballot papers and postal voting statement must be returned before 10pm on Thursday 7 May.

You do not need to show photo ID to vote in the Scottish Parliament election.



SIMITA KUMAR
SCOTTISH NATIONAL PARTY

If elected to represent Edinburgh South Western, I will approach this role with rigour and vigour. It's truly a constituency like no other. Vast not only in geography, but in diversity of its people. From different ages and stages to levels of socioeconomic backgrounds, to urban and rural settings - there is no single "one-size-fits-all" solution. My priority will be to ensure every voice is heard and that support reflects the real needs of our communities.

During this cost-of-living crisis, I will work to ensure people can access meaningful support. I welcome the commitment in the SNP manifesto to introduce a food price cap on essential items. I've met residents for whom this policy could ease daily pressures in a very real way and provide some much-needed financial breathing space.

Healthcare is a core priority for me, shaped by my professional background. I will advocate for improved access to NHS services, with a focus on prevention as well as treatment. This includes pushing for additional walk-in GP clinics, building on the model in Wester Hailes, so more people can access care quickly and locally when needed most.

Housing is fundamental to wellbeing. I will campaign for increased affordable housebuilding, including delivering a £10,000 deposit assistance scheme for first-time buyers (another manifesto commitment). I will also advocate for strengthening rights of long-term renters, ensuring greater security, fairness, and stability for tenants across the constituency.

Mostly, I will prioritise communities that are often overlooked—those that don't always ask nor receive their fair share of support. Basic services must be delivered: from stairwell cleaning and maintenance to grass cutting, environmental improvements, to investment in infrastructure.

Politics should strengthen communities, not divide them. I will work to build trust, encourage participation, and ensure decisions are shaped by the people they affect.



CATRIONA MUNRO
SCOTTISH LABOUR PARTY

From knocking on doors and talking to residents consistently for the past seven months, I know how scannered voters are: they feel let down and that public services just aren't there for them when they need them.

I know from the many hundreds of conversations I've had that traffic congestion and the condition of our roads is a daily frustration. Scottish Labour will invest £350 million to repair the potholes. But repairing the roads means road closures and I'd want to speed this up – for instance on Lanark Road, which is an essential arterial route for residents of Currie and Balerno. I'd look to introduce a lane rental scheme, which are being used in England, where utility companies are charged for occupying busy roads. This creates a strong incentive to complete works more quickly. The SNP have consistently rejected this approach.

But we also need to fix our NHS. Too many people are struggling to get a GP appointment or waiting too long for treatment. Scottish Labour has a clear plan to cut waiting times, end the 8am rush for appointments and bring back the family doctor.

Housing is another major concern. In Edinburgh particularly, too many young people and families are locked out of home ownership or stuck in unsuitable housing. Where the SNP have signally failed in government, Scottish Labour will deliver 125,000 new homes and help more people in this community to get on the housing ladder.

For families, education and childcare are key. We will introduce breakfast clubs in every primary school, provide more support in classrooms with additional teachers and assistants, and expand apprenticeships so young people can build a future here.

I will be a visible and accessible local MSP — holding regular surgeries, working with community groups, and working closely with Scott Arthur MP and local councillors to achieve the change people need.

South West Edinburgh is a fantastic place to live, and my commitment is simple: to listen, to act, and to deliver the change this community deserves.



CAMERON ROSE
REFORM UK

Consensus politics in Holyrood is not working. It is losing touch with real lives. Common sense policies can change that. I bring a wealth of experience from years of policing, as a councillor and my involvement in Edinburgh community life. Here are four out of many areas I will work to change.

TAX: Scotland's economy is in deep deficit. To get it moving I want to cut taxes, first to align with rates in the rest of the UK, then reduce rates by 1p to make Scotland an attractive place to live and work (reformuk.scot/tax-calculator/).

It would be paid for with £1bn from Net Zero and its subsidies along with overhauling the £6.5bn annual spend on 132 quangos. £3bn would fund these tax changes — rewarding hard work and aspiration, giving incentives to move from welfare to work.

ENERGY: Long before the Iran war our energy prices were the highest in the industrialised world, higher the rest of Europe the US (X4) and even China (x7). We have plenty of gas and oil on our doorstep which can provide energy security, high value jobs and yes, much cheaper household bills. Reform UK's lonely stance against the consensus is beginning to change that debate.

CRIME: Local knife and drug crime need a much more robust response from the justice system. The shocking drug death figures in Edinburgh need countered by robust policing and effective rehabilitation.

FAIRNESS & COMMON SENSE: We need to get control of our borders so we can control our housing and NHS waiting lists. Holyrood legislation currently prioritises illegal arrivals over locals when it comes to housing.

REFORM: All these issues affect local people. Reform is offering common sense answers to these issues.



SUE WEBBER
SCOTTISH CONSERVATIVE & UNIONIST PARTY

Born, raised and schooled in Currie, it's an honour to be standing as the Scottish Conservative candidate for my home constituency of Edinburgh South Western, just as it's been a privilege to serve as one of your Edinburgh MSPs.

And during the election campaign it's been brilliant to speak to so many local people on the doorsteps and hear about your priorities.

Of course, you don't need to live in the constituency to stand for election, but it really helps because I understand the issues in our area because they affect me too. No other candidate can claim the same.

So, what is our experience of the past 20 years? Our roads are scarred with potholes, while the priority seems to be spending millions on cycle lanes which fewer are using.

On health, I'm contacted every week by constituents who are having difficulty securing appointments to get treatment for long-term conditions.

The impact of anti-social behaviour, particularly dangerous e-scooter riders, is reported to me just as often, and I know from talking to frustrated police officers just how over-stretched they are.

As a local representative, my commitment to Edinburgh South Western is total. As a councillor first and then an MSP, I'm proud to stand up for our community and I think my record speaks for itself, from saving our schools in Currie and Wester Hailes to protecting local green spaces and improving road safety.

This part of the city can often feel sidelined by Edinburgh and Holyrood, but as someone who knows the district intimately, I do my level best to ensure local people's views are properly and vociferously promoted.

But if the SNP win, nothing will change. That's why you need to vote for me on your purple ballot and for the Scottish Conservative party on your peach ballot, that's your secret weapon to stop an SNP majority.

It's been the privilege of my life to represent the area in which I grew up and with the support of local people I hope I can continue to do so.



ANDY WILLIAMSON
SCOTTISH LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

Hi, I'm Andy, I'm your Scottish Liberal Democrat candidate for Edinburgh South Western. I'm not a career politician. I'm a business owner working in neurodiversity, and I've built and run businesses in both the UK and the US. That experience has taught me how to get things done, but more importantly, to listen first and act with purpose.

These last few months, I've been out knocking on doors across Edinburgh South Western, speaking to residents about what's working, what isn't, and where things need to change. Those conversations are shaping how I approach this election and what I would do as your MSP.

One issue that comes up time and again (and is a personal priority of mine) is the impact of smartphones on young people. I've long been campaigning for smartphone-free schools, including meeting with the Scottish Government, because schools should be places where students can focus, learn, and actually be children. Creating smartphone-free learning environments is a priority I will continue to push throughout Edinburgh South Western and throughout Scotland.

More acutely, we also need to urgently ease pressure on our NHS. The Scottish Liberal Democrats have been clear that investing in social care is essential, helping people leave hospital when they are ready and receive dignified care at home. It's better for patients and frees up vital capacity - not to mention saving our NHS £1.2 million a day.

The Cost of living is another constant concern. The Scottish LibDems believe that supporting people to properly insulate their homes will not only cut bills, but also make our country greener. The LibDems at Westminster have also called for an urgent cut to fuel duty in the light of the war in Iran.

Finally, it's worth saying this: Scottish Liberal Democrats have shown they can deliver. By working constructively at budget time, they've secured real wins for our community like hospitality business rates relief, the reopening of the Edinburgh Eye Pavilion, and more funding for ADHD and autism assessments to tackle long waiting lists. These are practical changes that make a difference day to day.

I am proud to be a candidate for Edinburgh South Western. I hope that on the regional (peach) ballot, you'll vote for the Scottish Liberal Democrats—a vote for a practical, grounded approach, where you'll get an MSP who will get things done.

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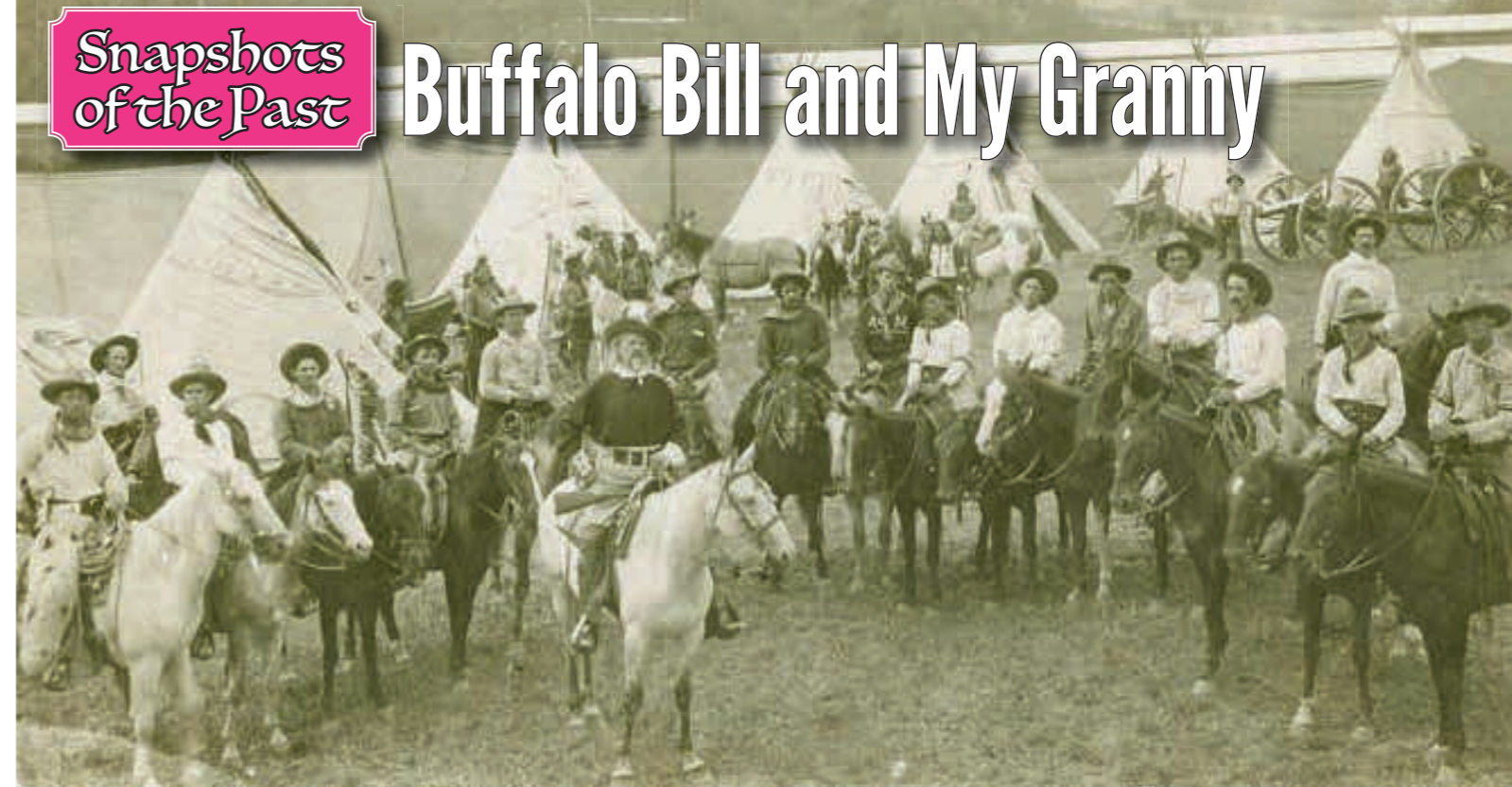


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DOUGLAS LOWE CURRIE & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

When I was young, in the 1950s/1960s, my Balerno granny, who was born in 1900, mentioned to me that she had met Buffalo Bill, his cowboys and some well-known "redskin" Indians.

As we were dealing with a western hero, who was unlikely to have visited Balerno, and being very young, I tended to ignore this—assuming that my granny was getting confused after watching "cowboy" films which were very popular with all of us. This was the time of black and white TVs, and cowboy series filled the screens: *Wagon Train*, *Cheyenne*, *Rawhide*, plus many more.

My granny and I used to talk regularly on old Balerno or old Currie things, events and people. However my personal source for these local insights sadly passed away in 1970, at a time when phones were in red boxes on street corners, cars were few and far between and no one except for foreign spies had "computers".

Being a bit older now and having a laptop computer, I can research things easily. No I'm not a foreign spy or, as my laptop seems to think, a robot. In doing a bit of research through the old newspapers on something completely different I came across a reference to Buffalo Bill—in Edinburgh!

After further digging around I found that *Buffalo Bill's Wild West Congress of Rough Riders* had been on display in a number of English and Welsh cities in the late 1890s and, from October 1891 until February 1892, had been based in Glasgow.

There was, however another large tour in 1904 taking in 29 different Scottish towns and cities. This show had started off in England and then had travelled north to Hawick as their first Scottish venue.

It was really all planned along the existing rail network. A number of venues later saw the whole Buffalo Bill party travelling on the Caledonian Railway from Glasgow, with three great trains arriving at Princes Street Station (then situated at the northern end of Lothian Road) at 5am on Sunday 7 August.

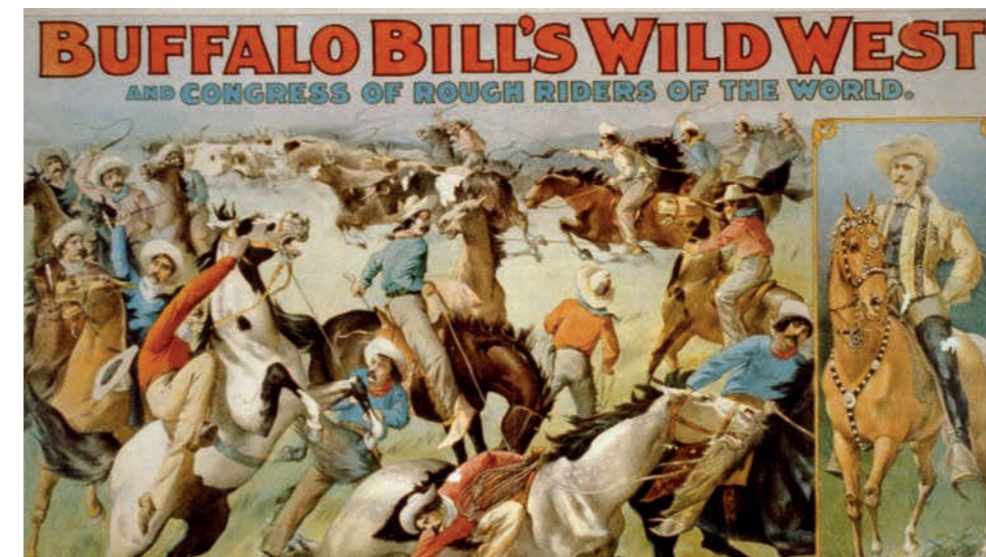
Main: the Buffalo Bill troupe, c1900. Below: a copy of a poster for the show.

A stream of carts, carriages, stagecoaches, and horsemen led the procession into Shandwick Place and along West Maitland Street, Dalry Road, Tynecastle, Westfield Road and finally into Damhead Farm in Gorgie, where they would start constructing the canvas tented venue covering approximately five acres. It would have formed quite a procession with performers, cowboys, "Indians" and animals following on.

The show was a great extravaganza of the "Wild West": tepees, trick lassoing, animals and people, trick and target shooting, mock attacks on stagecoaches, and a re-enactment of the Battle of Little Big Horn, involving cavalry and "Indians"—and, surprisingly, Russian Cossacks in a horse riding display. In the centre of all this, the stately long-haired figure of Buffalo Bill emerged on his tall white horse.

Much of this last information I gleaned from the book *Your Fathers the Ghosts—Buffalo Bill's Wild West in Scotland*, by Tom F Cunningham. There's no mention of my four-year-old granny-to-be but, as it was reported that 140,000 people attended the show during the week in Edinburgh, I now have no doubt that – sometime between Monday 8 and Saturday 13 August 1904 – two of the attendees were my granny and my great grandfather.

I will apologise to my granny next time I am down at Currie graveyard.



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

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I'm lucky to have a number of ride-or-die pals in my life. Friends with whom I would travel to the fires of Mount Doom and back to the comfort of The Shire. They have been there for me through brilliant highs and spectacular lows. Producing food for people is one of my love languages and when one of my beautiful friends was missing the taste of home back in Denmark, naturally my first thought was to recreate it as best I could.

My cookbooks are all ordered in a particular way so it was easy for me to locate *The Nordic Baking Book* by Magnus Nilsson in amongst its geographical siblings. What my friend, let's call him Thor, was craving was Danish Rugbrød, aka Rye Bread. Not just a bread loaf made with rye flour, this is a dense bread with fine and coarse rye flour and rye kernels. It is fermented with buttermilk over several steps and additions which take five days in total, and provides us with the base of most of the famous Danish open-faced sandwiches, aka Smørrebrød. You're right, I did sort of gloss over the fact it takes five days to make, plus 24 hours to let it mature before eating. But for a buddy like Thor, that's nothing. As with a lot of Nordic Baking, you need fresh yeast in addition to different types of rye flour and kernels which aren't that easy to find in the UK. I went to a website called ScandiKitchen to get what I needed (and a few extra bits that I didn't need). And really it's not that difficult to make. It only requires patience and alarms set to remind you to do the next thing in the recipe. It produced three loaves that Thor said tasted exactly like the real thing.

Two went into his freezer and I hope he is enjoying them with lashings of Lurpak.

The Nordic Baking Book is actually quite terrifying. It's more of a tome with recipes for basically anything you can get in the Nordic regions. Some more obscure: fish pancakes from Iceland, crushed barley porridge from Norway, deep fried pasties from Finland. Others more well-known: Danish pastries, spiced biscuits from Norway, Denmark and Sweden and things like Icelandic Christmas cake and tonnes upon tonnes of sponge cake recipes and those for crackers and breads. The first few chapters alone are about flours used in Nordic countries. There are almost no pictures. It is utilitarian and enormous and extremely detailed. I love it.

One thing to come out of that region is the Swedish tradition of fika, where people stop their working day to have coffee and a piece of cake. I wanted to have my own slice of fika so I went about making a Tosca Cake. It has a fairly plain sponge, but the magic happens when you pour a delicious almond and caramel glaze on it while it is part-way cooked and leave it in the oven to finish. The resulting cake is sweet, but with an amazing crunch on top with the sliced almonds. It crisps and caramels up at the edges giving an incredible texture.

I hope you are fortunate enough to have someone in your life for whom you would become the neighbourhood mad person spending five days fermenting rye kernels in a huge bowl in a corner of your dining room so they can have a slice of Copenhagen in their living room. Because what is food, but something to share with those we love? *Skol.*



Off-Beat Origami

Origami is the traditional Japanese art of paper folding that transforms a flat sheet into decorative shapes, creatures and figures through precise folding techniques. It has become a globally appreciated hobby and artistic discipline enjoyed by people of all ages. Origami is meant to be a meditative craft but I beg to differ. It can be quite challenging at times; however the result is very satisfying.

My favourite part is that all you need is a piece of paper, typically a square (15 x 15 cm). Using coloured paper will add a splash of fun. I followed videos online and have one important tip for you: select a very short video to begin with! I started with a 5-minute video on how to create an origami fox and it took me 30 minutes to finish with all the stopping and going back to re-watch the instructions. So I would avoid videos over 30 minutes, unless you are planning to have an origami afternoon.

The beauty of origami is that there is no cutting, gluing, or marking the paper; it relies solely on the folds themselves to form the final artwork. There are two exceptions in my example: (a) I added googly eyes to the frog to make it more fun and (b) I had to extend the elephant's tail. It was just too short and it dangled between his legs, not looking like a tail at all.

In terms of difficulty, the frog was the easiest, then the elephant and finally the fox. If you are a beginner, I would start with the frog, which is easy and quick to make and it actually jumps which is an added benefit. The next time you see some coloured paper next to a copier, grab it and give origami a go!



Nature's Medicine Box



URARA DONOHOE

Elderflower

Elder (*Sambucus nigra*) produces beautiful white fragrant flowers usually from May to June. Distinctly aromatic, most people have had it in cordials at least once. It is the key ingredient in French liqueur St Germain and included in our own Edinburgh Gin. Most European countries from Denmark to Italy consider the Elder sacred, with Danes and old English believing its deep connection with the faerie folk, while Sicilians and Russians believed it drove away evil spirits and bad luck. Albus Dumbledore's invincible wand was of course the Elder wand, one of the three Deathly Hallows.

This is another one of the core medicinal herbs that most British herbalists have in their medicine cabinets. The berries will be discussed in a later instalment, as they are medicinally distinct from the flowers. A famous herbalist from 1960s, Mrs Maude Grieve, extolled the virtues of elderflowers in fighting off common colds and influenza: dried flower infused for 30 minutes in boiling water, to be taken before going to bed to promote sweating. It is also a powerful anti-inflammatory that helps relieve the symptoms of hay-fever and other allergies.

Homemade Elderflower syrup is a wonderful addition to your kitchen. Obvious thing is to make a refreshing sweet drink. It also has a way of making everything taste a little special: syrups on sponge cakes; an extra ingredient in shortbread; that little touch to a homemade strawberry jelly. Fresh flowers can be added to salads, enhancing your lettuce and cucumbers with that sweet fragrance. The light-green flower stems contain toxins, so please remove the flowers from stem when cooking them. Please visit my website for recipes.

• 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.roseandyarrow.com>

Wellbeing



ANNETTE WILSON

Music to boost or change your mood

Most people recognise the positive impact of music in their lives. I've noticed how, as the days lengthen and temperatures rise, I'm turning to more uplifting and energetic music. But I'm interested to explore how the music we listen to can influence our wellbeing!

Our music choices can lighten our mood, giving some respite perhaps when things feel difficult. Our brain responds to rhythms, and predicts upcoming notes. When expectations are met, it creates feelings of safety and pleasure, so we might choose to listen to light music to feel relaxed and happy—even if this is a temporary distraction. But when music contains unexpected surprises, it can create emotional tension—the release of which can help us regulate our emotions. This explains why we might really enjoy listening to sad music when we feel down, or angry music when we feel rage. The music itself mirrors our internal emotional state, giving it authenticity and allowing us to fully and safely experience our difficult feelings.

Most of us embrace music in some way, and we all have our favourite genre or era, but have you considered the possible benefits of listening to something new? Listening to unfamiliar music, particularly for older adults, stimulates neural pathways, improving cognitive function and providing a "challenge" that enhances brain flexibility. One of the benefits of modern technology is the open access to so much music. I recently discovered "Add to Playlist" on BBC Radio 4 and other podcast sources – a brilliant way to discover pieces of music that are new to me – with each piece linked to the previous but with every genre included.

So that's my challenge for this month: find something new and different to listen to and immerse yourself just for a few minutes!! And who knows where it might take you and your brain?

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

Seasonal Allergic Conjunctivitis

What is Seasonal Allergic Conjunctivitis?

More commonly known as Hay Fever Conjunctivitis, this becomes more prevalent at this time of year. Airborne allergens like pollen from trees, grass and weeds increase in spring. Because the body remembers these allergens (if previous response), the body reacts immediately—Type 1 hypersensitivity. Inflammatory mediators, like histamine, are released into the body's system to "protect" it from these allergens. This causes dilation of blood vessels giving red eyes, but also makes the vessels leaky, giving swelling. Histamine acts on the nerve fibres causing itching. Rubbing can cause more histamine to be released and increase symptoms.

Who is more at risk?

People who have an allergic tendency suffer more from this ie. food allergy, asthma, eczema. It can also run in families.

What are the signs and symptoms?

This affects both eyes and presents with redness, itching, swollen eyelids, watering of the eyes and sometimes sneezing.

What can be done without medical intervention?

It's good to try and identify when this is happening by following the pollen count on TV. It is also good if the particular allergen can be identified but this could mean a lot of work! Washing out the eyes and using cold compresses can often give some amount of immediate relief. Try not to rub the eyes as this can exacerbate the symptoms.

What medication can help?

People commonly take a mast cell stabiliser eye drop with Sodium Cromoglicate 2% as the active ingredient. The most common brand name is Opticrom. This can take a couple of weeks to build up in the system to help with symptoms, taken typically throughout the allergic season. A combination drug with a mast cell stabiliser and anti-histamine can give more immediate relief with less applications.

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



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Graham Priestley was the founding editor and leading light of C&B News for almost three decades. But, as his widow Marjorie Beaumont writes, 'the paper' was just one aspect of his commitment to the wider communities along the upper Water of Leith valley...



Remembering Dr Graham Priestley

Graham Priestley, a Yorkshireman, came to work in Edinburgh in 1970, settling with his family in Balerno. He very soon became involved in the Balerno Children's Gala, the first of many local voluntary organisations for which, at various times, he worked tirelessly over the next 30 years.

In 1975 he joined a very small group of locals and students from Heriot-Watt University who were keen to produce a community newspaper, and in February 1976 the first edition of *Currie and Balerno News* was distributed to all the houses in the district. Graham became its first Editor, a position he fulfilled for three years, while still working full-time in medical research at Edinburgh University. Writing editorials, a regular fishing column, and making sure the paper was assembled by the team and ready for the printer each month was an enormous undertaking. But he willingly took it on, often "burning the candle at both ends", determined that the paper would succeed. With a small team of



volunteers, he steered the paper through its early years and brought a steady hand during the difficult times when it was feared the paper might fold, as most other community newspapers had done. He remained as Chairman for 28 years, always actively involved; writing regular pieces, present at monthly committee meetings and the early layout sessions, and encouraging the volunteers and editors who served at different times. Under his guidance the *Currie & Balerno News* survived its fledgling years and beyond, to become an enduring and much valued feature of the local scene.

Since then, other volunteers and different editors have progressed and modernised the paper and their efforts have been vital to the continuing success of *C&B News*—they deserve recognition and our thanks.

Graham was an altruist and visionary, with a strong commitment to the community where he lived. He firmly believed that while he could do little to address the bigger problems of the country and the world, he could at least try to improve things on his "home patch".

He joined the Balerno High School Action Committee, formed a new Balerno Cricket Club, became honorary High Bailiff of the Water of Leith, and a founder Trustee of the Water of Leith Conservation Trust, later serving as Volunteers Manager and then Trust Manager

until ill health forced his retirement.

This district is blessed with a vibrant community, a multitude of organisations, clubs, and societies, and large numbers of volunteers willingly giving up their spare time for the good of others. These are the unsung heroes deserving of our thanks and appreciation.

Graham's commitment was selfless, unwavering and remarkable. Fifty years on, it's difficult to imagine life without a regular *C&B News* or without the opportunity to enjoy a leisurely walk or cycle ride down the Water of Leith Walkway, perhaps stopping at the Visitor Centre in Slateford for refreshments, and continuing all the way to Leith and the sea.

In the 300th edition of *C&B News* in October 2004, Archie Clark (another amazing stalwart of the paper) wrote: "For a number of us who at one time or another volunteered to work on *C&B News*, Graham was the *C&B News*."

"We owe Graham and that early team a great debt of gratitude. [...] Graham's considerable achievement was innovative and quite outstanding."

The two fine memorial plaques, in Graham's Garden in Balerno and in the courtyard of the Water of Leith Visitor Centre, are a testament to the man who became "a man of the community" and who gave his utmost to the community. Some words on the plaque at the Visitor Centre read:

"He served with great distinction [...] He left his mark."

Above: the mill stone memorial to Graham Priestley at the Water of Leith Visitor Centre. Right and below: "Graham's Garden" can still be enjoyed at the western end of the Water of Leith Walkway, just off Bridge Road, Balerno.



'Graham's Garden'

This wildlife garden has been built in memory of
Dr Graham C Priestley
 1923-2004, biologist, naturalist and angler.
 Founder Member, Trust Manager and Trustee of The Water of Leith Conservation Trust,
 Honorary Bailiff and High Bailiff of The Water of Leith, Co-Founder, Editor and Chairman of The Currie & Balerno News
 and Founder of The Leith Walkway and Balerno Cricket Clubs.

The garden was constructed by volunteers from The Water of Leith Conservation Trust,
 and it is planted kindly donated by the Currie & Balerno News. (2007)

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Springtime at Malleny

JAMES BELL
 HEAD GARDENER, MALLENY GARDEN

Another busy month in the garden at Malleny. We saw all the different weathers over our Easter Egg Trails weekend at the beginning of April. Easter Sunday saw: rain, sleet, sun, sleet, hail, snow, bright sunshine, hail, snow and finally sunshine, in that order!

Despite the weather (and just about enough snow to make an Easter snow rabbit, see photo!), 240 Easter Egg Trails were completed. Thank you to everyone who braved the mixed weather to come along, complete the trail and claim your chocolate egg prize. A fantastic weekend. If you missed it this year, you will be welcome to come along next year.

Meanwhile in the garden, the 600 tulips we planted back in November – in a mixture of garlic and chilli powder to discourage squirrels – are starting to flower. Some have fared very well, while some have been a tasty treat for grey squirrels: perhaps around one quarter of the tulip bulbs have gone. While this is disappointing, it is not unexpected. The first year in the ground is the most likely time for losses when the new growth is obvious. We'll enjoy the remaining flowers and subsequent years flowering will be less appealing to squirrels. Once established, the tulips will be a colourful addition to the spring garden.

Unfortunately, one bulb squirrels don't eat is *Allium paradoxum*—Few-flowered leek. You'll be familiar with it as it's widespread around Balerno and Currie in April: tiny

white flowers with multiple green bulbils held up on the flower stem, with a smells of garlic. As a non-native invasive plant, we take steps to control its growth within the Malleny grounds, using a variety of methods including hand weeding in the walled garden. Left to its own devices, it will take over and hinder the growth of our much more important native bluebell.

Rounding up some of the other work in the garden this month, we have repaired a section of path near the cascade burn. This was damaged by the large Turkey Oak when it was blown down, and by subsequent tree work a few months ago. The paths are now edged with logs, covered with woodchip and the edges will be planted later in the year. We've also potted up about 100 Dahlia tubers which will be planted out at the end of May. Everything starts to grow:

the annual scrummage between our volunteers and the weeds has begun. Currently our volunteers are winning. We will endeavour to stay ahead!

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>

NTS Great Pumpkin Weigh-off 2026 update: the seed which will become the biggest pumpkin in an NTS garden was sown at the end of April. Are we doing the right thing by sowing late? Time will tell! Atlantic Giant is our pumpkin of choice.

Ramblers: Forthcoming Walks

GAIL COUSINS
 BALERNO RAMBLERS

SUNDAY 3 MAY

• **LINLITHGOW CIRCULAR:** A strenuous 13 mile (21 km) walk (Linlithgow, Union Canal, Avon Aqueduct, Muiravonside, Lochcote Reservoir, Cockleroy Hill, Linlithgow).

WEDNESDAY 6 MAY

• **WINCHBURGH TO LINLITHGOW VIA UNION CANAL:** A flat easy 7 mile (11.3 km) linear walk. (Remember your bus pass if you have one.)

SATURDAY 9/SUNDAY 10 MAY

Check website for details.

WEDNESDAY 13 MAY

• **MUSSELBURGH CIRCULAR:** A 6.2 mile (10 km) walk starting at the Roman Bridge in Musselburgh.

SATURDAY 16 MAY

PEEBLES MEDIEVAL CASTLE:

Circular route, including Fotheringham Bridge, woodland, Old Manor Bridge, Peebles, Neidpath Castle, Hay Park, and Tweed Bridge.

WEDNESDAY 20 MAY

• **TORPHIN AND WARKLAW HILL:** 8 mile (12.9 km) route, 787 feet (240 metre) ascent. Water of Leith up Torphin, Warklaw Hill down towards Clubbedean Reservoir. Option to return to Currie from Poet's Glen, otherwise continue to West Kinleith, returning via Duncan's Belt and Lymphy.

SATURDAY 23 MAY

• **NEWHAILES ESTATE TO PRESTONPANS:** a 7 mile (11.3 km) linear walk; Newhailes Estate with its Palladian Mansion and pretty woodland paths, then a walk along the beach to reach Fisherrow Harbour, then John Muir Way along coast (short detour to visit bird hides) to Prestonpans, and bus back to Musselburgh, then to car park.

WEDNESDAY 27 MAY

• **INVERESK TO DALKEITH COUNTRY PARK:** a 7 mile (11.3 km) leisurely semi-circular walk starting and finishing at Inveresk Lodge Gardens, via River Esk to Whitecraig and Dalkeith Country Park, returning via Old Craighall.

SATURDAY 30 MAY

• **PENTLAND CIRCULAR:** a 9 mile (14.5 km) moderate circular walk near Harlaw and Threipmuir Reservoirs and including two Pentland Hills. Starts from Balerno Bus Terminus to Harlaw Reservoir, across Black Springs, round Black Hill to Green Cleuch, then up Hare Hill, returning via the Red Road, Bavelaw Marsh and Threipmuir Reservoir.

• *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>)*



Ramblers approaching Wester Craiglockart Hill. Photo: Erna Humphrey



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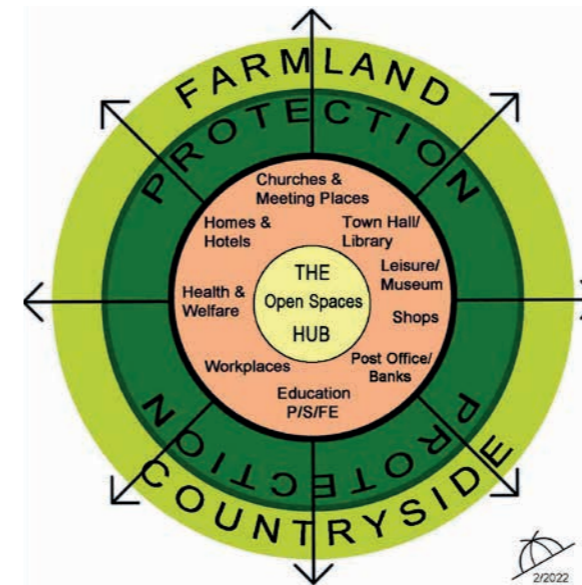


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PLANNING, ETC BY ARCHIE CLARK

On Local Place Plans



Several Community Councils are seeking ideas to submit to the City of Edinburgh Council for its 2040 Local Plan.

Scottish Government Circular 1/2022: “Local Place Plans” states that: “Local Place Plans are community-led plans setting out proposals for the development and use of land. These plans will set out a community’s aspirations for its future development. Once completed and then registered by the planning authority, they are to be taken into account in the preparation of the relevant local development plan.”

Note the wording! There is no requirement that the Council will prioritise a community’s wishes above its own preferences. Someone once said that “Consultation is a formal system for ignoring public views while patronising them at the same time.” Having seen how much regard CEC paid to those who responded to the Muir Wood Field Consultation (see *C&B News*, April 2026: “The Path of Good Intentions”) communities may wonder whether the enormous effort required to develop Local Place Plans is worth the effort.

While CEC may expect communities to suggest things that would add interest and meaning to their settlements – like a museum or a covered market – while discouraging

Data Centres or putting a Battery Energy Storage System (Bess) in Torphin Quarry rather than beside houses, I suggest the starting point should be strategic, taking elements of the above diagram and seeing what may be missing.

By 2040, many of us will be nearing the end of our working lives. Would it be better in a “Walk To” society to develop the 20-minute Neighbourhood concept to incorporate local “One Stop Shops” for Local Authority officers so we don’t have to traipse into town as at present? Should we not spend more time doing things in our communities instead of sitting in a bus to the opposite side of town? If community councils were allocated dedicated planners, then the process could identify vacant sites and community hub locations that could evolve over future years. 20-minute neighbourhoods cannot happen overnight but we could set some ground rules for making our communities more all-embracing instead of wasting hours travelling into town to buy a light bulb.

However, unless I am the only one who cannot read a Quick Response (QR) decal, may I suggest that Community Councils find more traditional methods to access their proposals? How many feel excluded by not being able to “read” a QR Code?

Where are our Recreation Spaces?

When a space we use for recreation disappears under the bulldozer, we grumble a bit, adapt and choose whether to go somewhere else—or just do nothing.

During Covid-19, it was reckoned that outdoor exercise in green spaces was good for us. But the ever-present threat of a developer pursuing his short-term financial objectives converting fields into ‘high-tech’ workplaces or houses remains. There comes a point where communities need to decide whether to allow this to continue ad infinitum or take action to prevent further losses.

A staggering amount of farmland has disappeared in this area over the past 200 years. Edinburgh has expanded from 1 square mile in 1809 to 105 square miles today. But instead of simultaneously retaining or expanding our recreation spaces, we allow these to be built upon. Flat fields become housing estates while spaces that are costly to develop become oddly shaped “amenity” spaces not large enough to kick a football. While “linear parks” serve a valuable purpose,

are there enough free accessible spaces where children can go to enjoy energetic activities? School playgrounds and small patches of green didn’t used to be fenced off. So what have we lost?

John Tweedie in his book *Our District* reminds us that Provosthaugh was once the “Kinleith Football Ground” before being filled with waste lime from the paper mill. In his book *A Water of Leith Walk*, he mentions the “Haugh” alongside the Water of Leith where the Juniper Green footballers played (now grazing land). It would be revealing to quantify what areas of undeveloped land remain in our communities and how they might be used for a variety of recreational purposes in future Local Place Plans.

Perhaps readers in Colinton, Baberton Mains, Juniper Green, Currie, Hermiston, Blinkbonny and Balerno might contribute a list of parcels of land near home, and how they could be better enjoyed if some attention was given to them. With luck, they might feature in CEC’s next “Open Space Strategy”.

Changes to Planning Fees

Planning fees are set by the Scottish Government. The relevant legislation is The Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2026 which came into effect on Wednesday 1 April 2026. Depending on the

circumstances, the Council has the power under Discretionary Charging, to reduce the fee by 25%, or raise it by 25%.

The Council’s Fee Charter can be found at <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/34195/planning-fees-charter>

Short Term Let (STL) Approved

In the September 2024 issue of *C&B News* (499), I reported that the Scottish Government reckoned that processing an STL might take up to nine months. The City of Edinburgh Council seem to have stuck to that timeframe—except for an application for “Use of student accommodation as short term let accommodation from 1 June to 31 August annually at 18 Haymarket Yards”.

That application was lodged on Monday 9 March and

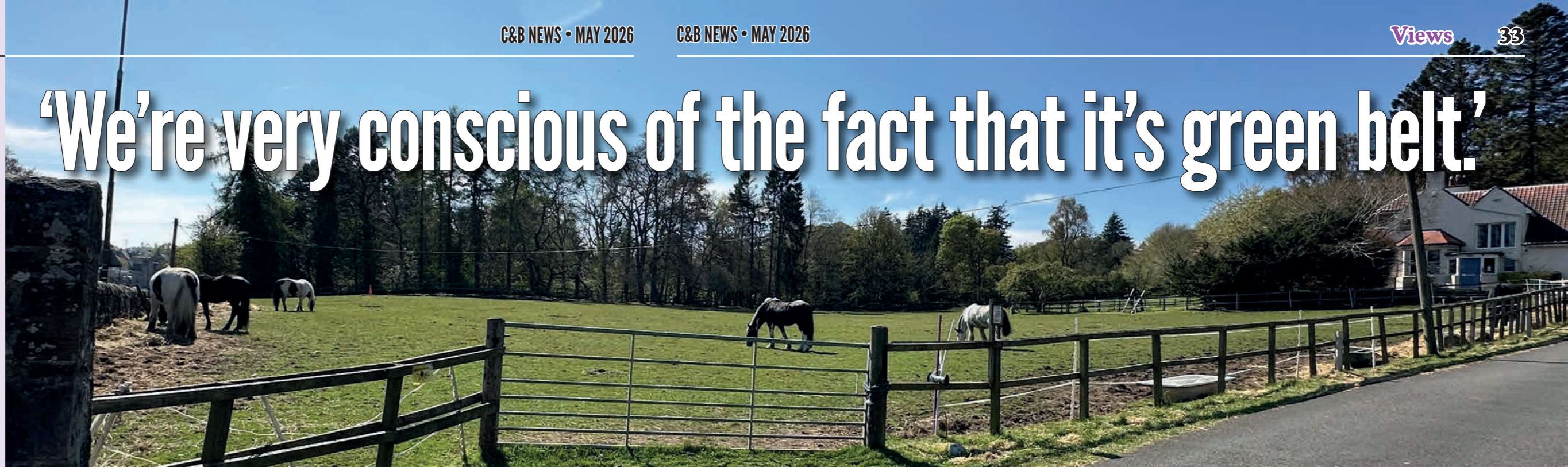
granted on Tuesday 14 April, five weeks later by delegated decision—good going for any planning application.

The building was completed in 2025, is seven storeys high, with accommodation for about 150 people. I wonder how such a big application managed to be approved so quickly when much smaller ones take nine months to be rejected. Perhaps our City councillors could clarify so that others may benefit.



We first reported on St Mungo's proposal for a new church building in Balerno, across the road from the High School, in our September 2025 issue. As public concerns grow about the proposal, we were invited to speak with Project Director Eric Adair to discuss the current status of 'The Gateway Project'...

'We're very conscious of the fact that it's green belt.'



PAUL FISHER COCKBURN
EDITOR, C&B NEWS

What is the current status of The Gateway Project?

In design terms, we're coming towards the end of stage two: that is, concept design. So we have got the broad ideas of what it is that we want to build that will meet our needs. It's not detailed yet; we don't know exactly what the colour of the carpet is, or what the external finishes are.

The key thing that I guess everyone's interested in is the planning application. We are easily six months of work away from being ready to submit: so that's September-October at the earliest. Subject to the vestry, who are our trustees, signing it off. The church takes time to make decisions, so it could easily be longer than that.

Is your congregation still supportive of the Project?

Yes. Our last survey didn't represent 100% of the congregation but, for the people who filled it in, it was significantly overwhelmingly supportive. It's a big challenge for us. We're talking to the Scottish Episcopal Church (which St Mungo's is part of) and they may give us some funds, but they will not be the sole funder. The majority of the funding will come from the church congregation, as indeed all the startup costs have.

People's biggest concern is that you want to build on part of the city's green belt.

We're very conscious of the fact that it's green belt. We did an assessment two years ago of what we, as a church, needed to do on

buildings. One of the issues was, well, there's a field here which had been given to us for this purpose [a new church building], but it's green belt. So what are the alternatives? Eventually we concluded that we would focus on the field, but we are very conscious that it's a site that people drive past, walk past every day. We are very conscious that we need to do a good development.

If we do something, [any building on the field] has to be of high quality. It has to actually look good and look appropriate. We acknowledge the City of Edinburgh Council's green belt planning guidelines. We've got one of the top Scottish landscape architects, rankinfraser, working for us in this. They were appointed second to the architect, Page Park, and have been involved from the beginning. The landscaping and the building have gone hand in hand to make sure that we are going to do good landscaping proposal, recognising that it is green belt.

Some presentations to Balerno Community Council notwithstanding, there have been some criticisms about your lack of consultation beyond your own congregation.

The scale of this building means that we come underneath the level required for mandatory public consultation, but we will do a public event – more than one – to explain what we're doing, and we intend to do that prior to lodging any planning application. And then we'll probably do one after as well: open events to explain and listen.

We know it's green belt and,

therefore, there are some people who would just simply say, 'Don't'. There's not much we can do about that, but I believe we can try and give some degree of comfort that we do recognise it's green belt. We're not trying to put houses on it. We've been in Balerno for 160 years. One of the reasons why we're wanting to do this on that field is that we want to stay based here [in Balerno] as part of this community.

I believe that, in Page Park, we've got one Scotland's top architects. We've got a top landscape architect. We want to ensure that we deliver a high quality building and high quality landscaping so that, when people see this, they will feel that it's a beneficial addition to the built environment of Balerno.

We are conscious that because we have a small old building, that actually we don't have a very visible presence. Now, sometimes that's good and sometimes that's not so good. But we think that it would be better if people were just aware that we are here. If people think we are secretive, we're not trying to be, but the fact we don't have a building means that are not obvious. So hopefully this new building will mean that people can begin to see that we are a normal part of the community.

Given the costs involved, are you as determined to proceed now as you were at the start?

Why we need it – and the benefits for us as a church – have, if anything, grown in the last couple of years. The desire to do this is still as strong. Perhaps we are more aware of just how difficult it is, but we really do need to do this.

Local Concerns About 'Gateway Project'

PAUL MORRIS
BALERNO RESIDENT

Residents in Balerno have begun raising concerns about the proposed "Gateway Project," a development by St Mungo's Church, which is expected to come forward as a formal planning application in due course.

While the full details of the proposal will be subject to the planning process, information already shared publicly indicates that this would be a significant development within the centre of the village, on land currently designated as green space within a conservation area.

One of the primary concerns relates to the potential loss of this green space. Areas such as this contribute not only to the character and identity of Balerno, but also to local biodiversity and environmental sustainability. Once developed, such land cannot be easily replaced, and many residents feel that its long-term value to the village should be carefully weighed against the benefits of any new building.

In addition to environmental considerations, there are questions around infrastructure and capacity. The proposed site sits opposite Balerno High School, an area which already experiences periods of congestion, particularly during school drop-off and pick-up times. Residents have highlighted concerns that additional, regular

use of a large venue could increase traffic levels and place further pressure on local roads.

Parking is another key issue. Existing parking facilities in the area is already limited, and there is uncertainty as to whether any new development could adequately accommodate demand without causing knock-on effects for surrounding streets. This is relevant not only for future use, but also during any construction phase, which could bring increased vehicle movements and disruption.

Some residents have also questioned the need for additional "community space" in this location. Balerno High School already functions as a community hub, hosting a wide range of activities, and the former Balerno Police Station is currently being repurposed as a non-denominational community facility. In that context, there are questions about how additional "community space" would complement existing resources.

Project materials also reference potential use of the new building by local schools, for example for assemblies. However, it is not clear whether this has been discussed with the schools themselves, or how such use would align with the non-denominational nature of local education facilities in Balerno.

A further point of concern raised by residents is the level of consultation undertaken to date. Documentation published

by the project team shows that detailed engagement has taken place within the church's own congregation, including presentations, meetings, and structured feedback through surveys. However, there has been no equivalent process involving the wider Balerno community.

Survey data shared publicly indicates that only 38.9% of respondents were residents of Balerno, with the majority travelling into the village. This has led to questions about how representative this feedback is, given that the development would be located within the heart of the village and directly affect local residents.

For many, the issue is not opposition to development in principle, but whether this particular proposal is appropriate in terms of scale, location, and impact. There is a growing view that, if a project is intended to serve the wider community, then the wider community should have the opportunity to be involved at an early stage in shaping it.

As the project progresses towards a formal planning application, residents are likely to look for clear, accessible information and meaningful opportunities to engage with the process. Ensuring that all voices are heard will be an important part of determining whether the proposal is the right fit for Balerno.

Our "Views" pages are not just for politicians and community councillors—if you have an opinion you'd like to share on any subject with C&B News readers, why not do so? We're looking for around 300-words to run during 2026. Email: editor@candbnews.com

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DR SCOTT ARTHUR MP
EDINBURGH SOUTH WEST

STEPS TO HOPE

On Easter Monday, I volunteered at Steps to Hope's soup kitchen in the city centre. Steps to Hope is an Edinburgh-based charity that supports people who are homeless and/or struggling with addiction.

That day, we served a wholesome three-course meal and an Easter egg to around 90 people, the vast majority of whom were Scottish men. Some were rough sleepers; others were staying in temporary accommodation, struggling financially, or simply looking for a friendly conversation.

One man approached me and said he was a veteran with nowhere to sleep that night. I passed him on to Richie, the charity's founder.

In Scotland, local councils have a legal duty to provide temporary accommodation to anyone who is homeless, but increasingly lack the resources to meet that duty.

That night, the charity paid for the man to stay in a hotel, and I donated to cover the full cost. Richie later told me the man had been carrying a suicide note in his pocket.

The following day, I attended a meeting at the City of Edinburgh Council's Waverley Court. Outside the building, was a neat row of tents. When I later asked the housing convener about this, he explained that those sleeping there were also waiting for the council to fulfil its legal obligation.

Some will claim this crisis is caused by people in the asylum system. That is not true, as councils have no legal duty to house them. The problem was created by politicians, and can be solved by them if they choose.

The week after Easter Monday, 120 people attended the soup kitchen. Volunteer to help here: <https://tinyurl.com/StHLINK>



CLLR GRAEME BRUCE
PENTLAND HILLS WARD

ROADS UPDATES

If you are as old as me you will remember a band called "Orange Juice". They had chart success in 1983 with "Rip it up and start again" which peaked at no 8 on the singles charts.

This acutely resonates with me in relation to the amount of weeds that have protruded within a week of the slurry works that were implemented on the pavements around Balerno. I've had many people contact me with their concerns and I can assure you that I have raised this with the Council to take action on this problem.

Last month I raised the conditions of our roads and especially Ladycroft which is in dire need of resurfacing. This concern was also raised at the Balerno Community Council recently. An officer from the council has been in touch to say that a technician will inspect this road shortly but have advised me that the resurfacing programme for this financial year is full. I have responded to the officer to ensure this is a priority for the start of the next financial year or sooner if budgets allow.

While I await further feedback on the roundabout in Currie being resurfaced, I was alerted to a drain on this roundabout that is completely blocked. Investigations have taken place and it is more serious than first thought. The long and short of it is that the Gully Tail is blocked 2 metres in, which is in line with a utility track. It appears that this will require the road to be dug up which will require extensive traffic management with likely four-way temporary traffic lights as this section of the roundabout will need to be shut off. However, there are currently a list of works already waiting to be done and therefore they cannot give a date for these works to commence at present.

Lastly, I just want to say a "Well done!" to the U15 Currie Chieftains for cleaning up Roley's Wood recently in what were abhorrent weather conditions.



RICHARD M HENDERSON
BALERNO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

ELECTION & LPP

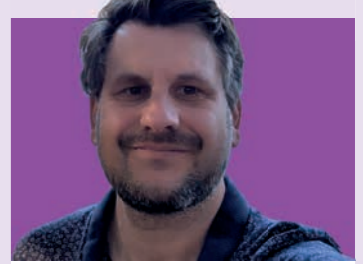
There can be very few people who are unaware of the upcoming Scottish Parliament Election on Thursday 7 May; there certainly seems to be wider press interest in these elections than in previous Holyrood polls. At the same time we are told that confidence in politics in Scotland is at best, not high. Turnout at Scottish elections seems to vary between 50% and 60%. On the one hand, then, we have apparent interest in the electoral process, yet on the other hand there is voter abstention. If large numbers of people feel no strong reason to cast their vote the question "Why?" is bound to arise.

Arguments on that will range across trust, accountability and the like. Politicians staying in touch with what citizens want is pretty crucial for effective democratic representation. Problems arise if politicians are thought to be out of touch, or where electors feel ignored.

It is a bit of a jump from a discussion of the level of turnout at parliamentary elections in Scotland to addressing the preparation of a Local Place Plan (LPP) for Balerno. But the principles remain the same; to work to best effect, both general elections and the LPP plan process depend on civic participation.

By getting involved in the latter, communities can ensure their priorities for land use, infrastructure, and community facilities are taken into account in the formal Local Development Plan. The higher the level of public participation in preparation of the LPP the more likely it is that the resulting plan will be recognised as genuinely reflecting the aspirations of the community.

Democracy can survive inertia, but it does rely on a baseline of civic participation to function effectively, far less flourish. Look out for further public meetings as part of Balerno's progress towards development of its LPP.



COLIN MACLEOD
CURRIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

APRIL MEETING UPDATE

April's CC meeting covered plenty of ground, and there was no shortage of things to talk about. Firstly, was a matter brought to our attention from representatives of the new build Cala Kinleith Mill Development. Some will know that the estate is built on the site of a former paper mill, and residents have raised concerns about the condition of the sloped land above the estate. Trees have fallen onto the access road on three separate occasions over the past two years, temporarily blocking the only route in and out. As anyone with knowledge of former industrial sites will know, historic land use can leave its mark in ways that aren't always immediately obvious. CCC has pushed for an urgent survey from the City of Edinburgh Council and our local MP has offered to go directly to the developer. We'll keep residents posted on developments.

Roads came up... no surprise there! Lanark Road West between Newmills Road and Juniper Green is in a poor state, and a pothole near the Community Centre has been reported more times than anyone cares to remember with nothing done about it yet. That said, we have been informed that a number of Currie's roads are due resurfacing over the next two years.

Some good news for dog walkers. Wash stations are coming to the Pentland Hills car parks, which will be a practical and long overdue addition. And if you've been puzzled by the new equipment on the approach roads to Harlaw, don't worry, it's counting cars, not clocking speeds.

The Local Place Plan questionnaire is finalised and will be out soon. Please fill it in. It's a genuine opportunity to shape how Currie develops and the more voices the better.

Finally, CCC is watching two proposed developments closely. An AI Data Centre at Hermiston and a Lithium Battery Storage Facility near Riccarton Garden Centre both have our attention. We're not opposed to these kinds of projects as a rule, but location matters and both of these are too close to homes for comfort and would infringe upon the green belt.

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New Tiphereth Space for Pentlands Open Studios Art Trail

RUTH FORBES
POST

Pentland Open Studios (POST) is delighted to announce that it will be adding a very special venue to its other 11 wonderful Art Trail locations this year: the big room at Tiphereth's Hoyland House.

Opened in 1993 as a charity (and part of the renowned Camphill international movement founded in 1940), Tiphereth supports adults with learning disabilities and autism by providing residential and day services with the aim of helping everyone make a meaningful

contribution to the world by "Living, Working and Growing Together".

Tiphereth's Hoyland House will provide a wonderful exhibition space for four of our very special, professional artists: Martha Ellis, Jade Stout, Sandra Vick and The Leftbehinds. Come and enjoy a range of fantastic work within this beautiful setting.

While there, you can also visit the fascinating print studio and shop, which sells the work produced by Tiphereth's members. To make the visit extra special, there will be a pop-up café serving delicious treats for the Art Trail weekend, which visitors can relax in and enjoy whilst taking

in the wonderful the views. There will also be live music featured to add to the atmosphere.

Tiphereth runs a range of inspiring and fun workshops including woodwork, printing, textiles, pottery and gardening. Through your visit, you will experience artists and makers whilst appreciating how learning and creativity go hand in hand with understanding, caring, building confidence, independence and life skills.

We at Penland's Open Studios believe in forging inspiring creative connections within our community and share Tiphereth's values to "celebrate differences and nurture creativity". We feel

privileged to have this charity as part of our Art Trail so make sure you include this special place on your visit.

The Art Trail is predominantly situated along the borders of the beautiful Water of Leith taking in the villages of Colinton (closest to Tiphereth), Juniper Green, Currie and Balerno. In order to help you to get to Tiphereth from Colinton, a shuttle bus will be available.

• To learn more about Tiphereth, visit: www.tiphereth.org.uk

• To learn more about this year's Art Trail, visit, POSTudios.org or @POSTudios



Above: The Tiphereth Print Studio. Left: two examples by the artists exhibiting at Hoyland House within Tiphereth; far left, The Leftbehinds; left, Martha Ellis. Photos courtesy of POST.



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Local Jazz Club Hits the Right Note

JOHN ELLIOTT
JUNIPER GREEN NOTE

Monthly jazz club Juniper Green Note continues to prove that world-class jazz can thrive far beyond city centres.

Hosted since October 2025 in the lounge bar at Baberton Golf Club, this grassroots club has built a reputation for consistently delivering exceptional live music in an intimate, welcoming setting—with the atmosphere as much a draw as the music itself.

With a packed house at recent events, audiences are treated to a close-up experience that larger venues simply cannot replicate—every note, every interaction, fully felt in the room.

In March, vibraphone player John Settle visited the club from Yorkshire to play a set with his Spanish trumpeter friend Victor Estevez. Then Thursday 2 April featured a trombone-led quintet paying tribute to jazz greats JJ Johnson and Kai Winding. The line-up, led by Phil O'Malley and Chris Greive, featured an impressive calibre of musicians, including tutors from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland alongside BBC Big Band-drummer Tom Gordon. The result was a dynamic, high-energy set that balanced technical brilliance with deep musicality.

April concluded with another quintet, led by tenor saxophonist John Burgess.

Above: April's Trombone-led quintet at Juniper Green Note. Photo: Charles Gaskell.

For those seeking authentic, up-close jazz on Edinburgh's doorstep, Juniper Green Note remains an essential destination, offering top-tier musicians in a relaxed, community-focused space. With demand high and only 80 seats, early booking is always advised.

• Tickets are available online: <https://greennote.club>

• Follow @junipergreennote on Instagram and Facebook and sign up to the email list to hear first about upcoming gigs and receive exclusive discount codes.

A Busy Year for the Pentland Singers

ROWENA STEWART
PENTLAND SINGERS

Pentland Singers and Pentland Junior Singers have had a busy singing year since resuming rehearsals in September.

Helped considerably by the talents of Musical Director Ian Munro, Isabella Gonzalez Diaz (who fulfils the same role for our eight to 14-year-olds in the Junior Choir) and our accompanist Ailsa Aitkenhead, we have enjoyed two Christmas Concerts, two "Come and Sing" events as well as a concert in St Giles. We are now looking ahead to our summer concert in June plus a performance in New Town Church to round off the year.

Those who were able to come

along to one of the choirs' "Percussive Christmas" concerts in either Gibson Craig Halls, Currie, or at Balerno Parish Church, will have heard a varied programme of traditional, as well as lesser known, music for the season—all with a fabulous trio of percussionists playing loads of exciting instruments. (Including bells, of course!)

Before then, the adult choir's "Come & Sing" in October celebrated significant birthdays of well-loved choral composers John Rutter and Bob Chilcott, which made for a very tuneful autumn afternoon's singing in Currie for all who came along to join in. Our commitment to sustainability meant we included the Chilcott and Rutter songs in our

March programme for St Giles Cathedral. Always a lovely day out for us, during our afternoon rehearsal, we sang to cathedral visitors, some of whom were saddened when we stopped to do the same bit again (but better). A generously appreciative audience at 6pm rounded off the day nicely.

Having hosted their own fun "Come & Sing" afternoon in March in Balerno, members of Pentland Junior Singers will have taken part – by the time this issue of C&B News hit the shelves – in their own cathedral performance—supporting their musical director's efforts to raise funds for her charity Music Unit, which supports students and teachers at Africa Music School in Uganda.

Spring Concert a Great Success

MARGARET KIERAN
COLINTON & MERCHISTON COMMUNITY CHOIR

We are very pleased to say that our Spring Concert was a great success, with a record attendance for recent years. We have received excellent feedback.

The choir and our fine soloists sang Mozart's Requiem and Purcell's Music For the Funeral of Queen Mary with the accomplished Morley Whitehead on the organ, and a most impressive orchestral accompaniment, all under the expert direction of our Musical Director, Timothy Coleman.

We are very grateful to Merchiston Castle School, as always, for the use of the Memorial Hall, where our rehearsals will start again in September.

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



PENTLAND SINGERS' SUMMER CONCERT 2026

Our forthcoming summer concert features both adult and junior choirs and will take place in Balerno High School on Thursday 11 June from 7.30pm (Doors open, 7pm.) It will feature songs associated with stage and screen (big and small). Tickets: £12—under 13s get in for free!

• For tickets, check our website (<https://pentlandjuniors.org>, <https://www.pentlandsingers.org.uk>), ask members of the choir, or come along on the night and pay at the door.

• Tickets will also be available at May's Balerno Farmers' Market from the Pentland Singers stall at which we aim to raise funds for the choirs by selling homemade baking and preserves. Do come along and say hello!

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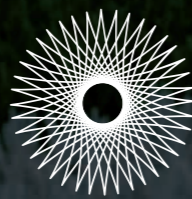


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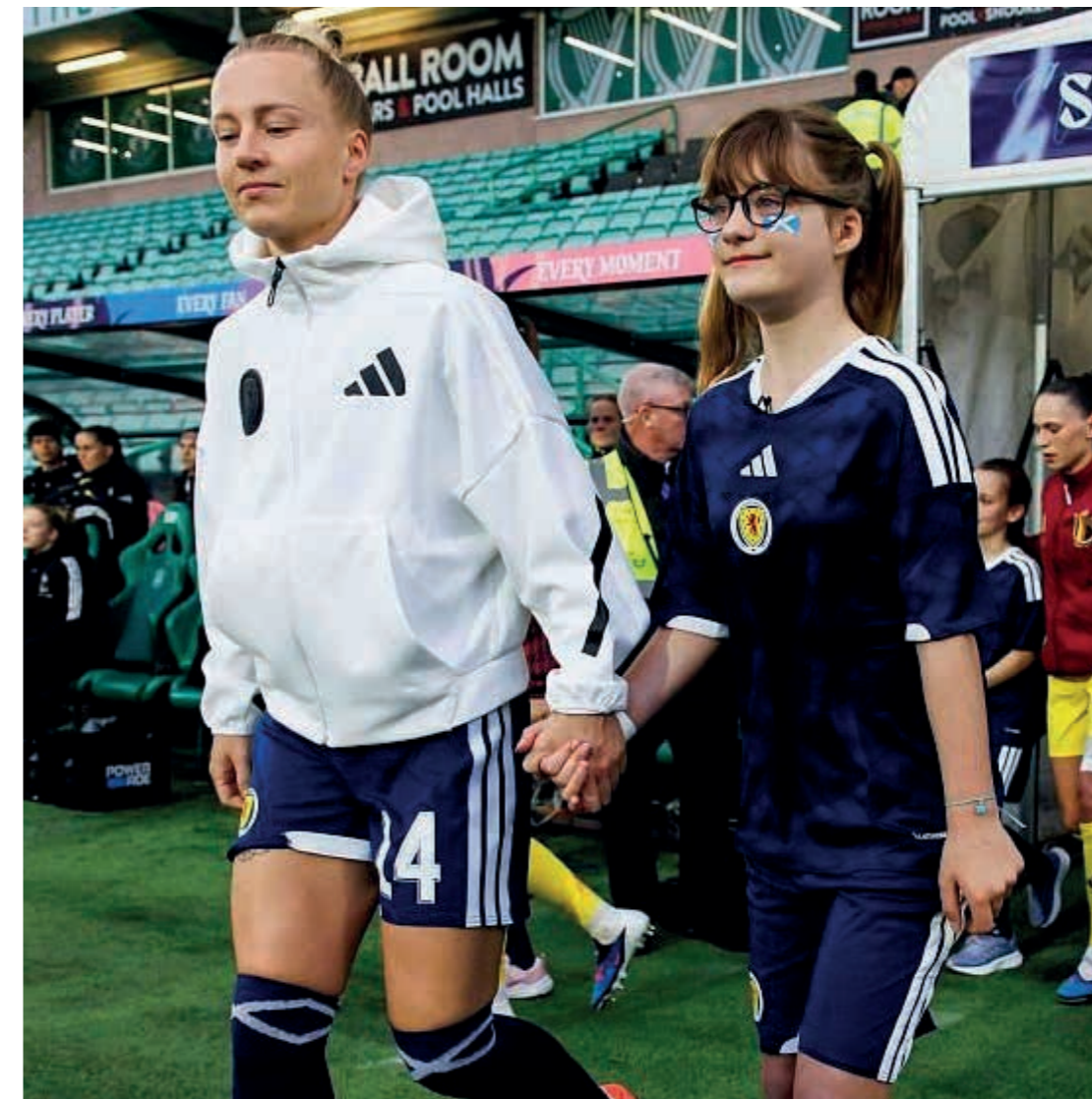
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Young Currie Footballer's 'Superfan' Dream Comes True

SAM STEWART
PROUD FATHER

A young footballer from Currie experienced a day she will never forget after being selected as a "Superfan" by the Scottish Football Association.

Cora Stewart, who plays for the Hornets at Currie FC, was chosen to take part in a special experience designed to inspire the next generation of girls in football—and it certainly delivered.

The experience began with a unique training session alongside her Currie FC teammates. As the girls listened intently to their coaches, they were given an unforgettable surprise when Scotland international Rachel McLaughlin quietly appeared behind them.

The reaction was immediate excitement, with the players eager to ask questions about her career,

training, and life as a professional footballer. The session ended on a high note as the girls presented Rachel with a Currie FC hat, a moment that meant just as much to them as it did to their special guest.

But the excitement didn't stop there.

A week later, the experience continued at Easter Road Stadium, where Cora attended the Scotland vs Belgium international match. Upon arrival, she received even more incredible news: she had been chosen as Rachel McLaughlin's official match day mascot.

Dressed in a brand new Scotland kit, Cora, alongside her friend and teammate Aimee, was escorted pitch side. In a moment she will treasure forever, Cora stood proudly next to Rachel McLaughlin, while Aimee lined up beside Erin Cuthbert.

Together, they walked out onto the pitch in front of the crowd

and joined in singing the national anthem, an experience few young players ever get to enjoy.

Afterwards, the girls returned to the stands to watch the match with their fellow "Hornets" teammates. They were treated to an exciting game, made even more memorable when Scotland scored a dramatic late goal.

"It was absolutely amazing, one of the most special things I've ever done in my life," said Cora afterwards. "Meeting Rachel was awesome because she was really nice and cool, and she plays the same position as me!"

For Cora and her teammates, it was more than just a day out: it was inspiration, motivation, and proof that dreams in football really can come true.

Cora would like to say a big thank you to the Scottish Football Association, Currie FC and of course Rachel McLaughlin for such an amazing experience!

Juniper Green Community Invited to New Tennis Courts

PAUL MURPHY
JUNIPER GREEN TENNIS CLUB

Local residents are warmly invited to a special Open Day at Juniper Green Tennis Club on Sunday 17 May, celebrating the official opening of its newly refurbished courts.

The recent investment in the courts marks an exciting new chapter for the club as it continues to grow as a hub for players of all ages and abilities.

Following the opening, a series of free coaching sessions will run throughout the afternoon, offering a fantastic opportunity for local residents to get involved. Sessions are tailored by age group, with children aged 4 - 7 from 2.30pm - 3pm, 8 - 9 year olds from 3pm - 3.30pm, and those aged 9+ from 3.30pm - 4pm. From 4pm onwards, the courts will be open for adults and family play.

There will also be off-court celebrations, with strawberries and cream and a glass of fizz on offer to mark the occasion.

To help with planning, attendees are encouraged to register in advance by scanning the QR code below and completing a short form. Non-members can also sign up via the form to receive updates on coaching, events and membership opportunities.

• The Open Day on Saturday 17 May begins at 2pm.



New Members—Win Your Membership Back!

We hope the event will encourage new people to join the club and discover the benefits of tennis in a friendly, welcoming environment. Anyone new joining Juniper Green Tennis Club between now and the end of May will be entered into a prize draw to win their membership fee back. It's a great opportunity to get involved, enjoy the club's facilities, and be part of a growing and friendly tennis community.

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teams from Canada, France and Northern Ireland

First up were the regional champions from Brittany who came to play our U18 boys on the morning of the Scotland v France game. A great game in the uncharacteristic Edinburgh sun saw our visitors win at Malleney before they made the trip to Murrayfield to watch "that game". Next up was Waterloo County Rugby from Ontario, who came to play our U18 girls and boys. The spectators were treated to a fantastic well-matched game, with Waterloo securing a win with the last play of the game. The boys game was a more comfortable victory for Currie.

The final touring side were from Garryowen in Munster. After a 3am departure, they arrived at Malleney to play our U13 side in a fantastic game. After all these games, the visiting players, coaches and parents had some great Malleney hospitality including a Canadian dance off and a spectacular rendition, to the tune of The Proclaimers "500 miles": "I would ruck 500 times..."

The teams are now looking forward to the 2026-2027 season and planning is well underway. We look forward to welcoming you to the club over the summer for the various events that are planned—details of these will be coming out on our socials and website over the next few weeks.

It all kicks off with Tartan Touch week on Friday 8 May. Please come along and support your local club.



Currie Chieftains' Other News

TABATHA MCCREE-COX
OPERATIONS MANAGER, CURRIE CHIEFTAINS

YOUTH

The Chieftains competed in two finals on Saturday 28 March at the Scottish Rugby East Region Youth Finals: U16 girls and U18 boys. The club also had 10 of our U18 girls playing for East Edinburgh in an exhibition match.

Both Currie teams played against our local rivals Boroughmuir and, despite exceptional rugby being played, it was the Meggetland sides who came out on top. The U16 girls fell to a high scoring and entertaining 65 - 40 score line while the U18 boys battled hard in a 19-10 loss.

Both games were played in tough conditions with rain and strong wind at Lasswade and all of your Chieftains left everything on the pitch, as they always do, trying to bring home the silverware.

SEVENS

The 7s season has now started with Chieftains making the trip to Gala for the first in the King of the Sevens series. Currie will also be hosting its third 7s tournament on Saturday 30 May: please keep an eye on our Facebook page and our website for the latest news and details about the event.

CHIEFTAIN GIRLS

With our growing Girls section at Currie, there has been some great representation at regional level and an international honour.

We had six U18 girls (above),

(Charla Pretorius, Sofia Buell, Becks Whitehead, Rhianna Connell, Hayden Potter, Aaliyah Murray) and three U16 girls (Iona Hunter, Amelia Olney, Maisie Beaton) selected to represent the East region, with Hayden, Becks and Iona Hunter going on to represent Edinburgh in their respective age groups.

Becks then went on to be selected for the Scotland U18 squad, playing at the U20s Six Nations Festival where she started against Ireland.

CURRIE 3s CROWNED LEAGUE CHAMPIONS

Currie 3s capped off a great season with a decisive 43 - 7 victory over Preston Lodge at Malleney Park on Friday 20 March, clinching the league title in front of a packed home crowd. The dominant performance ensured top spot in the table, regardless of other results, confirming their championship win under the floodlights.

The triumph marked a brilliant end to a season that blended development and experience throughout, offering young players a vital step up from colts while giving long-standing club members a competitive environment to represent Currie.

With the title secured, the focus now shifts to defending the league crown in the coming campaign.

INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

While none of our youth teams have yet gone on tour, Malleney Park has been busy with visiting



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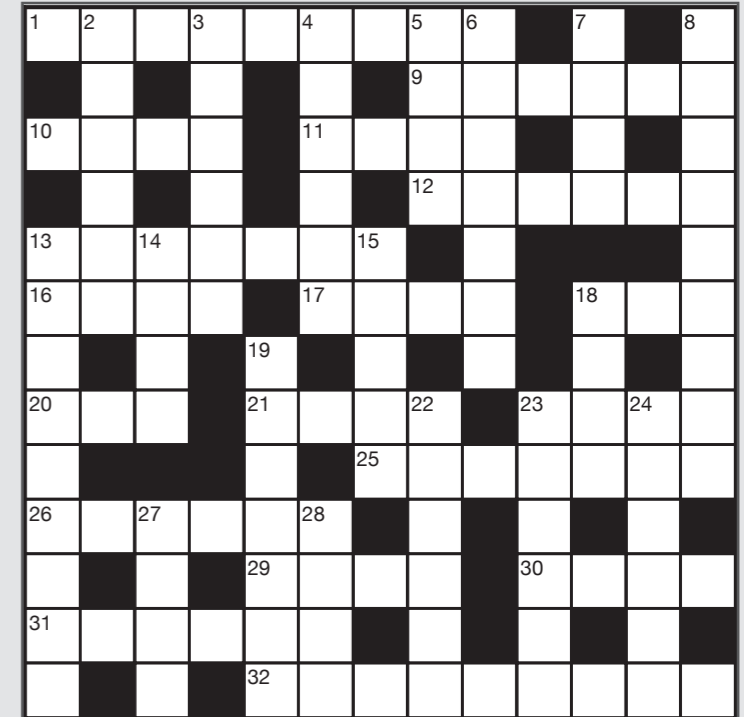
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Good luck everyone!

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| ACROSS | DOWN |
| 1 Stubborn (9) | 2 Mug (6) |
| 9 Join the military (6) | 3 Muddy (6) |
| 10 Den (4) | 4 Rain cloud (6) |
| 11 Animal flesh (4) | 5 Wood (4) |
| 12 Water boiler (6) | 6 Alliance (7) |
| 13 Grave (7) | 7 Food regime (4) |
| 16 Stepped (4) | 8 Litter for the injured (9) |
| 17 River mud (4) | 13 National leader (9) |
| 18 Transparent resin (3) | 14 Dappled horse (4) |
| 20 Light brown (3) | 15 Vocalises (5) |
| 21 Exhort (4) | 18 Skulk (4) |
| 23 Scottish hillside (4) | 19 Cattle thief (7) |
| 25 Soft-soled shoe (7) | 22 Extra performance (6) |
| 26 Prances (6) | 23 Yellow fruit (6) |
| 29 Inflatable mattress (4) | 24 Charge with air (6) |
| 30 Distant (4) | 27 Famous hotel (4) |
| 31 Flower part (6) | 28 Beget (4) |
| 32 Demoted (9) | |



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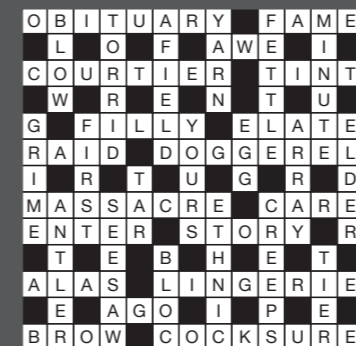
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LAST ISSUE'S SOLUTIONS

Last issue's prize crossword was won by Linda Sherwood from Balerno. Congratulations!



EASY	MEDIUM	HARD
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What's on...

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; 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 CHURCH PLAYGROUP: St. Cuthbert's Church Hall, Westgarth Avenue, Colinton; 10am - 11.30am.** (Every Monday during School Term.) Play, craft, refreshments, singing. All Welcome. Contact: stcuthbertscomms@gmail.com for more information.
- **MONDAY MAHJONG: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 10am - noon.** 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
- **THE MEETING PLACE: Currie Scout Hall, Forthview Crescent; 10am - 4pm.** A community cafe for those 65 and over, all carers and anyone looking for good company. Free exercise class, refreshments and games. For further information email: themeetingplacejcb@outlook.com
- **MONDAY MORNING POP IN CAFÉ: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 10.30am - noon.** 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/ccc/
- **LUNCHTIME RELAXATION: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 12.15pm - 1pm.** 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 Church Juniper Green; 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 enquire, as we may have an opening for this 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; 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; 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; 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.** Booking now required. Call (0131) 529 5609 to book your space.
- **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, 156 - 158 Lanark Road West; 6pm - 7.30pm.** For more details, contact Bill Brown: bill.brown53@yahoo.com
- **PENTLAND BRIDGE CLUB: St Margaret's Court, Juniper Green; 7pm.** We play competitive bridge in a friendly atmosphere. Less experienced players welcome. For further information visit: www.bridgeweb.com/pentland/ or email: mthkjb@gmail.com

FRIDAYS

- **THE MEN'S SHED at the Scout Hall: 99 Forthview Crescent; 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: Edinburgh Pentlands Parish Church Hall, Juniper Green; 6pm - 7pm (Beavers), 7.15pm - 8.45pm (Cubs).** 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 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, 155 - 158 Lanark Road West, Currie; 6pm - 8.30pm.** For more details, contact Bill Brown: bill.brown53@yahoo.com

FORTNIGHTLY

FRIDAYS 1, 15 & 29 MAY

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

MONDAYS 4 & 18 MAY

- **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 8 & 22 MAY

- **FRENCH CONVERSATION GROUP: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green, 12noon - 1pm.** Meeting fortnightly at the Hub for people who would like to practise and improve their French. Newcomers are welcome. Meeting on 10 and 24 April. For more information see our Facebook Page @The Hub at 531 or email hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

DAY BY DAY

FRIDAY 1 MAY

- **GARDENING GROUP: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green; 11.30am - 1pm.** Gardening Group (first Friday of each month) All Welcome—experienced or novice, pot planters or allotments. A friendly

group that welcomes enthusiasts to share common love of gardens and gardening. Please email for details and to join us. hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

TUESDAY 5 MAY

- **DEMENTIA AWARENESS WORKSHOP: St Cuthbert's Episcopal Church, Westgarth Avenue, Colinton; 1.30pm - 3.30pm.** Join Diana Kerr – author of *Singing Groups for People with Dementia* – to learn more about dementia and the most positive ways to engage with anyone living with the disease. Refreshments will be served. Copies of Diana's book will be available at the cost price of £6. To register for a free place, email: stcuthbertsrector@gmail.com

WEDNESDAY 6 MAY

- **PENTLAND MEN'S PROBUS CLUB: Edinburgh Pentlands Parish Church Hall, Juniper Green; 10am.** "Edinburgh's Hidden Sights—For Tourists," an illustrated talk by Karen McCormack. New members welcome. Further enquiries from Club Secretary Leslie Hanniford on (0131) 453 3012 or email lesliehannaford@blueyonder.co.uk
- **LANGUAGE TASTER SESSIONS: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green, 4.30pm - 6pm.** Free language taster sessions with tutor, Beata Kohlbeke: Polish (4.30pm), German (5pm) and English as an Additional Language (5.30pm). Online booking is available at <https://hub531.appointedd.com/> or by email hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

SATURDAY 9 MAY

- **BALERNO FARMERS MARKET: Main Street; 9am - 1pm.** Selection of local and independent producers and groups. More information: <https://balernovt.org.uk/farmers-market>
- **HERIOT-WATT CHOIR & ORCHESTRA: Greyfriars Kirk, EH1 2QQ; 7.30pm.** Schubert Mass in G Join the Heriot-Watt Choir & Orchestra for a programme featuring Schubert's glorious Mass in G, Maxwell Davies' Orkney Wedding with sunrise and Gordon Cree's Scottish Blessing.

MONDAY 11 MAY

- **BALERNO FAIRTRADE VILLAGE GROUP AGM: Ogston Hall, Balerno Parish Church; 7.15pm - 8.45pm.** All welcome to find out what we did last year and what we're planning, going forward.

WEDNESDAY 13 MAY

- **ALL EARS BOOK CLUB: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green, 7pm - 9pm.** Calling all

audiobook and podcast lovers, we have a group who meet monthly to discuss latest favourites. For more information see our Facebook page @The Hub at 531 or email: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

THURSDAY 14 MAY

- **LANGUAGE TASTER SESSIONS: the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green, 6.30pm - 8pm.** Free language taster sessions with tutor, Beata Kohlbeke: German (6.30pm), English as an Additional Language (7pm), and Polish (7.30pm). Online booking is available at <https://hub531.appointedd.com/> or by email hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

SUNDAY 17 MAY

- **FAMILY MEET A PONY DAY: Ravelrig RDA, 21 Ravelrig Gait, Balerno; noon - 3pm.** Fun for all the family. Meet our ponies, plus tombola, human show jumping, games, face-painting, biscuit decorating, hot rolls, soup, refreshments and home baking.

WEDNESDAY 20 MAY

- **PENTLAND MEN'S PROBUS CLUB: Edinburgh Pentlands Parish Church Hall, Juniper Green; 10.30am.** Members AGM, followed by lunch at Kingsknowe Golf Club. Further enquiries from Club Secretary Leslie Hannaford on (0131) 453 3012 or email lesliehannaford@blueyonder.co.uk
- **THE SECRET BOOK SWAP: Crows Nest Collective, 350B Lanark Road West, Currie; 7pm - 9pm.** Bring a wrapped up book and pick one to take home. Guest author Allison Meldrum. Find out more at www.theseecretbookswap.com

THURSDAY 21 MAY

- **MONTHLY CRAFTING (adults): the hub@531 Lanark Road, Juniper Green, 7.30pm - 9.30pm.** Make your own jewelled wind chimes with Louise. Please book your space to join us. All materials provided. Online booking is available at <https://hub531.appointedd.com/> or by email hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

MONDAY 25 MAY

- **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

TUESDAY 26 MAY

- **PALM DEMENTIA CAFE: St Joseph's Centre, Balerno; 3pm - 4.30pm.** "Therapy Pets".

The cafe serves the communities of Currie, Balerno and Juniper Green providing a space for people with dementia and their carers to meet others for support and social contact. For more information please contact Clare Dow on palmcafebalerno@gmail.com

WEDNESDAY 27 MAY

- **MONTHLY MAHJONG: 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. Please email for details and to join us: hub531lanarkroad@gmail.com

THURSDAY 28 MAY

- **QUIZ NIGHT: The Colinton Inn, 12 - 14 Bridge Road; from 8pm.** Last Thursday of every month. Any enquiries, email: [hello@colintoninn.co.uk](mailto:colintoninn.co.uk) or ask a member of staff.

FRIDAY 29 MAY

- **QUIZ & WINE EVENING: Gibson Craig Halls, 156 - 158 Lanark Road West; 7.30pm.** An enjoyable evening of quizzing ("devilishly difficult, fiendishly frustrating") mixed with wine tasting. Tickets £10 from the church offices in Currie and Balerno.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

THURSDAY 7 MAY

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

TUESDAY 12 MAY

- **COLINTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL: Colinton Bowling Club, 49A Redford Road; 7.30pm - 9pm.** AGM and monthly meeting. <https://curriecommunitycouncil.wordpress.com>

WEDNESDAY 13 MAY

- **CURRIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL: Gibson Craig Halls (rear), 156 - 158 Lanark Road West; 7.30pm - 9pm.** <https://curriecommunitycouncil.wordpress.com>

WEDNESDAY 27 MAY

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

LOCAL COMMUNITY CAFES

SATURDAYS*

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

- **COFFEE STOP!: Currie Kirk, 7 Kirkgate; 2pm - 4pm.** Coffee, tea, home-baking and a warm welcome. **CASH ONLY PLEASE.**

TUESDAYS - FRIDAYS**

- **THE MILL CAFE: 2 Main Street, Balerno; 9am - 2pm.** Balerno Parish Church Community Cafe provides a sociable warm space with home-made baking, Fairtrade barista-style coffee and a light breakfast and lunch menu. Last orders: 1.30pm.

**OPEN ON FARMERS' MARKET SATURDAYS.

TUESDAYS - SATURDAYS

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



The Mill Cafe



FREE!

C&BNews



BALERNO RAMBLER MORAG WAS RECENTLY UP FOR A PADDLE—
DESPITE THE GREY SKY AND CLOUDS. PHOTO: SANDRA RENTON.