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EDITION 115 - March 2023



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Editorial



As you read this, Spring should be well on its way. Spring flowers, baby lambs in the fields, bit of sunshine, warmer weather - don't we all just need those signs of hope after the cold and difficult winter we've just had?

Winter may be passed now, but didn't Portlethen look festive thanks to all those volunteers involved with the Party tree, lights and helping Santa on his Run? In fact, thanks continue to go to everyone who gives selflessly for the benefit of others in these difficult times.

My personal thanks also go to my daughter Gwen for her technical Sub-Editing, as well as to Clare Davidson for her Proof-Reading, skills. Both took on their new roles for the last edition, as did I.

By now, the Portlethen Town Association (PTA) will have held its first **Bingo** session at the Jubilee Hall. Hopefully, it went well and a good time was had by all. The plan is to hold a Bingo night on the last Sunday of every month thereafter, so look out for reminders on Facebook and posters throughout Portlethen.



Something else to look out for is news about **Portlethen Gala**. As this goes to press, the first public meeting has been held, but there is still time to get involved. Keep an eye out on local Facebook pages and posters around the town for more information.

If you'd like to have your say in the next Clochandighter, do please get in touch, but make sure you have the **correct email address** (*previous email addresses are no longer valid*). Email me at: clochandighter.editor@gmail.com (Please note the dot between clochandighter and editor.)

Unfortunately, the Cloch team was hit with a big hike in printing costs for this edition and that has forced us to increase our advertising fees (see inside back cover for these) to cover our costs. Enquiries about advertising and subsequent invoices should be sent to clochandighterinvoices@gmail.com (Please note NO dot between clochandighter and invoices.)

And that just leaves me enough space to wish you all a very Happy Easter / Spring Solstice.

Alison Lloyd-Wiggins - Editor





“Pipes Up” Again for Newtonhill Pipeband

Last year saw a return to engagements for Newtonhill Pipeband and the chance for some of the juvenile players to be playing in public for the first time.

The band was involved in some prestigious engagements including the United Pipers for Peace 2022 which was held in Manchester in September. This weekend-long event saw the band performing in several locations across Manchester as well as joining in two mass pipe band performances with 20



pipe bands and over 400 musicians playing at the war memorial and marching through the city centre. The event had special impact as it came just a week after the death of Queen Elizabeth II, and her love of the pipes was acknowledged with a special mass band performance.



Three years ago, the band was invited to the Royal Braemar Gathering – an invitation which goes out to only a select few bands. Unfortunately, this was put on hold, but in September 2022 the band took its place with 11 other bands in front of a sell-out crowd which included the Duke and

Duchess of Rothesay. A long and tiring day was enjoyed by all - something which will last in the memories.

The end of the year saw the band entertaining shoppers at ASDA with marching through the aisles entertaining those looking for the last items for the Christmas dinner. The band is grateful to ASDA for the opportunity to play and raise money which goes towards instruments and kit for younger band members.



The last outing of 2022 and the first of 2023 was the Stonehaven Fireballs. Playing alongside Mrs Lindsay's highland dancers and marching up the High Street, the band managed to keep the crowd of 10,000 entertained in the run up to the swinging.



With a full programme of events in 2023 including the rededication of Stonehaven War Memorial, the opening of the Outdoor Pool, Primary School Spring Fayres and all the other regular events and Highland Games, the band has been in full preparation over the winter.

The band is always looking for new members and are especially looking to bolster its drum corps. If you are a beginner, or ideally with some experience, of the snare, tenor or bass drum then please get in touch. Top level tuition and support is available from the band.

The band practice every Tuesday night at Portlethen Academy between 7:00pm and 9:30pm. You can contact the band via its Facebook page or Pipe Major Domhnull McLennan on 07889 106527.

Newtonhill Pipe Band is a Scottish Charity SCO41533



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865 (Portlethen) Squadron

End of year activities

865 (Portlethen) Squadron had a busy end-of-year period for 2022, with cadets and staff participating in a range of activities. Cadets had the opportunity to visit the Gordon Highlander's Museum to learn about the history of the Gordon Highlanders and their involvement in battles throughout history. Cadets walked around the museum, looking at a variety of artifacts including medals and weapons. Many thanks to the museum for hosting us!



During December, the Squadron held their annual presentation and awards night. The evening saw every cadet present to their parents and guardians about the exciting activities everyone got up to during the year. Throughout the night cadets received various awards that they had gained through the year, badges, and certificates from courses they had completed. To finish off the night, the Sqn OC handed out some very well-deserved promotions.

Cadets also had the opportunity to visit the Loganair hanger located at Aberdeen Airport, for a private tour of some of the aircraft that they fly. Cadets learned about the features of the aircraft including safety measures for icy conditions, and were even given a private tour of the cockpit.



Lastly, to finish off the year, the cadets enjoyed a Christmas quiz and party organised by the Squadron's NCOs. The Cadets' quiz comprised a Quiz-of-the-Year, ATC Quiz and a Christmas Music round. Later, cadets played party games and listened to Christmas music. Everyone had a great night to round off the year.





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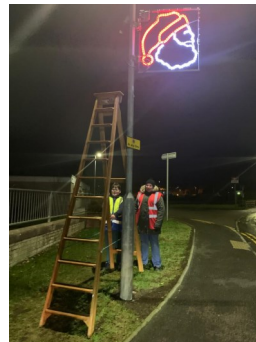


These are the only
email addresses
for reaching out to
us at the Cloch!

Any other email
addresses will not work. Please
update your address books!

With Christmas far behind us now, I'm sure you'll agree Portlethen was looking festive this year with the street motifs, Christmas tree and the Jubilee Hall lights.

Many thanks go to everyone involved in making this happen.



We're hoping to introduce some more motifs this year and now have our own mobile scaffolding to help us install and remove them. Want to help? Then please get in touch through our Facebook page.

The Portlethen Santa run 2022 raised £4180, which was split between the 3 primary schools and the Larder, each of them receiving £1045.

The Christmas Tree Festival in the church was fantastic too and it was great to be able to have the school fayres and things back on the go.



I believe Denise Martin (the Hedgehog Lady) has been busy, with her helpers, brightening up Portlethen by planting over 1000 daffodil bulbs around the town.

The wild flower patches will shortly "appear" too with the help of Ken Watson and Aberdeenshire Council. Portlethen Town Association will once again supply the seeds for this annual spread of colour in the town.

The new defibrillator is now in place and operational on the wall outside the main door of Portlethen Academy. It has taken a while to finally get sorted, but we believe this will be a benefit for the whole community, with it being in a central location with 24-hour public access. Thanks go to Aberdeenshire Council and Robertsons for supporting this.

By the time this Cloch hits your doormat, we will have had a public meeting to begin arranging the Portlethen Gala, bringing it back after 3 years of absence! If you'd like to get involved, look out on our Facebook page for further meetings.

Thank you to all of you who have given up any spare time to make Portlethen a nicer place in which to live and grow up.

Darren Robertson, (Chair, Portlethen Town Association)



Clochandighter Accounts

Transactions in the quarter to 31st January 2023

	Credit	Debit	Balance
Balance b/fwd.			£6,694.96
Advertisers	£3,832.00		£10,526.96
Printing costs		-£4,500.00	£6,026.96
Donation—Santa's Grotto		-200.00	£5,826.96
Tree light repairs		-£73.08	£5,753.88
Domain name charges		-£389.16	£5,364.72
Christmas lights removal		-£456.00	£4908.72
Stamps		-£5.44	£4,903.28



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Portlethen Moss Conservation Group



Registered Scottish Charity No – SC040350

<https://www.facebook.com/portlethenmoss>

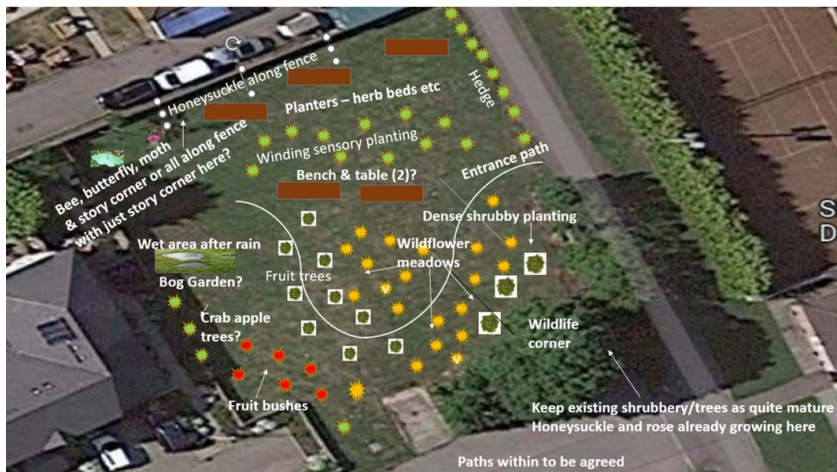
Our Group's Projects - Portlethen Moss and Portlethen Community Woodland

2023 will see the start of a brand-new exciting project (from scratch) for our group, in partnership with our Kincardine & Mearns Ranger/ Aberdeenshire Council. We've been planning this for some time and finally, towards the end of 2022, permission was granted for us to proceed with a consultation on our plans.

This project is to create a Community Wildlife Garden. We would like to encourage schools, nurseries and other groups to use the site and be involved in its creation. In fact, anyone in the community is welcome to be part of this project so please get in touch.

We'll create dementia friendly paths, a sort of memory walk, with areas of sensory planting and seating. There will be a mini orchard and planters, complemented by native trees, shrubs and wildflowers. This site is within the community, so those unable to make it to the woodland or moss, will now have a community wildlife garden that's more accessible to them.

Here's our draft plan:



The site is the large grassy area near the Green, just across from the Bowling and Tennis Clubs and the Bourtree Hall.

We're pretty good at this now after creating the community woodland from a disused agricultural field into what is now our much loved and used community woodland.

Of course, this won't happen overnight, like the woodland, it will be an ongoing project for some time as we finalise the plan and secure funding for structures, plants and our biggest expense, the all-important paths.

We will be consulting on our plans until the end of March. If you would like to get involved, or if you have any comments on the draft plan, please see below where to get in touch:

kincardineandmearns.ranger@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Also look out for EngageAberdeenshire—they will be posting a link on Facebook to the consultation.

* * * * *

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As our group is a registered Scottish Charity, we have registered with Easyfundraising. Please use the link above and support us - it costs you nothing, and every time you use the easyfundraising link to access your online shopping, the company you shop with gives our group a charitable donation – on which we can even claim Gift Aid.

If you wish to know more about the group, or if you want to become a member (new members are always very welcome), please do not hesitate to contact us through our Facebook page or at one of our events.

Being a group member is neither onerous nor time consuming, we have 'hands on' events throughout the year and everyone is welcome to take part. It's very rewarding, you can see the results of the work we do and you know that you're doing something really positive for our local environment.

<https://www.facebook.com/portlethenmoss>



www.facebook.com/HedgehogsofPortlethen

Saving Our Endangered Hedgehogs

By March, some hedgehogs will already be out of hibernation. During hibernation, UK hedgehogs can typically lose around 25% of their body weight. So, when they emerge, they urgently need to drink and eat.

Male hedgehogs wake first and if they can find enough 'good food' will quickly build up their fat stores and energy levels just in time for when the females emerge.

'Good food' is important, beetles, grubs and caterpillars are the best natural foods for hedgehogs.

Sadly 'fashionable garden makeovers' have stripped bare all the habitat that supports these insects. As a result, hedgehogs are forced to eat too many slugs, snails and earthworms, a diet of these alone is very harmful to hedgehogs.

This is where you can help them by providing some 'good food', wet or dry cat or dog food (preferably kitten/puppy) is all they need and a shallow bowl of fresh water - be wary of foods sold as hedgehog food, unlike pet foods, they're unregulated and can contain low value ingredients that are harmful to hedgehogs.

By providing supplementary foods (cat or dog food) it compliments their natural diet and helps them to stay healthy, plus you get the honour of seeing them visit your garden, in return they keep garden pests under control for you.

Over the next couple of months some hedgehogs can really struggle. Hibernation takes its toll, and any hedgehog that wasn't in tip top condition prior to hibernating, if it survives, will emerge in a very poor state. These hedgehogs are the ones that will be out during the day, if you see one out in the hours of daylight, please put it in a high sided box and call a rescue right away. Don't watch it for a day or two, by then it is often too late to save them.

Check out the Hedgehogs of Portlethen & Surrounding Area Facebook page where there's lots of information, use the search tab to look for information and if you don't find the answer you need, send a message directly.

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News from the Shed

Portlethen & District Men's Shed and Garden is open to our members again after a brief shutdown for the Christmas Holidays. We are open to anyone who wishes to come along and see what The Shed does; it is located on Cookston Road opposite the old Police Station. **Our opening hours are Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10am to 1pm. Check out our Facebook page for more details.** Whether you wish to be actively involved 2 or 3 times a week or occasionally, you will be made welcome.

We are in the process of significantly increasing our workspace with the addition of a temporary outside workshop. This will have been operational from mid-February and will allow more members to work on projects at the same time.



Members assembling temporary outside workshop.



Members admiring the recently rebuilt bench

The members have been busy making and repairing a range of items requested by the local community. These range from garden planters, garden benches to bird boxes and a recent request for a Bug Hotel.

We also maintain links with local schools and community groups. We did venture outside the Shed in January and were pleased to dispose of the Portlethen Christmas Tree, and one of our members helped judge the Hillside School Scottish Poetry Competition. Should you wish the members to make you an item or if you have a project you would like us to assist with, please get in touch and we can discuss your requirements.

If you wish to join the Portlethen & District Men's Shed, please contact the email address below and ask for a Membership Form. If you wish to make a donation to Portlethen & District Men's Shed of timber or tools, please get in touch. We can arrange collection of your donations.

Come along for a blether and learn more about how to get involved. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any question or need assistance.

Jim Duguid, Secretary P&DMS Email: secretary@portlethenmensshed.co.uk

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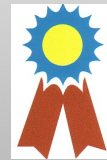
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Hillside School and Nursery

January 2023



In December, we informed our Clochandighter readers that Hillside are on a 'Rights Respecting' journey – looking to achieve further recognition from UNICEF for demonstrating our knowledge, understanding and respect for children's rights.

We are delighted to announce that we have since been certified as 'Rights Aware' – a move from Bronze to Silver accreditation! We were visited before Christmas, where the school provided evidence of our progress and some staff, pupils and parents took part in focus groups.

Our report highlights our commitment to learning about rights, restorative practices, ways for children to express their ideas and work in raising awareness and money for charities.

We are so happy that our hard work has been recognised. We now plan on maintaining our commitment to children's rights as we begin the early stages of going for Gold!



Our Rights Respecting Steering Group proudly displaying Hillside School's Silver Award certificate and banner.

In other news, Hillside celebrated the holiday season throughout December, and it was lovely to perform to audiences once again with a range of Christmas shows. Our Nursery presented their own version of the classic fairytale Goldilocks (*Goldilocks at Christmas*), Primaries 1 & 2 pupils performed 'The Shiniest Star' nativity and our Primary 3-7 classes sang some festive favourites in a show entitled 'Rocking Around the Hillside Christmas Tree'. Thanks to our Hillside Parent Group, we had a very special visit from the Cairngorm Reindeers which certainly helped spread some holiday cheer amongst children, staff and parents/carers alike. Hillside Choir made us all incredibly proud too, by performing at the Evening Express Concert at the P and J Live! The parents, carers and staff present were full of praise for what was a professional and enthusiastic performance. We are incredibly proud of the Choir's continued success and achievements.




Throughout January, the school worked towards our annual poetry competition in celebration of Robert Burns. Children across all Primary classes were absolutely fantastic at finding, learning and sharing a Scots poem. Our celebration concluded on Tuesday 24th January with each class voting a class winner to recite their chosen poem, to compete for an overall trophy – one for P1-2, one for P3-4 and a trophy for P5-7. A special thanks to our community members that took time to attend the competition as part of our judging panel!

As we continue 2023, we look forward to sharing more progress, achievements and successes from Hillside. For now, we wish all community members all the best for the year ahead!

Kind regards,
Lesley-Anne Munro & Jordan Leslie
Head Teachers



Congratulations to our Hillside School Choir for a fantastic performance at the P & J live as part of the



Become a mentor
Share an hour per week and change a life

MCR Pathways is a charity that currently supports secondary pupils throughout 11 local authorities in Scotland. MCR Pathways has recently started up in Portlethen Academy and is asking volunteers to #ShareAnHour and provide more young people with a mentor who's there just for them.

At MCR Pathways, we believe that a young person's future should be determined by their talents and never their circumstances. When life around us is overwhelming, it's difficult to think about the future. That's why we are asking for help to ensure no young person should ever feel alone.

Our award-winning programme carefully matches young people with a mentor to meet for just one hour a week, in school. This one to one relationship makes a profound impact on their confidence and future.

All steps to becoming a mentor can be done online and full training is provided. No qualifications are required and anyone over the age of 21 can apply.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor or would like to learn more, please follow the link: <https://mcrpathways.org/become-a-mentor/>



Fishermoss School

'Being the best we can be'

Respect-Honesty-Responsibility-Kindness-Hardworking

It's been 'all go' over the past few months with lots of interesting and active learning experiences. That's what life at Fishermoss is all about! It has been such a joy to be able to have so many great events happening at school again, after the restrictions of the last few years. The winter months brought opportunities as well as challenges....Great opportunities for sledging and building snowmen, but the added challenge of having delayed openings and trying to navigate the significant ice in January! We are all looking forward to Spring!



Our **Parent Staff Council (PSC) Christmas Fayre and Shopping Night** were very successful events, where together we raised **£3017.44!** This is an incredible amount. Well done to all involved, pupils, parents, school staff and extended family members. Great teamwork and a super night with the usual spectacular Santa's Grotto.

Santa made another appearance with a merry bunch of elves from Hillside, Portlethen and Fishermoss School. The '**Santa Runs**' were once again a great success and such a special community event. A total of **£4180** was raised. The money is to be shared between the 3 schools and Portlethen Larder. It was an extra special event this year as we enjoyed hot chocolate at the front of our school awaiting Santa's arrival!

We know it's 'that time of year' when you come across sheep at school! It was lovely to see so many Parents attend our **Primary 1 Nativity**. The children shared the Christmas Story in their performance of 'Baarmy Bethlehem'. It was wonderful to be able to have a live audience for our Nativity back in school!



We had a super whole-school outing with Primaries 1 to 7 off to see '**Strange World**' at the **Cinema**. A great time was had by all! We always feel special having a big screen all to ourselves and our pupils are to be commended for their behaviour. This year our **PSC** covered the entire cost of this very special outing!



It was also special to be back in Portlethen Parish Church for our **Christmas Church Service**. Our readers and musicians impressed us all. Our church collection went to **Aberdeen Cyrenians** in support of Portlethen Church's chosen charity for the Tree Festival. Once again, a Fishermoss tree was on display at the festival which was decorated by Senior Pupil Council representatives, accompanied by Miss Anderson.



'Season's Greetings' and 'Festive Cheer' were brought to the residents of Portlethen Care Home as **Primary 4/5 & Primary 5** entertained them all with a medley of Christmas songs.

In-Service Days - Fishermoss School Improvement Plan

I am sure many wonder what school staff do on in-service days! We are always very busy! We had a packed programme for Teaching and Support staff with a combination of face-to-face sessions and online. All staff participated in workshops on Trauma Informed Practice, and we joined with cluster colleagues for a focus on Nurturing classrooms. Pupil Support Assistants across the cluster met together for a session on Anxiety and the Effects on Learning, and teaching staff across the cluster met for Writing Moderation. All our staff attended an Aberdeenshire-wide event on Learning, Teaching and Assessment delivered by inspirational speaker Mark Burns over ZOOM! Over the last fourteen years, Mark Burns has developed a proven track record in developing teaching and leadership in education and has co-authored three best-selling books in this field.

Acts of kindness!

We are always genuinely touched by parents' and pupils' generosity at fundraising and charity events at school. Our Fishermoss Family's **kindness** and **hard work** put in to support our school, and others in need, is second to none. In November, pupils were given the opportunity to dress up for **Children in Need** and a fantastic **£417** was raised, and for the **Poppy Appeal** a total of **£50.47** was raised.



For the **Rotary Shoe Box Appeal**, an amazing **63 boxes** were sent from Fishermoss School and **£126** of monetary donations were received to help cover the transport costs of delivering the boxes. As **Global Warriors**, **Primary 4/5** were responsible for organising this charity event for us at school. Here they are pictured receiving their certificate from Carolyn McGhee, one of our local Rotarians.

News!

Primary 6, Primary 6/7 & Primary 7 pupils have been out on their bikes again! Great to see a busy bike shelter at school despite the winter chills! I-Bike was held over three days and pupils were given the opportunity to learn about planning a safe route for cycling, bike skills, bike maintenance and bike safety checks. This was all rounded off with a group cycle around Portlethen. **Primary 6** also have the responsibility of being **Junior Road Safety Officers**. Working in small groups, they taught or presented an age-appropriate lesson to every class in the school.



Fishermoss School continued

Aberdeen University Business School delivered workshops to two classes to support our **Developing the Young Workforce** agenda. **Primary 6** participated in a **'Design an App'** workshop at school. Pupils spent the morning investigating research, designing and marketing their apps which included some impressive ideas with very practical uses. Skills developed included communication, creativity, empathy, teamwork and decision-making. **Primary 6/7** also benefitted from a workshop on **Marketing Skills**.



Primary 5, Primary 6, Primary 6/7 and Primary 7 pupils were involved in the **planting of crocus bulbs** in our playground with one of our Aberdeenshire Rangers, Helen Young. The bulbs were provided by the Rotary as part of their **'Purple4Polio'** activities. This was a great opportunity for our pupils to play their part in creating something quite special for us to enjoy for many years to come. We look forward to a purple carpet in the spring! **Primary 2 and**

Primary 6 also planted some additional bulbs throughout the playground so we look forward to the flowers peeping through one day soon!

Primary 6/7 took a trip to the **Science Centre** where they participated in a coding workshop and had an opportunity to experience all the exhibits. The class are also participating in the **Carbon Capture & Storage Project** organised by **Scottish Council for Development and Industry**. This will culminate in the class building and powering a hydrogen fuelled vehicle. They also took part in a **Code-a-Long Christmas Candle** session as part of their **technology skills**.

Primary 7 met virtually with a **World War II pilot** as part of their class project. **Primary 7** also attended an **Eco Schools Biodiversity** live lesson. **Primary 6 and Primary 6/7** participated in an online demonstration of the **Kooth website**, a site where pupils can go to for a range of mental health support in a safe, free and confidential environment. **Primary 2 and Primary 2/3** had a hands-on experience with a Fire Engine at school linking with their class projects on **Communities and Keeping Safe**. **Primary 4 and 4/5** had an on-line **pollution and conservation workshop** as part of their class project.

Assemblies.....a few examples

We welcomed two **Rotarians**, Moira Hogg and David McGhee, to share a presentation with us about the work the Rotary does to raise awareness of Polio, and the Rotary's efforts to rid the world of this disease. Their presentation tied in with our purple crocus bulb planting and they shared the significance of the purple coming from a purple pen mark put on children after their vaccination.

Primary 3/4 created presentations about **Children in Need Day** and how the funds we collect help many children across the country.

All classes were involved in a **Bounce-Back 'Show and Tell' Assembly** where they all shared what they had been learning and focusing on through our whole school Resilience Programme, known as 'Bounce Back'. Classes shared books they had read with inspirational key messages. They spoke about the importance of teamwork, cooperation, and strategies they can use for solving life's problems such as talking to friends, not catastrophising things and the power of yet! We continue to focus on putting all these into practice!

Finally, I recently enjoyed a telephone conversation with one of the Clochandighter readers who read in the last edition about our mini greenhouse. The gentleman kindly offered seeds that he felt he would be unable to use, and I had the pleasure of meeting him when he dropped these off at school! It is always encouraging to see the interest taken by people not directly associated with our school.

Mrs Margaret M Ferguson
Head Teacher



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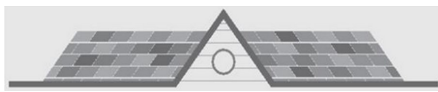
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Portlethen School News

Trust Teamwork Respect Achievement
Inclusion Nurture



It is hard to believe that by the time you read this article, the school will be half-way through the 2022-23 school session. We have had a very busy time in school and have now had many opportunities to invite parents and the community into school, a vital and much missed element of our school during Covid restrictions. Enjoy reading about what's going on at Team Party!

Christmas

A very busy and fun-filled festive period was had by pupils and staff alike.

As is our school tradition, the whole school attended the panto at HMT, Peter Pan. We were fortunate that the snowy weather did not impede us from travelling and we had a fantastic afternoon together.

For the first time in three years, the school's annual Christmas Fair took place on a face-to-face basis. It was wonderful to hear the buzz of children, families and community members all around the school. Products were made and sold by each class and we listened to our choir singing Christmas carols beautifully. The Fair made a profit of £2,000 for much needed school funds.

Pupils, parents and community members were very appreciative audiences when they watched the Primary 1 to 3 pupils perform the nativity "Baarmy Bethlehem". The children did a fabulous job and definitely put us all in the Christmas spirit! £600 was raised for school funds from ticket sales, wow!

On Sunday 11th of December, the school choir performed at the Evening Express Christmas Concert at the P&J Live to an audience of 1300 people. The children did an amazing job in representing our school! Thank you to our parent and teacher who lead the choir and everyone who came along to support them on the night. The £15,000 raised at this event will support primary schools within Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire through the Evening Express Pounds for Primaries project.

Christmas wouldn't be Christmas in Portlethen without the now well established Santa Run. It was another great success this year as Santa and his many volunteer helpers, including the elves, paraded the streets of Portlethen. There was much excitement as an enthusiastic crowd gathered outside the school to enjoy our new tradition of hot chocolate and marshmallows and give Santa a big Party welcome. Portlethen Primary Together (PPT) will receive £1,045 which is fantastic, community spirit at its best. We know it will be put to good use to benefit our children.

Portlethen School continued

ECO Group

We are delighted to have achieved our 7th Eco Green Flag in recognition of the work we do in looking after the environment and working towards the Global Goals for Sustainability.

To add to this good news, our Eco Group has secured a £1,000 grant from the We Decide Participatory Budgeting Fund to spend on the topic of Climate Change Carbon Reduction. Primary 7 pupils across Aberdeenshire vote on projects who bid for the money and Team Porty came second. Watch this space for further news on how we are using the money.

A huge thank you to all staff, pupils and parents involved in achieving the Green Flag and securing the grant.

At our first assembly of the year we welcomed Marion and her trusty dog Paddy from Paws on Plastic. Marion told the children about how her simple idea of picking up litter (safely) on her daily dog walkies has taken off around the world. The placid and very well behaved Paddy stole the hearts and attention of our kind and caring pupils. Paws on Plastic now has 21,000 dog owner members across 70 countries on social media. In an ideal world everyone would pick up their own litter but this might be a helpful way to improve the litter issues in our community.



Health and Wellbeing



As part of the Health and Wellbeing curriculum, all classes participated in a visit from Aberdeenshire Life Education Centre where the children focussed on physical wellbeing, learning about their bodies and how to make healthy choices. The annual visit from Harold the giraffe is always very well received. Parents even had an opportunity to join a workshop to share in the learning experienced by the children.

Primary 5 and 6 pupils are in the midst of a block of weekly hockey sessions and Primary 3 and 7 pupils are learning badminton skills this term, both led by Active Schools Aberdeenshire.

Scottish Poetry Recitals

The children did a sterling job learning their poems, not an easy task. Judging the competition, whilst a pleasure, was also really tricky as the standards of recital were amazing! Thankfully we had Mr Douglas Samways, a member of the Burns Federation, to help us judge and he also entertained the finalists with his super command of the Scots language!





The winners performed their poems at a special assembly where we also had a guest speaker, Mr Gordon Hay, author of Doric Nursery Rhymes for Loons and Quines.

Thank you to Portlethen Primary Together who provided funding to buy copies of Gordon's book, which are now included in each class library.

International Family Breakfast

In celebration of the diversity of our school, we held an International Family Breakfast before the start of the school day on Wednesday 11th January. It was more like a feast than a breakfast, with a delicious range of foods from many of the countries from which our families originate.

Silent Discos

An evening full of fun and laughter was enjoyed by children and staff alike as they danced the night away to a range of tunes after school on Friday 13th January. The children and staff had a fabulous time! The discos raised £442.27 for school funds.

We are extremely lucky to have staff who give their free time outwith school hours to contribute to the wider life and ethos of our school. As head teachers, we very much appreciate it!

February In-Service Days

Staff training is always on-going as we aim to continuously improve our practice so that children achieve their very best. In-service days allow for concentrated staff training over whole days and we are very excited that teaching staff will be participating in a training session led by Shirley Clarke, bestselling author and expert in learning, teaching and assessment. Over the two days in February there will also be a range of staff learning related to health and wellbeing and inclusion. We are very much looking forward to the training and can't wait to take what we learn back to the classroom.

Finally – A Fundraising Plea

If you are able to help the school by raising funds through your normal on-line shopping (there is absolutely no cost to you) please sign up via:

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk> and select Portlethen Primary as your cause. It takes about a minute to sign up and then no time at all as you do your shop. If you are able to sign up it would be very much appreciated.

We hope you have enjoyed reading about our learning, events and achievements. As usual, we remain Proud to be Porty! Keep safe and well everyone.

Sandra McKechnie and Christina Hardie
Head Teachers



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Scottish Charity

Number SC007420

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e-mail: rkowal@churchofscotland.org.uk

The Manse: 07484 257534

Church Secretary: portlethenpc@btconnect.com

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Greetings to you all!

We rejoice in the coming of Spring.

The great event of the Christian year that coincides with spring is Easter. The vegetation is growing again, the birds and animals are busy feeding their young. This is associated with Easter, the Feast of the Resurrection. Resurrection means victory over death, which does not mean that death in the concrete sense that we all experience with the passing of our loved ones and of every living creature no longer exists. Rather, it means that death loses its power over our minds. We no longer act because of death or because we know we will die. Freed from this worry, we are available to act positively in the world by serving others. The resurrection is the divine power that makes Jesus, who died on the cross, rise again. His concrete, earthly presence, as told in the Gospels, has become a different kind of presence for those who follow him - his disciples. At Easter, Christians proclaim that Jesus is alive. This is not a proclamation that each Christian makes alone, in isolation. It is a proclamation that we are called to make together. That is why we meet on Sunday mornings, because we want to express our faith together. We need each other. Together we encourage one another. We practise service to others. We create projects that are translated into the life of our community.

If you are lost in this world of violence, loneliness, and servitude, and if you feel a spiritual call, if your faith is awakening and you have questions about the Christian faith, I invite you to meet me. I could help and guide you in your spiritual quest.

Portlethen congregation and I also want the Sunday morning service to be a time of welcome. A person seeking God who walks through the door of Portlethen Church will always be welcomed with kindness and without judgement. The Sunday service is at 10.30am each week.

Children are welcome every Sunday at 10.00am for Sunday School, where they are taught a passage from the Bible. Every first Saturday of the month from 3-5pm we hold a Messy Church where we play, sing and listen to a Bible story.

Fairtrade Fortnight runs from Monday 27th February to Sunday 12th March 2023. To support this, we will have a breakfast in the Church on Sunday, 12th March 2023 at 10.15am. The members of the congregation and myself invite you to come along to this special service.

Portlethen Church also offers other activities such as the Lunch Club on Fridays and the Craft Club on Tuesdays (Please contact the church office portlethenpc@btconnect.com Tel: 01224 782883 for more details).
Happy Easter to you all!

Rev. Rodolphe Blanchard-Kowal
Minister
Portlethen Parish Church

Dates for your Diary:

1st Saturday of the month 3.00 pm - 5.00 pm: Messy Church
Sunday, 5th March 10.30 am: Service of Holy Communion
Sunday, 12th March 10.15 am: Fairtrade Fortnight Breakfast Service
Sunday, 2nd April 10.30 am: Palm Sunday Service
Thursday, 6th April 7.00 pm: Maundy Thursday Service
Friday, 7th April 7.00 pm: Good Friday Service
Sunday, 9th April 10.30 am: Easter Morning Service



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Bacon Cheeseburger	£3.80
Chicken burger	£3.60
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Portlethen and District Voluntary Community Ambulance Association

2022 was another busy year for the "Little Blue Ambulance", transporting passengers to and from the Portlethen Medical Centre and Dental Practice as well as providing regular lifts for several local community social groups.

In a typical year the Ambulance travels around 14,500 miles and carries over 3,000 passengers.

The service has been in operation since 1982, so we are now over 40 years old!

We have a small team of friendly and enthusiastic volunteers who cover the roles of Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Rota Coordinator and Maintenance Coordinator. Of course, we also have our regular and relief drivers without whom the service wouldn't exist, and we are eternally grateful to everyone who gives their time to support the Association.

However, due to some recent "retirals", we are desperately in need of more drivers, either taking a regular half-day shift each week, or covering ad-hoc shifts to allow our drivers to have a wee break. Familiarisation sessions will be given with an experienced driver and a formal Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme (MiDAS) course can be arranged and funded by us.



So, if you have a driving licence with category D1 and some time to spare, and are willing to give something back to our wonderful community, we would love to hear from you.

You never know when you or your family might need this service in the future, so we don't want to lose it!

Of course, with all these miles driven, our fuel and maintenance costs make a considerable dent in our funds, so we are always very grateful for any donations, however small. We plan to replace the current vehicle soon and will be fund-raising towards the costs. If you can help in any way, please let us know.

Contact

Hugh Wheelan on 07834 559547 (hwheelan1@gmail.com) or David Walton on 07468 883289 (j.d.walton@btinternet.com)

The Residents at Lethen Park are looking for volunteers to help in our gardens.



Over the past few years, the gardens did not flourish in the way we had hoped, due to being neglected during the pandemic.

Over the summer of 2022, Terra Foras supported us and helped us bring life into the garden, with beautiful flowers.

We are looking for volunteers to help us encourage the flowers to thrive and to help us with our greenhouse.

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Freemasons of Portlethen

The Lodge of Portlethen was founded in 1993 by a group of Freemasons from Lodges in the surrounding areas who wanted to get together within Portlethen. It took two years of planning and organising, and of course we needed a suitable building to hold our Lodge Meetings in.



We were fortunate to have within our numbers a local architect, Brother Forbes (we Freemasons refer to each other as 'Brothers') who drew up plans and submitted them for approval with Kincardineshire Council. These plans became the Bourtree Hall, and we are all very thankful to Brother Forbes who donated the plans free of charge – a considerable saving to all concerned.

Now, who or what are Freemasons? We like to think of ourselves as good men who believe in a Supreme Being of whatever that man's Faith may be, and we try to make good men better. Not better than other men, but better within themselves. Being a good citizen and helping those less fortunate or less able, is very important to us.

Freemasonry has often been called secret society. It isn't. But it is a society that has certain secrets which are imparted to like-minded men in, what we call, 'Degrees'. (Did you know that there are also Lady Freemasons?).

We are a charitable organisation and, supporting and helping charities is one of our Principal Tenets. For example, Scottish Freemasons recently donated over a MILLION POUNDS to Prostrate Cancer, something the older generation can relate to.

Locally, within Kincardineshire and around the Portlethen Area, we have donated, gifted and supported numerous charities and organisations. Such as: A portable defibrillator to Portlethen Health Centre, considerable funds towards replacing the Portlethen Community Ambulance, supporting and helping to maintain the Bourtree Hall inside and out, another defibrillator outside the Bourtree Hall. Just before Christmas we donated £200 to the Portlethen Larder/Food Bank, as well as others within Kincardineshire. Over Christmas, the Portlethen Freemasons donated £200 to help pay for the Pensioners Christmas Lunch at The Leathen. We also have two cheques, for £3000 each, ready to hand over to 'Cycling Without Age – Stonehaven' and 'Mearns Coastal Healthy Living Network'. This money was raised by all the Freemasons of Kincardineshire at our Annual Charity Ball.

Being a Freemason isn't about rolled up trouser legs and funny handshakes. It is about being a good and upright man who wishes to help those around him and serve his Community... and trying to make the world a little brighter and kinder, one step at a time.

If you'd like to know more, please contact the Lodge of Portlethen Secretary at lodge1805@gmail.com

My name is Brother Ian Wood I am the Right Worshipful Master of The Lodge of Portlethen 1805. We have a saying: "2 B 1 ask 1"

If you have an interest, or would like to find out more about Freemasonry, please give me a call 07579 004166 - I will try and answer all your questions, or point you in the right direction.

Portlethen Library

Happy New Year and welcome to Portlethen Library! The new opening times are:

Monday 9am – 5pm	Tuesday 9am – 1pm
Wednesday Closed	Thursday 3pm – 7pm
Friday Closed	Saturday 10am – 2pm
Sunday Closed	

But fear not! On Wednesdays, you can still come in to participate in the varied range of activities we have prepared for you. Please do book online or, alternatively, come in at opening times and register for the event. To keep up to date with all our activities including book groups, craft, coding and author talks, visit www.livelifeberdeenshire.org.uk and

www.facebook.com/portlethenlibraryaberdeenshire

Monday

Come in and immerse yourself in Spanish language and culture with **Conversational Spanish with Leandro**. Our brilliant Customer Assistant Leandro will introduce you to the warm rhythms of the 5th most spoken language in the world.

Tuesday

Bring your little ones along to Bookbug from 10:00am to 10:30am where they can enjoy fun songs and rhymes and an exciting story every time! Suitable for 0-5 year olds.

Wednesday

The Chatty Crafty group meet weekly from 1:30pm to 3:30pm.

Thursday

The Digital Skills group meets from 11:00am to 1:00pm where you can improve and expand your digital skills.

We hope to see you in the Library soon!

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Rotary **Community:** We held a couple of events before Christmas, a fun quiz night on 12th November in Portlethen Golf Club which everyone enjoyed, resulting in a donation made to **The Larder of £317**. A Scots Quiz, raffle and 'Guess the Weight of the Christmas Cake' event at the Fine Piece in the Jubilee Hall raised **£162** for **local good causes**. Thanks to Eileen and her team for a successful morning.

We will be launching our hunt for our next **Community Champion** in the spring, if you know of an unsung local hero, please let us know. We will have contact details published on social media soon.

Car Raffle: Thanks again to Matalan for allowing us to sell tickets for the Rotary Clubs' **Car Raffle** for **Charlie House Children's Hospice**. A total of £46,500 was raised by 22 clubs in the local Aberdeen area, **£33,500** going to Charlie House as the primary benefiting charity. The money will go to their **Big Build Appeal** to develop a dedicated support centre for children with life limiting illnesses. The winner of the car is Jenny Kemp from Alford, who was recently presented with the keys to the car.

INTERNATIONAL:

Polio: Watch out around Portlethen for **purple crocuses** appearing, especially in the space where the Christmas tree was, the Woodland and Moss areas and as usual they were also distributed to the schools. These are a donation from Rotary to local groups by the club, our purchase costs going to Polio eradication. Supported by Bill Gates, vaccination teams are constantly working around the world to keep this awful disease at bay. If you would like to know more about Rotary International's fight against polio, please contact us via our club Facebook page.

ShoeBox: The Rotary Shoebox Scheme has been part of our club's international commitment for many years, and again we have managed to distribute over 500 boxes to be filled by the community and sent to eastern Europe. The schools have again been involved. * **Update! We have heard that boxes did make their way to Ukraine!**

FUTURE EVENTS: As I write we're looking forward to our Touch of Tartan Evening when we will celebrate with haggis neeps and tatties, a wee touch of tartan, Robbie Burns and general 'Scottishness'!

A **Race Night** is being organised to take place in The Paddock on **Friday 17th March**, we are looking for sponsors for races and horses. If you or your business would like to get involved, please contact us, details below. All proceeds to local good causes. For tickets, please see posters in local shops and noticeboards or contact any Rotarian.

Our **Primary Schools quiz** will take place on 23rd March, in the Academy and on the same evening, the **Rotary Young Musician Competition** will also be hosted by the Academy when I'm sure the best of local young talent will be on display.

Contact us if you would like to be involved in our efforts to support the local community and/or international projects, whichever is your interest. Contact any Rotarian or find us here:

<https://www.facebook.com/Portlethen-and-District-Rotary-302573226576567>

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News from your community hall.

Committee – As a result of our appeal in the last edition of this fine magazine, we have added a Booking Clerk! Mandy Ross has joined the committee and has had an immediate impact securing new bookings and responding quickly to all enquiries. Welcome aboard, Mandy!

We are still looking for a **Committee Secretary**. As we get busier and secure additional funding, we have an obligation to keep track of invoices, correspondence and other commitments and the secretary position is vital to keep track of all this paperwork. If you have some time to spare, like to serve your community, and enjoy paperwork, you could well be just the person we are looking for. Contact us through our email:

info@portlethenjubileehall.com.

The **Fine Piece Café** has now re-opened for business and is going from strength to strength meeting every Wednesday morning from 10 o'clock to noon. The recent introduction of bacon rolls has taken the offering to a whole new level! The hall provides a warm, safe space which in the current climate is a welcome development. Why not check it out and pop in for a chat and a cuppa? Julie and her team are always on the look-out for additional help.

PROJECTS – We continue to upgrade the hall to widen its appeal to the entire community. We have just been awarded match funding by our lovely, elected Aberdeenshire Councillors to help us with three urgent projects. We intend to improve the security of the hall by mounting security cameras front and back. Secondly, we want to improve our offering for pre-schoolers to enjoy parties in the hall through the purchase of 5 kiddies' folding tables and 24 colourful chairs. Finally, we will instal an external storage unit to hold items we need but don't use often. On behalf of the Management Committee, I must express our gratitude to our local Councillors, the Meikle Carewe Windfarm Fund and AVA Wellbeing Fund who have all helped us raise significant amounts of cash to better serve our community.

Our plans to start hosting a Lunch Club to cater for people in our community with complex additional needs took a huge step forward

with a generous funding award of over £5000 from the local Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action Group through their Communities Mental Health & Wellbeing Fund. This award will allow us to purchase the specialist equipment we need as well as provide funds to cover running costs for the first 6 months. We are hoping to kick-off the Lunch Club in March. We can't wait to get started and I'll report progress in the next Edition. Again, if you think this is an activity you could help with, please get in touch.

RAG BAG – This is still proving popular. Your contributions of used clothing and shoes are very much appreciated – please remember to tie the shoes together in pairs and please put the clothes in suitable bags! Thanks, as ever, to Heather Yeoman for organising this!

We have a new email address: info@portlethenjubileehall.com for general enquiries and bookings@portlethenjubileehall.com for booking applications.

We look forward to seeing you at the Jubilee Hall in the near future!
Dave Johnstone, Chairman

BOOK THE HALL

BOOKING TIME	HOURLY RATE	REGISTERED CHARITY RATE
OFF PEAK Mon-Fri: 09:00-17:00	£18.00	£17.00
PEAK Mon-Fri: 17:00-22:00 Sat/Sun: 09:00-17:00	£20.00 £25.00	£18.00 £20.00
OUT OF HOURS Sat/Sun: after 17.00	£30.00	£25.00

Community Fundraising Events: Please Contact Committee

info@portlethenjubileehall.com

To Book: bookings@portlethenjubileehall.com (or 07396 339448)

News from Cllr Mel Sullivan

You can find me on Facebook as 'Councillor Mel Sullivan, North Kincardine'.



My webpage is <https://melsullivan.mycouncillor.org.uk>. On here, you can find longer articles on things like recycling, and resources to help with the cost-of-living crisis, as well as the Trading Standards Bulletins, road closures, police reports and other bits and bobs.

At the latest Infrastructure Services Committee, I enquired about the roads plan budgeted for this financial year. Worryingly, the response was that they could not guarantee that all works on the main list (on my website) would be completed before the end of March. I have asked for an update on which projects were still outstanding, and which of those would be unlikely to be done. Of special concern are those roads in Portlethen and Newtonhill still waiting on resurfacing.

Electric vehicle chargers at Hillside School - by the time you read this, these should be live - finally! Problems with the quality of work done by the installer on a national level meant further checks needed to be carried out. At the time of writing, the chargers now charge, they are just not connected to the Charge Place Scotland network.

The Kincardine & Mearns Area Committee budget closes at the end of February (and reopens for the new financial year in April). For 2022-23, the committee granted these applications of interest for the Portlethen area:

- Portlethen Bowling Club - £3,000
- Portlethen Jubilee Hall - £3,408
- Portlethen and District Men's Shed - £633
- K&M Youth Clubs - Portlethen £1000 (£3000 for a 16 week trial of 3 clubs)
- Portlethen Town Association £1,456

Applications need to be from constituted community groups and be match-funded.

Until Portlethen has a community council again, the area is without a statutory consultee for planning applications. With the proposed development north of Thistle Drive coming up, that makes it more important for local residents to pay attention to anything that might impact on them or their surroundings. The next consultation event for this development is at the Jubilee Hall on Thursday 9th March.

Weekly news emails continue to be sent out. These include the latest planning applications and other local items of interest. Please let me know if you would like to receive these. My email address is **cllr.m.sullivan@aberdeenshire.gov.uk**

Contact your Local Councillor

David Aitchison - cllr.d.aitchison@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Shirley Burnett - cllr.s.burnett@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Mel Sullivan - cllr.m.sullivan@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Catherine Victor - cllr.c.victor@aberdeenshire.gov.uk



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Lay Ministry:	George Masson	01569 739283

Sundays 10.30 am Eucharist Service

Wednesdays 11.00am Prayer and Chat meeting

9th April Easter Sunday - 9th April - 10.30am Family Eucharist

Our Community Room is available for hire, and this can be booked by telephoning Sheila (01569 731608). Facilities are first rate, offering a well-equipped kitchen, toilets (including disabled) also baby-changing provision. Car parking is available, also provision for disabled drivers by way of a car park closer to the church.

Apart from the Community Room we also have space at the rear of the church (7 x 7.5 metres) which could be used for fitness classes such as yoga, Children's Nursery, public meetings, first aid groups, concerts. There is also adequate open space at the front of the church for musicians/choirs. There is a PA system where you can play your own music and an Epson projector and screen.



If you would like to spend some quiet time in prayer or meditation, I think you will find our church is ideal and it is open during daylight hours.

Please check our web site and also Facebook (addresses for both above) to find out about any services or events we may be holding in the future





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THE LARDER (PORTLETHEN AND SURROUNDING AREAS)



#THELARDER #FORTHECOMMUNITYBYTHECOMMUNITY

The Larder at the Porty Cabin on Cookston Road is a prime example of the community working together to help the community. Over the Christmas Season the volunteers at The Larder were completely overwhelmed by the support given to our group by everyone in the local community.

From all our surrounding Primary Schools, Portlethen Academy, the Medical Centre, the Churches, many of our local businesses and organisations, and our amazing local residents we received a constant flow of donations large and small. We cannot thank every one of you enough, who contributed to our stock or our funds, as every item and penny were gratefully received!

The Larder was able to help and support those families and individuals in our community, needing extra help, over the Festive Season with some additional treats and tasty parcels due to these extra donations.

If you are in the situation of finding yourself struggling with food cost and could benefit from extra help, please scan the QR Code opposite to place an order. **The Larder is open Monday 6pm-8pm, Friday 2.30pm-4.30pm and Saturday 10am-12pm.** Our volunteers are there to help anyone struggling during this cost-of-living crisis and you do not need a referral from another organisation. We can also be contacted by email to c19portlethenhelp@gmail.com or by phone on 07376 133870.

Keep an eye on our Facebook page @thelarderportlethen for the fresh fruit and vegetables that we receive from FareShare on a weekly basis. Please come into The Larder as these items are for everyone to benefit from, for a small donation if you can, and this will stop these items from being sent to landfill as well as helping us stop food waste.

We are also always in need of bags-for-life so please pop in during our opening hours if you have any extra bags you'd like to pass on. We look forward to working together with the community during 2023 and passing on any help and donations we receive to those that need it.

Thank you all very much again,
The Larder Team

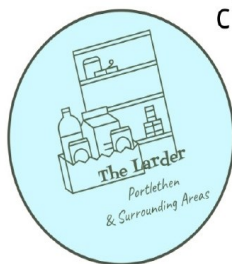
The Larder is based at The Porty Cabin and is available to anyone who could benefit with some help with reducing food costs.

SCAN HERE TO PLACE AN ORDER



[HTTPS://FORMS.GLE/OB8P27
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You can email any enquiries to
c19portlethenhelp@gmail.com



@thelarderportlethen

Staffing

Doctors

We are delighted to announce that we have appointed new members to our clinical team. Dr Margaret Brown will join us as a 4-session salaried GP from the beginning of February. Dr Brown has worked in the practice before as a locum GP so may already be known to some of our patients.

Dr Moshood Masha who is currently employed as a salaried GP with the practice has been appointed to the partnership and will take up his new role in April along with Dr Nkem Wayemeru who has also been appointed as a Partner.

In these difficult times for recruitment, we are delighted that we have been successful in appointing new members to our team.

Nursing Team

Our nursing team continues to evolve. We are reviewing the roles of our current team with a view to ensuring we have all areas of nursing covered. We are yet to make any firm plans regarding recruitment of additional team members.

Administrative Team

Our admin team has welcomed 4 new members to the team in the past six months. I am pleased to say that all 4 members have completed their initial induction and are now working as part of our team. We are currently in the process of advertising for an office manager to add to this team.

Telephone Access

From the beginning of February, we are introducing some changes to our telephone messages. Our telephone lines will be active for all appointment bookings and enquires from 8.30-12 noon and from 1pm until 5pm Monday to Friday. Outwith these times, the telephone message will advise how to contact our emergency team or the out of hours service. Please remember that if you feel it is a life-threatening emergency you should hang up and dial 999.

Practice website

The practice has recently developed a new website in conjunction with a company which specialises in developing web sites for general practices. We hope you find the new website informative and straightforward to use. To access the site please use the following link: www.portlethenmedical.co.uk. We have incorporated some new facilities such as signing up for online repeat prescriptions and requesting sick lines online.

Face Masks

The wearing of face masks is still recommended in health care settings. We would encourage all patients to continue to wear a face covering when visiting the practice. If you forget to bring your own, you will be issued with a face mask on arrival at the practice.

Repeat Prescriptions

In order to generate the repeat prescriptions in a managed system the online repeat prescription service will be switched off at 5.00pm on Friday evenings until 8.30am on Monday mornings. We encourage patients to use this service, as it is the safest and most efficient method for ordering repeat prescriptions. Over the coming months we shall be working to encourage more patients to sign up for this service. If you wish you can sign up on the practice web site or by speaking to one of our reception team who will be happy to help you.

If you don't wish to use the online service, you can order your repeat prescriptions by placing your repeat prescription re-order form into the box at the front entrance. Please note we do not accept repeat prescription requests over the telephone.

Please remember we require 3 working days' notice before you can collect your repeat prescriptions from the pharmacy of your choice.

Portlethen Medical Centre

Skateraw Fair 2023

Saturday 24th June

If you're a local group, business or charity,
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or

[**delamitri11@hotmail.com**](mailto:delamitri11@hotmail.com)



Councillor Catherine Victor

I know it's a bit late, but Happy New Year to you all!

Here we are again another year gone and who knows what is in front of us this year? I'm sure that it will fly by just like last year did.

I must confess, I did not think this time last year that I would be sitting writing an article for the Clochandighter as one of your Councillors! No regrets though, and I am thoroughly enjoying getting to know the area. I would add that I have met some wonderful people along the way. The people who keep on giving of their time and effort to help those in the community less fortunate. They are a credit to our towns and villages.

There is never a dull moment as a Councillor, whether it is dealing with individual concerns or attending meetings and committees, it's all in a day's work. I am in the Business Services Committee which meets once a month to discuss and debate what the council have set before us in a report of their work. Can be lively, as we don't all see things from the same perspective but always respectful of others point of view. It's very interesting to have an insight into how the council works and how they come to their decisions.

I am a substitute on the Education and Children's panel too. I enjoy stepping in when required, as this committee is full of very worthwhile content.

We also meet on a regular basis in our respective areas. These meetings are held in Viewmount, Stonehaven and this is where we get the chance to put questions to our local Manager, Bruce Stewart, about matters that our constituents have brought to our attention in each of the wards. There are some council officers in attendance also, to answer the queries that arise. Usually, a response is forthcoming on the day but sometimes it can take a while to get the answer we may be looking for.

We have area meetings as a whole group too, and this is where we would discuss and make decisions on planning or other factors that may affect the whole area of Kincardine and Mearns. Interesting items and, at times, frustrating if you don't get your point of view agreed!

There are other committees, like the Local Planning Review, the appointment of Head Teachers in the Ward and Exclusion committee, all very interesting and worthwhile work.

That's an overview of some of my responsibilities along with visiting as many of the great charity works that are ongoing in the area. I am always available to anyone in the Ward who needs my help. I cannot promise to get the outcome you want all the time, but I will give all my attention to doing my best for any and all of you.

Get in touch at cllr.c.victor@aberdeenshire.gov.uk or call me on **07787800678**. Follow me on Facebook # cllr. Catherine Victor. North Kincardine

Thank you for your time in reading my little blog. I hope it gives you an insight into the work of your Councillors.

AJ Hire

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Portlethen Academy

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It's been another incredibly busy few terms across Portlethen Academy, and it is astounding to think we are already into 2023! However, we continue to be very proud of the successes and achievements of our fantastic pupils and staff, and I just wanted to share a few key highlights with you below.

We welcomed our pupils back in their School Uniform from August 2022 and we are continuing to promote this across our school and local community, in partnership with our Parent Council and parents/carers, to ensure a sense of pride in our school. #ProudOfPorty

Our pupils have benefitted from a huge number of in-class and extra-curricular opportunities to enhance their skills and to complement the work they are doing in their subjects. We take great pride in our school in getting our pupils ready for the world of work, and as we continue to progress with our Excelerate journey in partnership with the Wood Foundation, our pupils are enjoying rich, real-life learning experiences. Some of these can be seen in the DYW article, and in our round-up of Terms 1 and 2 below.

So far this session we have also our MCR Pathways and Career Ready programmes in partnership with key colleagues in our school and local authority. These programmes are designed to match our identified young people with Mentors; some of whom are in the industry or fields that pupils wish to move into post-school. Again, a real-life partnership and context here which is going from strength to strength.

A key area of focus for our School Improvement Plan over the next few years is to give back to our local community in a variety of different ways, to become #CommunityChampions. So far, we have re-instated links with our local Rotary Club, we have enjoyed a parent/carer GIRFEC Wellbeing Evening led by our Local Area GIRFEC Group, and we have also run a food drive to support the Porty Larder prior to Christmas. We look forward to doing more to support our local area in the weeks and months to come and to further promote the excellent work and achievements of our pupils across the local area so, watch this space...!

Lastly, we have continued to focus on Health and Wellbeing for everyone as we continue to recover from the global pandemic and our Health Weeks have proven to be a real whole-school success for all staff and pupils. Some of these highlights can be seen below.

Thanks to all pupils, parents/carers, partners and friends for your continued support. We hope you enjoy looking at our Term 1 and 2 highlights below:

Link to our Term 1 and 2 Highlights (Session 2022-23)

Microsoft Sway:

<https://sway.office.com/1ZM8h1qUPMBGwlQg?ref=Link>

DYW North East and Portlethen Academy

Bringing the world of work into the classroom

It's not just school pupils who have been streaming through the doors of Portlethen Academy recently. Local industry representatives have been going back to school to facilitate careers-related activities, helping young people to gain the skills and knowledge they need to enter the world of work.

"Early exposure to different industry sectors and job roles means that pupils are better informed and prepared when it comes to taking their next steps," says Barry Drennan, Head Teacher, Portlethen Academy. "We place a great value on our school-industry partnerships and are always seeking to strengthen and grow these activities."

In just the last few weeks, the school's STEM club members have benefited from a visit from TotalEnergies. Meanwhile, S3 Computing Science pupils have learned about technology-related apprenticeships from digital skills provider, QA. Portlethen Academy's S5 year group have participated in mock interviews, courtesy of volunteers across several industry sectors. The school has also reignited its partnership with Maryculter House, a long-standing supporter of Portlethen Academy's Foundation Apprenticeship programme in Hospitality.

So, who organises these initiatives and how can you get involved? An organisation called Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) North East coordinates activities between the region's schools and the business community. Its team includes an Employer School Coordinator, Jodie Niddrie, whose role it is to build and nurture links between Portlethen Academy and local industry representatives. Jodie works closely with Jess Copner who is the school's Principal Teacher of DYW; Jess facilitates a number of experiences and supports teachers to promote DYW and Career Education Standard in the classrooms.

"If you're reading this article and wondering how you might be able to help, I can almost guarantee that there will be a way for you to do so," says Jodie. "You need not have years of experience, or work in a particular sector - we are delighted to hear from anyone who might be willing to give a class talk, come along to a careers fair or check pupils' CVs."

"It may only be an hour out of your day but it could make a world of difference to a youngster who is considering their next steps."

To find out more about supporting Portlethen's young people through DYW North East, email jodie@dyw.org.uk or visit www.dyw.org.uk.

Computing science pupils
Learn about digital careers



Peter Walker of Maryculter House (centre) with Jodie Niddrie, DYW North East, & Barry Drennan Portlethen Academy



STEM club members receive a visit from TotalEnergies

WE DISCOVER, WE GROW
Girlguiding
 Coastal North

Volunteer with us

'I enjoy it so much. The girls are lovely and I feel I'm doing something worthwhile. It's amazing!'
 Tayba, leader

girlguiding.org.uk/interested

Hello my name is Sarah and I am the unit leader of the 1st Portlethen Rainbows. I have been in Girlguiding since I was five years old and have progressed through Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Young Leader to Adult Leader.

I currently run the Rainbow unit in Portlethen along side Lyndsey. Here we get the opportunity to interact with a variety of characters and are fortunate in being able to help the girls learn and develop new skills whilst also enjoying craft and games nights with them.

We have 1 Rainbow unit and 2 Brownie units that cover Portlethen, Newtonhill, Chapelton and Muchalls, it is definitely not enough. Over Covid, we lost 3 units as many volunteers weren't able to continue helping so now we need new volunteers to step forward and give us their time. Our waiting lists are very long as some girls aren't getting spaces in units before they are too old so they aren't getting the same Guiding experience that I experienced growing up.

In Girlguiding, the opportunities are endless. We do activities indoors and outdoors, badges, crafts, adventures away from the meeting place and it is a great way to meet new friends. An example of activities I have done with my unit in the past are visiting the Farm Stop and we have had an evening at Jump In.

Even if you could donate some of your time so that more young girls can join, that would be amazing. If you can give your time it would be much appreciated so we can give more girls the Guiding experience. Please go to the link above to register your details if you feel this is something you could do.



WHO WE ARE

We are a community of Christians who meet together to worship God, encourage and support each other in our day to day lives and share Jesus' loving care with groups in the Portlethen area



Mainly Music is a fun and interactive music programme for parents and caregivers to enjoy with their child from age 0 to 5 years of age. It meets on Tuesday mornings from 10am to 11.30am, consisting of 30 minutes of singing and rhymes followed by a snack, free play, and a chat for the big people!

Please note we have moved from The Porty Cabin to The Jubilee Hall.

Cost is £3 per family per session.

Please contact Pamela on 07748 756 281 for more details.

PORTY CRAFTS

Our craft group meets at the Porty Cabin, Portlethen. Come and enjoy some creativity in a relaxed setting, with fellow crafters to chat with, and a cuppa and cake into the evening. We invite you to take your own projects along,

for example: knitting, sewing or your own project choice.

On the first week of the month, Irene will lead our Card-making sessions, which are always enjoyed. We also enjoy sharing a new craft. We meet weekly from 7:00 -9:00pm with a £4 fee towards costs per session.

For more info, contact Frances on 07740 427 272.



EASTER CELEBRATIONS - He is Risen!

Please join us for our Easter Celebration Service on Sunday 9th April.
Refer to our website for more details.

SUNDAY SERVICES

Every other week we meet at The Porty Cabin, Portlethen at 2pm for tea/coffee before a watch service at 2.30pm. On the alternate weeks we attend ACF's Union Grove building or watch online. You will be welcome to join us and details are contained in the PCF website (Portlethencf.com). This website also has links to the ACF site, and on the 'Let's Keep In Touch' page, you can sign-up for our weekly 'What's On' email.

WE HOPE THAT YOU WILL JOIN US AT ONE OF OUR ACTIVITES

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1st Portlethen Scout Group

We're pleased to confirm all sections of 1st Portlethen Scout Group have made a strong in-person comeback following the challenges of Covid, and we have somewhat grown in recent times. Not only do we continue to run Beavers & Cubs sections at Bourtree Hall with the Scouts meeting at Fishermoss Primary, but we also have parallel sections running at Hillside School, with Scouts being a welcome and much-needed addition for 2023.

As always, it is challenging to find adult volunteers to ensure that the sections continue to thrive and develop and continue to offer a wide range of activities and opportunities. A new Scouting initiative called the 'Four Week Challenge' is open to potential volunteers. Over a period of 4 weeks, you can observe and learn what's involved in our different voluntary roles. It's an excellent way to get to know people, do some real good in the community and gain a range of different skills. Interested in finding out more? Please get in touch! We have a Facebook page (@1stportlethen) with a message function, contact us via our website or you can email the group mailbox at 1stportlethenscoutgroup@gmail.com

Gone Home - Jimmy Steinson

The group were saddened to learn of the recent passing of Jimmy Steinson, a key figure in the establishment of Scouting in the area. Jimmy started as an assistant Scout Leader alongside Arthur Deans who founded the 1st Portlethen Scout Troup, based at Portlethen Primary School. Land was then secured at the Glebe at Portlethen and three portable buildings were gifted to the Portlethen Scouts through Arthur Deans. Once on site, Jimmy, with his tremendous joinery skills and the help of others, made the three buildings into 1st Portlethen Scouts Headquarters, comprising a kitchen, leaders' room, storage and the Scout Hall. Many people will remember the famous Michelin green paint.

Jimmy was later appointed assistant District Commissioner of Scouting. He was also awarded the famous Scouting wood badge for advanced leadership training. As the initial scouts grew older, Arthur Deans moved to become the Venture Scout Leader, and with Jimmy naturally taking up the Scout Leader role. He later became 1st Portlethen Group Scout Leader in charge of all sections of the group.

Jimmy has influenced countless young people over the years. He was considered the Bear Grylls of his generation. When camping near the rivers, he was often to be found washing and shaving in them. He was an excellent camper, hiker, map reader and a woodwork expert. There was always a kettle on the boil for a cup of tea at any of his campsites

Fun day and camp

In November, we had our first group fun day and camp since 2019. Cubs camped indoors at Templars Park with Scouts outdoors in tents, braving the sub-zero temperatures. Beavers joined us to take part in the fun day. Our Young Leaders, who are Explorer Scouts (age 14-18) who also give up their time to serve the community, designed a fabulous, themed trail; we learned to tie knots, and built an amazing climbing frame with the pioneering poles. Delicious burgers were served for lunch, and even the rain didn't dampen our spirits. The event concluded with a campfire, and again our Young Leaders stepped up to lead the singing and stories.

Christmas tree festival & Portlethen Parish Church

We were pleased to see the return of the Christmas tree festival at Portlethen Church in December and sponsored a tree to help raise much needed funds for the Aberdeen Cyrenians. In addition to this, our group were chosen as the beneficiary of the Christmas collections, and we gratefully received more than £400 to boost our funds. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Church and the congregation for their generosity.

Hillside Beavers

In January, Bethan from our Hillside Beavers pack incredibly earned the last Beavers badge to complete a full set, including at least one level from each activity badge and the Chief Scout's Bronze award, which is achieved upon completion of all 6 challenge badges. This is just incredible, and demonstrates commitment and determination, particularly as so much was achieved during a global pandemic



We rely on people like you playing their part to give young people the opportunities they need.

But volunteering's not just about giving something back. It's also about doing something that's good for you.

Volunteering gives you career-boosting skills, improves your wellbeing, and helps you make connections with friends, family and your local community.

So what are you waiting for? Get in touch to find out about how volunteering can help you.

Facebook: @1stportlethen

#GoodForYou

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Waiting list

We continue to receive enquiries regarding places for young people, but at present, our waiting list is long. If you are interested in joining the waiting list, then you can find the form on our website. Please be aware that your request to join the list will be acknowledged by our waiting list coordinator, and you will only be contacted again if a space becomes available.



The recently opened **Portlethen Youth Club** is open to all young people aged 10 years and above. We have no upper age limit as we like to progress young people into roles within the youth club or let them move on to new opportunities at the right time for themselves.

Fully trained Youth Workers are on hand to support young people to create a safe space and a place to meet with friends, meet new people and explore lots of new opportunities.

We have had a great start to the youth club and would love to see it grow. We are open every **Tuesday from 1830 – 2030** and we hope to run all year round.

We currently run from **The Porty Cabin** in Portlethen.

There are no joining or weekly fees.
We rely on donations, grants, and community funds.

For more information, or if you can support us in any way, please contact myself below

Email: Portlethenyouthclub@gmail.com

Or find us on Facebook, twitter and Instagram.

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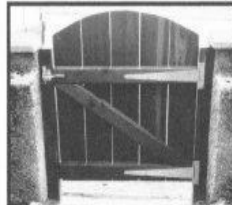
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Arduthie Road
Stonehaven
Tel: 01569 690541

Bourtree Hall

Booking Secretary
Angelene McKay
Tel: 01224 782734

Bourtree Pre-School Group

Bourtree Hall
Berrymuir Road
Tel: 01224 782472

Family Resource Centre

Portlethen Academy
Bruntland Road
Tel: 01467 537111

Fishermoss School

Berrymuir Road
Tel: 01224 472875

Franciscan Missionaries

16 Dunvegan Avenue

Hillside School

Newlands Drive
Tel: 01224 472850

Homestart

32 David Street
Stonehaven
Tel: 01569 767773

Jubilee Hall

Booking Secretary
Tel: 07396 339448

Portlethen Academy

Bruntland Road
Tel: 01224 782174

Portlethen Church Office

Tel: 01224 782883

Portlethen Library

Portlethen Academy
Bruntland Road
Tel: 01224 472870

Portlethen Medical Centre

Old Portlethen Road
Tel: 0345 0130720

Portlethen School

Cookston Road
Tel: 01224 472845

Post Office

McColls,
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Social Work Department

Rowanbank Road
Adult Services
Tel: 01569 690532
Children's Services
Tel: 01467 537111

Need to speak to your local MP/MSP?

Andrew Bowie MP

House of Commons
London, SW1A 0AA
Tel. 01224 766959
or e-mail andrew.bowie.mp@parliament.uk

Audrey Nicoll MSP

51 Victoria Road, Torry, Aberdeen AB11 9LS
Tel. 01224 876743
or email: audrey.nicoll.msp@parliament.scot
Twitter: @Audrey4ASNK

Useful Numbers

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Employers' Helpline:	0800 019 2211
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