

CLOCHANDIGHTER

Portlethen's Community Magazine

EDITION 118 - December 2023



Portlethen's Santa Run



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Editorial



You may have noticed that you are receiving the December edition of the Cloch a tad early this year. We wanted to give you as much notice as possible about various festive events, some of which are taking place in early December, or even late November. Of course, this time of year sees many Christmas Fayres and other seasonal events, not least the Santa Run (the front cover shows last year's event), and it would be impossible to list them all here, but I've listed a selection on page 29. Do keep up with social media, the press and/or local posters as well as consulting your trusty Cloch.

This edition, we welcome some new groups and organisations to the Cloch. Unfortunately, possibly due to the early deadline, we are missing some of the regulars, but hope to see them back in the new year! Spare a thought for those who managed to compose their Christmas/Festive articles before Hallowe'en, even before the tattie holidays!

If you yourself are new to the Cloch, let me explain. The Cloch is a community news magazine, written by the people of Portlethen for the people of Portlethen. It offers a means to catch up with what is/has been going on in our area, and introductions to the local groups and facilities, but it also very much serves as a directory of local trades people. Please note that any advert supporting a rosette means that the advertiser has been recommended by Cloch readers (see inside the back page for how to award someone a rosette).

If you would like to write an article relevant to the local community (it's your magazine, so why not?), please contact me at the email address below. Similarly, if you would like to advertise your local business, please get in touch - our advertising rates are shown inside the back page.

Meanwhile, the rest of the Cloch team and I wish you all the very best for the festive season, and a happy and healthy new year.

Alison Lloyd-Wiggins - Editor



Email the Clochandighter on clochandighter.editor@gmail.com

BEAST RACE

Update from Roy and Daz

For those of you who are too sensible, the Beast Race goes off in waves, so it doesn't just degenerate in a massive free-for-all. At the start of each wave, the event announcer reads out all the team names and you get to cheer for yourself and make yourself known.

The announcer reads out "Beastly Beer Blokes".

Daz and I cheer.

Announcer looks us up and down and says "Yeah, that makes sense."

Sarky swine.

Other than that, the day went really well. It was still a roasting September day at the time we started, so by the time we'd covered a few kms, it was almost a relief to be dunked up to our necks in freezing bog water.



You know the drill from here, I guess. More running, more obstacles to be jumped/climbed/crawled, then some more running. Dunk yourself in a loch. Run a bit more. Repeat.

There are comparatively few photos of me compared to Daz on the obstacles. I'm taking this as evidence that I was so quick despatching them that they couldn't keep me in focus. Or they just thought Daz was the more photogenic of the two of us. Could be either.

By the time we got to the end we were completely soaked and caked in mud, and that was when the sun decided to clear off for the day.



Although we had great intentions of hanging around for post-race coffee and food and making the most of the event, as soon as we stopped running and collected our finishers' medals, we were suddenly frozen to the core and all we wanted was a warm fluffy towel and a heated seat in the car.

But, we had survived. Amazingly, we both finished in roughly the top 20% of the field, which we're delighted with.

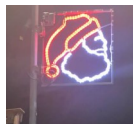
When all was said and done, we raised £202.07 for each of our four local organisations*. We didn't quite hit our target, but we came close enough to make it worthwhile. Massive thanks to everyone who donated. From the ratio of donations from Darryl's friends and mine, I get the feeling people are probably sick of sponsoring me to do daft things, so no more charity-based self-abuse for a while.



Enormous thanks to everyone who contributed, even if it was just in encouragement. The Beastly Beer Blokes are definitely coming back for more next year. Even if it is just to give that announcer a fat lip for his cheek.

Cheers, Roy

***ED:** As a reminder, Roy and Darryl were raising money for these four local organisations:



Portlethen Christmas lights



Air Cadets 865 Squadron Portlethen



Portlethen Moss Conservation Group



1st Portlethen Scout Group



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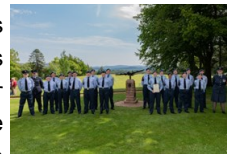
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Busy Summer for 865 (Portlethen) Squadron RAFAC

These past few months have been really busy for 865 (Portlethen) Squadron. Back in June, our Squadron took part in the MacRobert Parade, where the best Squadron in the Wing is presented the Lady MacRobert trophy! As runners up, 865 were invited along to support this event. At this event CWO Becky McKechnie was also presented with her Lord Lieutenant's Certificate and badge – over the course of the year, CWO McKechnie will attend events with the Lord Lieutenant Alastair McPhie and assist him with any duties.



Cadets and staff from 865 went for a walk around Loch Muick to practice their navigation and expedition skills. Unfortunately, the midges were out in force; we did however dodge the worst of the rain! Despite all this, the views were fantastic, and the event was enjoyed by all!

In August, Cadets from 865 went down to Scotland's Secret Bunker in Fife. Cadets were given an idea of what life was like in the cold war, and the preparations the MOD put in place for the worst possible outcome. The bunker, coated in 3 metres of concrete, showed what life was like for the Royal Observer Corps, Royal Air Force, and several other organisations in the cold war era. After the Secret Bunker visit, the Cadets went to Camperdown Country Park in Dundee.



In September, cadets and staff from 865, as well as 2 other local units came together for another training weekend at RAF Lossiemouth. This time cadets took part in other training, such as L144 weapons training and shooting, Aviation training flight simulators, and the Part Task Trainer (PTT) which is a model cockpit where cadets can feel and see what it's like being in control of a Tutor Aircraft. The cadets also went to the Morayvia Museum in Kinloss to see the exhibits on offer there and got a trip to the beach to let off some steam, with an ice cream to finish off the night. A very successful and enjoyable weekend for all!

We are always looking for more staff and cadets, so if the above sounds good and you would like to get involved, please contact us on 865@rafac.mod.gov.uk or follow us on Facebook at **865 (Portlethen) Air Cadets**.



THE LEATHAN

LOCAL COMMUNITY PUB

The Leathan turns 50

This November, The Leathan will be celebrating 50 years since it opened its doors. To celebrate, we will be putting on different promotions on our food & drink every week in November along with entertainment every weekend

Tis the Season

Come along and spend your festive season at the local. Our Festive Menu will be served every Thursday to Sunday from Thursday 30th November - Sunday 31st December. We have a packed December planned from Santas Grotto, live music, discos & a NYE Party.

Pop along for a drink & speak to the staff or keep a look out on our Facebook page for all the info on whats happening at your local this December.

Food served every Thurs-Sun 12:30pm-8pm
Sky Sports, BT Sports, Via Play, Pool, Darts, Live Music,
Discos, Bingo & Dog Friendly

The Leathan, Cookston Road, Portlethen, AB12 4PT

House of Salvation

The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) began in the in 1988 and has now expanded to more than 700 parishes across the UK.

In 1998, The Fountain of Love (FOL) Church started in Aberdeen, holding services at various places before settling at 31 Palmerston Road in May 2005. Under the leadership of the Senior Pastor Chris Gbenle, the church emphasises caring for one another and our community, reaching out with love to all, aiming to bring freedom from life's challenges.



Lord Provost of Aberdeen visits FOL in August to dedicate community beautification project

The FOL Church as established over 10 branches in Aberdeen and its surroundings, including **The House of Salvation Church in Portlethen**, founded in November 2011.



Sunday service with Renewed Faith

The House of Salvation Church, Portlethen has actively participated in community events over the years, including visits to the Lethen Park Care Home, litter picking, kid-friendly fun activities, home visits, counselling services, supporting the Larder and the annual Portlethen Gala.

Recently, the FOL church celebrated its 25th anniversary with a week-long event in August 2023, tagged FOL 25. The celebrations included prayer sessions for the church, our community, the nation, a community outreach day, a fun-filled variety evening, a nostalgic drama night depicting the church's origins, a lively praise night, a fun day with games and BBQ in Portlethen, and a thanksgiving celebration where all FOL parishes joined to sing, dance, and praise God together.



Tug of war @ FOL Fun Day At Portlethen



BBQ @ FOL Fun Day

The House of Salvation Church holds a church service at Portlethen Academy every Sunday at 11am and is open to everyone within the community.

Contacts - Femi on 07932853611 or Joy on 07877103721

Email – pastor@houseofsalvation.org.uk

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It's nearly Christmas time once again!

Quickly, before the Christmas stuff, I'd just like to say well done to the Gala Committee for all their hard work with the Gala. They raised £3750 profit after costs, which has been distributed around our community to various groups. It's your town, your Gala - please get involved.

Well done to Debbie Nutten and dad for winning Portlethen's best garden competition 2023!

It's great to see the start of a monthly market here in Portlethen, and thanks go to Mandy Ross from the PDCC for getting this organised, sourcing vendors etc. Remember, please use the market, because if it's not supported, it will be difficult for it to continue. Unfortunately, that's why the monthly Bingo at the Jubilee Hall has been cancelled - due to lack of numbers of players on the days.

By the time this edition has hit your doormat, the town should be adorned with the beautiful Christmas tree with over 600 metres of lights on it and the baby tree which is fairly starting to grow too!

The elves should have worked their magic and the new Christmas motifs should be on the main street lampposts, with the help of our recent purchase (with match-funding from Aberdeenshire council) of a monkey tower. This should make the job a little easier going forward.



Portlethen Tree 2022

There will be lots of fairs and events on this Christmas. Please keep up to date on social media and posters locally for further information.

The Santa Run is back again this Christmas too, supporting the Larder and all three local primary schools. If you'd like to get involved with the Santa Run, contact your school PTA, who will be more than happy to hear from you. A huge thanks to William Nicol, the main transport sponsor, for supporting my crazy idea from the start, and to Graham Chapman who gives his time to drive Santa. More information follows about the times and sponsors.

Have a great festive season and enjoy catching up with family and friends.

Darren Robertson, PTA Chair



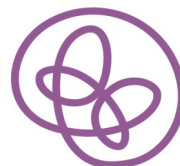
Change



Heritage



Strength & Unity



Unending

Portlethen Santa Run is back for 2023!

The Santa Run is once again being organised and run by Portlethen Town Association, in conjunction with Fishermoss Primary, Portlethen Primary, Hillside Primary and Portlethen Larder. The run will take place on the dates below unless the weather is against us or we're short of helpers.



The profits will be split evenly between the primary schools and the Larder.

This is for the benefit the whole community, and we always try our best to get round Portlethen on these nights, but bear in mind we are all volunteers and sometimes things may happen outwith our control, resulting in us not getting to a certain road!

There will be updates constantly on Facebook throughout the run nights, so keep checking for details.

Night 1 28th November: Duffshill Drive, Hare Moss Avenue, Mosside Avenue, Craighleith Avenue, Craighleith Drive, Eskywell Place, Mosside Avenue, Sunnyside Drive, Mosside Avenue, Hillside Road, Hillside Avenue, Hillside Drive, Hillside Place, Schoolhill Road, Clochindighter Terrace, Clochindighter Drive, Schoolhill Road, Auchlee Wynd, Auchlee Gardens, Schoolhill Road, Hillside Road, School Hill Drive, Barnhill Gardens, Newlands Drive, Newlands Avenue, **Hillside School**, Barnhill Drive, Schoolhill Drive, Bishopstone Place, Bishopstone Gardens, Bishopstone Circle, Wellbrae, Redmire Crescent, Balqharn Drive, Balqharn Circle.

Night 2 29th November: Clashfarquhar Crescent, Craighead Avenue, Cairnwell Drive, Whinpark Circle, Muirend Road, Bruntland Road, Fern Drive, Bracken Road, Bruntland Road, The Square, Cookston Road, **Portlethen Primary**, Rowanbank Road, Glascairn Avenue, Dunvegan Avenue, Mosside Crescent, Mosside Drive, Rowanbank Road, Glebe Court, Devenick Drive, Thistle Drive, Claymore Avenue, Thistle Drive, Ninian Place, Thistle Drive, Argyll Place.

Night 3 30th November: Bruntland Court, Oak Drive, Berrymuir Road, **Fishermoss School**, The Green, Ash Place, Easter place, Easter Drive, Bramble Way-Place-Road, Drumthwacket Drive, Lethen Walk, Bourtree Avenue, Gorse Circle, Alder Drive, Cairngrassie Circle, Cairngrassie Drive, Berrymuir Road, Broomfield Road, Broomfield Park, Boswell Road.

Night 4 1st December:

5.30pm Approx: Leathen Park Care Home.

6.15pm Approx: Marywell - Wellington drive, Checkbar Gardens, Bothybiggs Drive.



Portlethen's Best Garden Competition 2023

To show off some welcome colour in these cold and dark days, here are some photos of the winning garden!



For the second year running, the garden of Debbie Nutten and dad won.

Once again it was close, with three gardens neck-and-neck until the last set of votes came in (but the main thing is, it wasn't tied, so I didn't have to cast a deciding vote!).

You can view all the photos here:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/PortlethensBestGarden>

Ken Watson, PTA Vice Chair

<u>Clochandighter Accounts</u>			
Transactions in the quarter to 15th October 2023			
	Credit	Debit	Balance
Balance b/fwd.			£5,729.18
Advertisers	£4,330.00		£10,059.18
Postage & stationery		-£44.80	£10,014.38
Printers		-£3,336.00	£6,396.11
Donation - Portlethen Men's Shed		-£100.00	£6,296.11
Donation - Portlethen Allotment Group		-£398.88	£5,897.23
Microsoft Office		-£79.99	£5,817.24
Christmas tree lights		-£735.08	£5,082.16

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Double Sheet (fitted/valance)	£2.50 per item
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King Size (fitted/valance)	£3.50 per item
Pillow Cases	£0.75 per item





Portlethen Moss Conservation Group



**Registered Scottish Charity No –
SC040350**

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

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

Portlethen Moss - Local Nature Conservation Site (LNCS)

Our Kincardine & Mearns Ranger oversaw some peatland restoration work which was carried out in autumn by an oil company who wanted to fund and volunteer for a project that created biodiversity. They did a great job and there's scope for lots more peatland restoration work which will keep our peatland 'alive'? Keeping it 'alive' helps clean our air, did you know that peat holds way more carbon than any forest can and the water that peat retains helps prevent flooding. The moss relies purely on rainwater, there is no other water source that feeds the moss.

The volunteers were so impressed by our Moss that they asked if our group had any other projects they could help with, and the good news is that they want to help create and fund our Community Wildlife & Sensory Garden near the Green (see more about this in the last section).

Community Woodland

The creation of the community woodland and memorial orchard has, without a doubt, been one of our groups biggest successes, despite some early criticism we went on to achieve our aspirations and prove the few critics wrong. The woodland has to be the most used community green space in Portlethen which gives us great pleasure.

We added more saplings to replace tree numbers lost due to ash die back, bringing our tree numbers to capacity for now. We're trialing an area of yellow rattle in the centre of the orchard to see how well it does, the plan is to create a more sustainable perennial wildflower meadow with less grass to compete with.

We've pruned the fruit bushes then mulched around them and the fruit trees for extra protection over winter and given the beech hedge a trim, so it's all set now until spring.

New Community Wildlife & Sensory Garden

As I wrote in the Moss section of this article, we've been so very fortunate to receive an offer of help from an oil company for this project. This is such a great thing for us and for the community of Portlethen.

At the time of writing (early October), we're waiting for quotes for the work to create the circular path and to install gates and fencing. The garden will not be locked, but as a request from Fishermoss Primary School, it should be safe for them to bring groups of small children for outdoor lessons without the worry of them wandering off. The gates and paths will be wide enough for wheelchairs and buggies.

We're in the process of receiving quotes from Rosehill Timber for planters, seating, and a 'structure'. Rosehill Timber built all the wooden seats etc. (not the play equipment) in the woodland and the replacement bridges on the moss. Their products are made from solid wood, are well-constructed and stand up to the elements.

Greenspace has pledged 2,000 bulbs for the garden and there will be other plants on offer nearer the planting season.

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>

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



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Helping Our Endangered Hedgehogs



Even in minus temperatures in winter some hedgehogs can still be active

www.facebook.com/HedgehogsofPortlethen

By December most hedgehogs will be hibernating, but there's every chance some may still be active – these will be juveniles born late in the year who are still building up fat stores to support them through hibernation and their mothers who also need to build up after raising a second late brood of hoglets.

Hedgehogs can wake from time to time throughout winter and go searching for food so it's always best (all year round) to leave a bowl of dry kitten kibble out in a feeding station where it will stay dry and a bowl of water nearby. Keep checking to see if the food is eaten and top it up, or replace it if it gets damp.

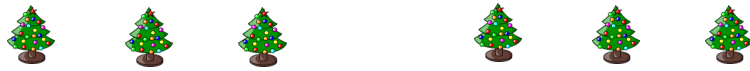
Be careful if you're planning any garden jobs, replacing new sheds or decking over winter, because there could be a hedgehog hibernating under that shed, decking, that pile of garden rubbish, inside that compost heap. If you accidentally disturb a hibernating hedgehog, cover it back over right away, leave a bowl of food and water close by so if it wakes, it finds food quickly and can hibernate again.

It's important to remember that over winter there's no need to worry about any hedgehog out at night, so long as it's uninjured, not a teeny tiny one, it's active and eating, they don't need rescuing just because its winter, they're always best left in the wild if they're healthy.

The exception to the rule, of course, is out during the day, any hedgehog out during the day in winter will always need rescuing, no matter how big or well it looks – if in doubt call a rescue for advice and never be tempted to look after a hedgehog yourself, they're wild vulnerable animals with complex needs.

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.

www.facebook.com/HedgehogsofPortlethen



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would like to wish all our readers the
very best for
the festive season**



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News from the Shed

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

The members continue to respond to requests from the local community. These range from garden planters, garden benches, garden furniture and other smaller items. The Shed is happy to repair or refurbish your garden furniture and other items that are within our capabilities so just let us know what you need.



The members decided to make a small quantity of wooden outdoor poppies for Remembrance Day in November. This small project ended up being a major job for the Members as over 100 poppies were requested. Our thanks to local community for supporting this project and it means that The Shed will be able to make a bigger donation to the Poppy Appeal.

The work on a request from Lethen Park Care Home for raised wheelchair accessible planters continues and the units delivered have been planted up. The gardeners in our Shed have been enjoying the fruits of their labours too. Most of the fruit, vegetables and the potatoes have been harvested and enjoyed.

We continue to maintain links with local schools and community groups. We did some work for Bourtree Pre-School, and we also recently cleaned and painted the door of Portlethen Town Association storage unit and repaired chairs and benches and planters for the Jubilee Hall. So, 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. Our thanks to everyone who donated tools and wood over the past few months.

So, 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@portlethenmenssheds.co.uk

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Who are we

Mearns & Coastal Healthy Living Network is a charity established in 2002 to support the wellbeing of older people living in Kincardine & Mearns.

We focus on the things that older people themselves say are important, which support them to live independently.

We also give older people in the community the chance to build their skills and confidence by volunteering with us.

We are based in Laurencekirk, our charity is run by a small team of staff and a Board of directors.

What do we do

We provide a range of volunteer-led services and activities to support the health and wellbeing of older people (age 50+) throughout Kincardine & Mearns.

The services include help with transport to medical appointments, accompanied or home delivery shopping service, friendly phone chat and garden maintenance.

Our activities include community gardening, a lunch club, low level health walks, digital skills classes, gentle exercise classes and a social group for people with cognitive impairment.

Did you know

Celebrating its 20th year in 2022, the charity serves an area of approximately **300² miles** that is home to over **45,000 people**. It's worth noting that, being rural, this catchment area is relatively poorly served by public transport - or affordable alternatives – further increasing the potential for isolation.


Since its establishment to address these issues, MCHLN has grown from a fledgling charity to one engaging some **200 people a week**. It also coordinates a volunteer network of around **80 individuals** that recently gave over **3,000 hours** of their time for the year – the equivalent of **83 working weeks**.

Running **550 groups**, classes, and activities annually, MCHLN is focussed on combating the negative effects of loneliness and isolation - as well as working against exclusions, such as digital. It focuses on the things that older people themselves say are important and regularly hosts open forums to ensure its activities are in line with the wishes of those it serves. Its activities, services and groups promote social engagement and both support and assist/enable individuals with the practical issues of day-to-day life whilst promoting inclusion, health & wellbeing and reducing loneliness and isolation. We currently have **506** registered clients - and took on 123 new clients between May '22 and Aug '23. In the period 1/5/22 to 31/6/23 our service received **1,214** requests.

If you require any services or would be interested in volunteering your time please contact us at:

01561 378130 or office@mchln.org.uk

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HOT FILLED ROLLS Bacon £2.90 Sausage £2.90 Lorne £2.90 Egg £2.30 Black Pudding £2.90 Extra Item 70p Soup £1.50			EXTRAS Softie 50p Chilli Mince £1.50 Cheese (slice) 60p	
CHIPS Chips £2.50 Chips & Cheese £3.40 Chips & Gravy £3.20 Chips & Curry Sauce £3.00 Chips Cheese & Gravy £4.00 Chips Cheese & Curry Sauce £4.00		DRINKS Tea £1.10 Coffee £1.30 Hot Chocolate £1.40 Decaff Tea/Coffee £1.30 Cans £1.20 Flavoured Water £1.00 Water £1.00 Cartons 70p		
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If you're looking to make a difference in your community, sign up today to become a volunteer mentor at www.mcrpathways.org or scan the QR code opposite to register.



SCAN ME



Dear Readers,

We are proud to tell you that this edition comes to you directly from our P6/7 pupils who have been developing their own school newspaper 'The Hillside Herald'. They post articles on display in our school, and below is a sample. Well done P6/7!

News From Hillside School...

New School Newspaper

In our school we have made a new newspaper, which is called the Hillside Herald. It includes all the latest news from Hillside and around the world, and we share our articles on a bulletin board in school. Our goal is to one day share our articles in the local community, so we are trying our best to make our writing interesting!

School Values

Recently, we have changed our school values to **Ambitious, Resilient and Respectful**. Our values remind us to be the best we can be. We have also got a new award called the Ambitious Award which we hand out every Assembly to a class or pupil who has demonstrated this value. We feel pleased and proud of our new values!

Police Visit

We had a visit from a police officer (PC Charnley), who spent time with some of our pupils in the car park in the morning during school drop off time. He helped to keep our car park safe and this was very exciting for the pupils involved. We can't wait to welcome him back to continue making Hillside School a safe place.



Community Café Dates

Everyone in the Hillside and Portlethen Community (and beyond!) is welcome to attend our Community Cafes. They run from 9.30am - 11.00am in our school dining hall and are led completely by our pupils. Money raised goes towards the maintenance of our Defibrillator, which is important for the whole Community. Save the dates!

21st November 2023

23rd January 2024

12th March 2024

30th April 2024

We would love to see you there, everyone is welcome (including local groups)!

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A selection of events in and around Portlethen this Festive season (local ones underlined)

November 18th (Sat) 10am-4pm: **Cammies Christmas Market**

November 25th (Sat) 2pm-6pm: Jubilee Hall Open Day - *not Festive
but still worthy of mention*



November 26th (Sun) 10am-4pm: **Mearns FM Christmas Fayre** (at Aberdeen
Altens Hotel)

November 26th (Sun) 10am-2pm: **Bettridge Centre Christmas Market**

November 28,29,30 and December 1 (Tue-Fri): Portlethen Santa Run (details
on page 11)

December 2 (Sat) 11am-2pm: Fishermoss School Christmas Fayre

December 2 (Sat) 10am-2pm: **The Haven Christmas Fayre** (3 Market Square,
Stonehaven)

December 10th (Sun) 2pm-5pm: Jubilee Hall Christmas Fair

*Apologies to anyone whose event is not listed here. The above are the ones
known to the Editor, and all dates and times correct, at time of going to press.*

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Kincardine & Deeside Befriending

Kincardine & Deeside Befriending has been working for 27 years in rural Southern Aberdeenshire with vulnerable, socially isolated older people. We facilitate a regular befriending visit which in most cases would involve an outing to a garden centre, going out for a walk, going for a bit of shopping or just for a cuppa and a fine piece, and if outings aren't possible, then a cuppa and a chat at home. We cover a large geographical area. In Kincardine from Banchory-Devenick and Portlethen down the coastal strip to St Cyrus, across to Marykirk, Laurencekirk, Fordoun and Fettercairn. On Deeside from Drumoak to Ballater, Torphins, Lumphanan and Tarland.



We are always on the lookout for volunteers who we try to match locally, so we won't be asking you to travel a long way, and we will look after your travel expenses and your snacks. And don't worry if you don't drive - there's always someone who can't get out and about who needs a friendly face.



What skills do you need to be a volunteer? You just need to be kind, compassionate, empathetic and committed. We offer a home learning package and a volunteering experience which is well-supported with volunteers being screened (PVG checks and references) and supported. We aim to ensure that the service has a positive impact on self-esteem, reduces feelings of loneliness, keeps isolated individuals linked with their local communities, and allows many to remain in their own homes for longer. Befriending has been shown to have positive impacts on the mental health of all involved. If you think that you might have a couple of hours free once a week or once a fortnight, and think that you might like to brighten up someone's day, please get in touch with us either by email

info@kdbefriending.org.uk,

or by telephone on 01569 765 714 (for Kincardine & Mearns)

or 01330 823 368 (for Deeside).

You can also find us on Facebook, and we do have a website for further information <https://kdbefriending.org.uk/>



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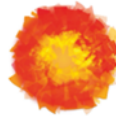
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Let's Talk About Sepsis

by Hannah Saum



THE UK
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What is Sepsis?

Sepsis is the body's over-reaction to an infection or injury. When the body is overwhelmed by an infection, sepsis causes the immune system to attack its own organs and tissues. It needs to be considered as a medical emergency like a heart attack or a stroke, as if it's left untreated or not caught quickly enough sepsis can cause organ failure, necrosis of body tissues which means the tissues die and need to be amputated, and eventually death. Sepsis is very quick, and can kill in under 24 hours, so it's vital that people know the signs to look out for. With early diagnosis it can be treated with antibiotics and fluids given through an IV and the outlook is often good for most patients who get urgent medical attention.

What are the symptoms?

The problem with sepsis is that there's no 'one sign' so it can be difficult to identify. If you, or a loved one, display any of the symptoms below, especially if you've got an infection, or are just really unwell, seek immediate medical advice and just ask "Could it be Sepsis?"

Common symptoms of sepsis in adults:

- Slurred speech or confusion**
- Extreme shivering or muscle pain**
- Passing no urine in 24 hours**
- Severe breathlessness**
- I feel like I might die**
- Skin that's mottled, pale or slightly blue**

Common symptoms in children are:

- Very fast breathing**
- A seizure or a 'fit'**
- Skin that's mottled, pale or slightly blue**
- Rash that doesn't fade when you press it**
- Very lethargic or difficult to wake**
- Abnormally cold to touch**

The most crucial thing to understand is that sepsis is triggered by any infection. Some of the most common causes of sepsis in both adults and children are from urinary tract infections, chest infections, infected cuts or bites, a wound from trauma or recent surgery and infections contracted during birth. Sepsis can affect anyone at any age, regardless of how fit and healthy they are.

The Scale of Sepsis

It is estimated that over 245,000 people in the UK will develop sepsis from an infection this year which is more than double the amount of people who will present at hospital with a heart attack. Another way to understand the truly devastating scale of sepsis and its impact is to know that sepsis kills 48,000 people in the UK every year, which is more than breast, bowel and prostate cancer deaths combined. It's responsible for 1 in 5 deaths worldwide.

My Sepsis Story

At the beginning of February 2023, I was blue-lighted to hospital critically ill with a serious, unknown infection causing sepsis. I'd collapsed 3 days previously and thought I was "just anaemic", but by the time my blood results came back, and my GP admitted me to hospital, I had drastic sickness and diarrhoea, severe hearing loss, delirium with a fever over 40°C and low blood pressure. Initial blood tests in Critical Care showed a strep infection in my bloodstream so they blasted me with three broad spectrum IV antibiotics and IV fluids, continuously monitoring my vital signs while they worked hard to find where the infection was. After a long, anxious day for my husband Phil and our boys, they were allowed to see me for a short visit, but I was still deteriorating and really struggling. I have very patchy memories of what happened, but I do remember praying continuously for the strength to fight.

An emergency CT scan of my abdomen showed inflammation and infection in my pelvis and three DVT blood clots. By late that night, the Doctors said I was stable but that it could still go either way. The doctors were amazed how well my body responded to the life-saving antibiotics as the next morning I started to improve. When the blood cultures came back, they had isolated Group A Strep (iGAS) and my IV was changed to benzylpenicillin. One of the scariest parts was the hallucinations and sensory overload I experienced when my brain just wouldn't switch off and I couldn't sleep. Another day, I could hardly talk as I struggled to find words or get them out. I had episodes of low potassium and low phosphate, so these were also replaced via IV. I was in hospital for 17 days and had a PICC line fitted to administer my own IV antibiotics at home for a further four weeks. The Doctors told me that I had defied the odds and I was so thankful to have survived and not lost any limbs.

Physical Recovery from Sepsis

When I was discharged from hospital, I was so weak I could only walk a few steps and couldn't climb the stairs. Although I knew it was long road ahead, I was determined to make a full recovery. I'd received no information about how to recover apart from "you will be very, very tired for a very, very long time". Once my appetite returned, my body craved protein to rebuild all the muscle I had lost. I embarked on my physical recovery by setting mini goals, celebrating every little milestone. I celebrated my first hundred steps then slowly increased until it was 1,000 then 10,000.

After the Easter holidays I started my phased return to work at Portlethen Primary and the first day I worked three hours then went home to sleep for four hours! At the end of April, I felt well enough to return to PureGym Wellington Circle. Under the guidance of my PT (@exerciseandmentalhealthcoach), I restarted my weekly PT sessions then slowly added in weight-based classes. Although my body is still healing, I've had a good physical recovery. It's taken a lot of hard work as I've had to push myself while listening to my body to not overdo it! Walking, weights and stretching have been my physical therapy.



Continued overpage...

Continued from page 33

Mental Recovery from Sepsis

Sepsis is also a huge trauma on the body mentally and when I got home from hospital, the emotion hit. The memory loss, night terrors, anxiety attacks, chest pains, flashbacks, nightmares, hair loss and PTSD were never mentioned in hospital. I had amazing support from my husband, our boys, family, friends and colleagues but I also needed professional support. I'm so thankful I did my own research and found The UK Sepsis Trust. Their weekly survivor zoom calls were an invaluable safe space to share my experience with those who understood and to cry the tears I'd held in while being so brave in hospital. Facing and talking about the trauma early on in recovery really helped and I can now talk about what happened without getting upset. I've focused on a positive mindset throughout my recovery as I've so much to be thankful for. Sepsis is a life-changing experience and every day I wake up grateful to be alive. I take time to appreciate the small things in life and no longer get stressed about things that don't matter.

Who are the UK Sepsis Trust?

The UK Sepsis Trust are a small team of 16. The charity was founded in 2012 by Dr. Ron Daniels, an NHS ICU clinician who was devastated by the amount of sepsis deaths he witnessed on his ward as patients were arriving too late. The charity work to save lives from sepsis and improve outcomes for survivors by educating healthcare professionals, raising public awareness and providing support for those affected by this devastating condition. The Trust offer free support groups and a free confidential support service operated by NHS sepsis nurses who work with people to empower and support them through recovery or bereavement.

Raising Awareness about Sepsis



I'm now a volunteer for the UK Sepsis Trust and my mission is to raise awareness by fundraising, continuing to talk about sepsis and telling my story. During the month of July, I walked 20,000 steps a day and raised over £1000 for the UK Sepsis Trust. In August, Phil and I held a sepsis stall at the Portlethen Gala to raise awareness by handing out leaflets and speaking to people. As part of Sepsis September, I gave a sepsis presentation to S6 at Portlethen Academy. During October, I've been supporting an American woman I met through Instagram who's just survived iGAS and sepsis. The UK Sepsis Trust have a new 100 squats per day fundraising challenge coming up in November so I'm looking forward to that too! I'm available in December if any organisation or business would like a sepsis talk.

What can you do? Become Sepsis Savvy

It is estimated that 14,000 lives could be saved every year if people just asked, "Could it be Sepsis?" at an earlier stage and treatment could be delivered. The UK Sepsis Trust need support to invest in resources to tell the public and healthcare community about sepsis. Please go to sepsistrust.org to become Sepsis Savvy and tell others about it too. Schools and employers can also register for free resources and become Sepsis Savvy. You can donate to the UK Sepsis Trust via their website and any support is greatly appreciated.

*Portlethen & District
Community Council*

The PDCC got Portlethen Market up and running over the past few months and it has proved to be very popular with stall holders and customers alike.

Something much needed in Portlethen to add to the community and bring people together whilst supporting small and local businesses.

The market will take a small sabbatical over the festive season returning in 2024.

If you are interested in running a stall or joining the organisation committee, please email portlethen.market@gmail.com.

Mandy



Mearns FM, your local community-based charity radio station, is hosting a Christmas Fayre at the Aberdeen Altens hotel, on **26th November, 10-4**, with over 30 crafters and a Santa's Grotto. Entry to the event is free (donations are welcome). Tickets for Santa's Grotto are £7.50 and available from the Mearns FM website:

<https://www.mearnsfm.org.uk/>





Portlethen Parish Church of Scotland

Scottish Charity Number SC007420

Locum Minister: Rev. John Watson
E-mail: johnmutchwatson2065@btinternet.com
Text: [07733 334380](tel:07733334380)
Tel: [01569 730604](tel:01569730604)

Church Secretary: portlethenpc@btconnect.com
Telephone: [01224 782883](tel:01224782883)

I have been asked to submit something to the Clochandighter magazine during my spell as locum at Portlethen and, if all goes according to plans, Newtonhill as well.

Some of you might just remember me from 2015 to 2017 when I covered during the vacancy at Portlethen until Rodolphe arrived. After a very quick six years Rodolphe and family move to pastures anew in the south of England, and I know that we wish them every blessing in their ministry there.

It's my hope that plans to call a minister will be up and running by the new year, but until then I am here to serve anyone in our community who needs me.

As a retired minister, the church is my spiritual home until I am called to serve God on a higher plain.

I am now reaching out to the community of Newtonhill and Portlethen, asking you to give your support to your church. There is a very apt saying reminding us..."If you don't use, it you lose it".

Both churches are there for all of you and if you want to get in touch and have a chat, I am available for you.

You may want to celebrate a christening or have a wedding service or a renewal of vows or, sadly, need to arrange a funeral. I can do all of that for you and you can get in touch using the email address, or text or phone using the numbers above.

Let me say that the church in your community is not just a place of worship, but a place of love and fellowship, where everyone, no matter their faith, culture or creed, will be made so welcome.

Having been an police officer for more than 25 years, a mature student for about 5 years, and a minister for the last 35 years, I have seen it all, heard it all and done it all. There is nothing that will surprise me or shock me.

As a footnote, I want to say I offer a special service to anyone who needs it. It is called Divine healing where, through Jesus Christ, I offer private healing services at your home or in the church. Much of the work I have done in that context has been verified and on one occasion featured on television. It's Jesus who takes the credit and the praise, and with Jesus anything is possible.

You can join us any Sunday for worship at either the Newtonhill service which starts 10.00am, or the Portlethen service starting at 10.30am.

Looking forward, we can offer you the following services in Portlethen:

24th December 2023 at 6.30 pm - A Christingle service.

24th December 2023 at 11.30pm - Watch night service.

25th December 2023 at 10.30 am - Christmas Day fun service

Best wishes,
John



ED: *Heartfelt apologies to Alison Harris who, as Session Clerk, stepped up and wrote the Parish Church article for the September edition of the Cloch, and whose name and choice of prayer were inadvertently missed off the end of the article.*





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AGM

Thank you to everyone who came along to our Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 19th September at the Jubilee Hall. We were joined by Leaders, Parents, some Beavers, Cubs and Scouts. It was chaired by Michelle, our Group Scout Leader. The meeting lasted for one hour with the main order of business to create a Trustee Board. We had two parent volunteers from

Bourtree Scouts come forward.

We are delighted that we now have a board made up of:

- Chair - Nicola (parent)
- Secretary - Jo-Anne (parent)
- Treasurer - Anne (re-elected long-standing ex-leader and parent)
- Ex-Officio Members - all Section Leaders:
 - ◇ Beavers - Michelle (Hillside) & Christine (Bourtree)
 - ◇ Cubs - Lynne (Hillside) & Brian (Bourtree)
 - ◇ Scouts - Rachel (Hillside) & Nicola (Bourtree)

Our final order of business was to elect a Group President. A unanimous vote saw Brian Black elected to post.

Volunteers Needed

We are also looking for Hillside volunteers to come forward so we can continue to deliver Scouting to all our Hillside youth members. If you are interested, please contact our 1st Portlethen Scouts Facebook page or your local meeting.

We meet on Wednesdays:

Beavers (age 6-8): 6.30 pm - 7.30 pm

Cubs (age 8 - 10): 6.30 pm - 8.15 pm

Scouts (age 10 -14): 7.00 pm - 9.00 pm

Keep Scouting alive and well in and around Portlethen

1st Portlethen Scout Group

Scottish Charity Number: SC032167

Web: <http://1stportlethenscouts.scoutsites.org.uk/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/1stportlethen>

Scouting days of Volunteering

to the tune of Twelve days of Christmas

On my first day of volunteering,
my Scout troop asked of me,
a hike to New-ton-hill!

On my second day of volunteering,
My Scout troop asked of me,
Two challenge badges!

On my third day of volunteering,
My scout troop said to me,
Three games of dodgeball!

On my fourth day of volunteering,
My scout troop said to me,
Four nights away!

On my fifth day of volunteering,
My scout troop said to me,
Five Summer Camps!

On my sixth day of volunteering,
My scout troop said to me,
Six Campfire S'mores!

On my seventh day of volunteering,
My scout troop said to me,
Seven Flag Breaks!

On my eighth day of volunteering,
My scout troop said to me,
Eight Rolled Neckers!

On my ninth day of volunteering,
My scout troop said to me,
Nine Campfire Songs!

On my tenth day of volunteering,
My scout troop said to me,
Ten Forgotten Toothbrushes!

On my eleventh day of volunteering,
My scout troop said to me,
Eleven Mugs Hot Chocolate!

On my twelfth day of volunteering,
My scout troop said to me,
Twelve Bacon Rolls!

Article and Scouting days of Volunteering written by Bourtree & Hillside Scout troops.

We wish you all a Merry Christmas from all at 1st Portlethen!





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Portlethen Bowling Club

All good things must come to an end, and in the case of Portlethen Bowling Club, it was the outdoor season of 2023.

On the green the surface was significantly improved thanks to the hard work of the greenkeeping staff, many of whom are volunteers.

We had some decent spells of weather this year which enabled all of our inter-club competitions to be concluded, and we have participated in the Bon Accord and Mearns leagues, Scottish and Barclay Harvey competitions across Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire with varying degrees of success. Our ladies managed successfully to defend their title of AirBP trophy winners. It was our turn to host the annual weekend with the Grangemouth Bowling Club, which is always a great weekend.

Our outdoor season will resume in April 2024 (date to be confirmed in future edition), but if you are interested in joining, our fees are Adult £95 and Junior £30 per year. All members are welcome at our AGM to be held in February 2024.

More information can be found at www.portlethenbowlingclub.co.uk

On the social front, the clubhouse will still be open most Friday evenings from 7pm for a drink and catch up with friends. All non-members are welcome, but must be signed in by a member.

Our next social events are: our Christmas Party 16th December and Hogmanay Party 31st December. There is also a quiz night to be held on 20th January 2024.

These events will be popular so, to avoid disappointment, if you are interested in attending, please contact: portlethenbcevents@outlook.com

Portlethen Library

We offer a warm welcome at Portlethen Library over the winter months.

We have our regular activities including:
Lego Club on Mondays 3.30pm - 4.30pm;
Bookbug on Tuesdays 10.00am -10.30am;
Craft Group on Wednesdays 1.30pm - 3.30pm
and of course our regular **book groups**.



In November, local author **Martha Wells** will be giving a short talk and signing copies of her book, *Incoming Tide* ([see details below](#)) on Wednesday 22nd November,

In December, look out for **Festive Crafts** on Tuesday 19th December, where we will be making some Christmas decorations.

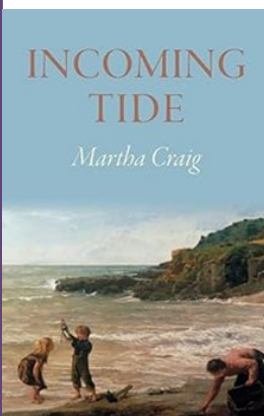
In the new year, we are looking forward to bringing some new activities, including a Relaxed Lego Session on a Saturday and a Genre discussion group.

Please note: we will be closed from Christmas Day until Wednesday 3rd January 2024.

To book for upcoming activities, pop into the library or visit www.livelifeberdeenshire.org.uk

* * * * *

On Wednesday 22nd November at 2pm, Martha Wells (writing as Martha Craig) will be giving a short talk and book-signing.



Set in the late nineteenth century, *Incoming Tide* is a fact-based novel bringing to life the dramas of ordinary people. It celebrates the indomitable spirit, and the humour, that sees them through the vagaries of wresting a livelihood from the unpredictable sea.

A country-bred girl enters this world and learns to adapt - to heed the superstitions, to work like the others from dawn to dusk, and to live with the ever-present fear, shared by the women, that her husband may be lost at sea.

All proceeds from the sale of this book will be donated to the R.N.L.I.

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We are part of a Network of 46 groups in the Grampian Area who arrange extra walks and events.



NP 50+ Walkers meet on alternate weeks at car parks at Newtonhill Church and Bourtree Hall, Portlethen at 9.30 a.m., and car-share.

A weekly email is sent out with walk details.

Walks are around 5 to 7 miles in various beautiful areas, usually within an hour's drive.

Cost is £4, payable on the day.

You'll need to bring a pair of walking boots or shoes with a good grip, a waterproof, a hat and gloves in colder weather, and a packed lunch and drink.

Hope to see you on a walk soon!

PLEASE NOTE!

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News from your community hall.

Jubilee Hall: Breaking News!

Following the successful insulation of the hall roof-space last year and replacing the horrendously inefficient infra-red heating system with state-of-the-art Air Source Heat Pumps, we have decided it is now time to refurbish the hall.

When the old heaters were removed, they left a few gaping holes in the walls and the new Air Source Heat Pumps also required holes to be drilled to connect the inside heating units to the outside pumps. While the new heating system works nicely, we were painfully aware that the hall was looking a bit "tatty"! The floor has also suffered from 20 years of footfall, so a complete refurbishment is now underway.

The hall will have been closed from Friday 13th October for 5 days for the floor to be sanded and revarnished. Following that work, the hall will again have been closed on 6th of November, this time for a week, for all the holes to be patched and replastered and the entire hall redecorated from floor to ceiling. We are very much looking forward to the final results and I'm sure it will be a vast improvement.

Of course, we will need your assistance to keep the hall looking pristine and to help with this, a small cleaning kit will be made available to all our future Lets to allow them to clean up after their events, be it a children's party or a regular group event. We ask all our clients to brush the floor before leaving the hall and we really appreciate everyone's help in this.

We have purchased 20 new folding tables to supplement the 5 kiddies' tables and 20 kiddies' chairs we purchased over the summer. We are still planning to build 4 picnic tables on the grassy area to the rear of the hall, which can be used for barbecues and picnics over the summer months. We are also hoping to build additional storage to the side of the hall, as our growing client base often come with equipment and materials which, ideally, require to be kept at the hall for future use.

This is an exciting time for the Hall, and we are confident the newly refurbished space will have a wide appeal for those planning parties, weddings, or Corporate Events. You can book the hall through the contact details shown opposite.

We are still looking for a **Committee Secretary** to keep track of our correspondence. If you have some time to spare and like the idea of supporting your local Community, please let us know. Contact us through our email: Jubileehallportlethen@gmail.com.

RAG BAG - This is still proving popular and raises a significant cash flow to help us keep costs down at the hall. Your contribution of clothing and shoes (appropriately bagged and shoes tied together), is much appreciated.

Finally, we are planning to install solar panels and battery storage at the hall. In line with the universal need to urgently reduce our carbon footprint, we are in negotiation with the Scottish Government who have a programme in place to support Community Halls in their endeavour to reduce utility costs and adopt green energy usage. Watch this space!

Our email addresses:
Jubileehallportlethen@gmail.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

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OUT OF HOURS Sat/Sun: after 17.00	£30.00	£25.00

Community Fundraising Events: Please Contact Committee

General enquiries: Jubileehallportlethen@gmail.com

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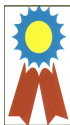
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Hello and a warm welcome to you all from us here at St Ternan's.



St Ternan's is very happy to record that 'Doors Open Days' on 16th and 17th September were a success, with a total of 14 visitors over the two days.

Following on from that, on 30th September we held a musical concert of singing by Aberdeen-based choir 'Vocal Moves'. This was most entertaining and enjoyable, also very well attended.

Sundays 10.30 am Eucharist Service
Wednesdays 11.00am Prayer and Chat meeting

Services to be held at St Ternan's over the festive season

10th December: 10.30am Carol Service
24th December: 10.30am Morning Prayer
25th December: 09.30am Family Service



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, a 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.

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THE LARDER (PORTLETHEN AND SURROUNDING AREAS)



#THELARDER

#FORTHECOMMUNITYBYTHECOMMUNITY

The Larder at the Porty Cabin on Cookston Road (opposite Portlethen Primary School) is getting prepared for our busiest period yet. Winter 2023/24 is looking to be a struggle for many individuals and families as the cost-of-living crisis digs deeper. The Larder is here to ease some of the difficulties by offering fresh bread, eggs, fruit and vegetables, fridge and cupboard items, toiletries, cleaning and baby items, all for a small donation.

There are still many people in our local community that do not realise that The Larder is available to EVERYONE. Please come in and visit The Larder as we receive organic vegetables from the farm at Bridge of Muchalls through the [@oneseedforward](#) organisation and we also receive fruit and vegetables weekly from FareShare. These items are for EVERYONE to benefit from, for a small donation, if you can. We also sell fresh farm eggs, soup packs and bananas at a fair price. The Fareshare items are excess stock items donated by supermarkets and are distributed to us to stop them from being sent to landfill and prevent food waste. Please see our Facebook page for weekly updates on the food items donated or pop in to see for yourself. All monetary donations are then used to purchase fresh items weekly.

If you find yourself struggling with food cost and could benefit from extra help, please scan the QR Code attached to place an order or visit our Facebook page and click the link to open a Google form to choose the items you are short of. We can also be contacted by email to c19portlethenhelp@gmail.com or by phone on 07376 133870.

The Larder is open **Monday 6pm-8pm, Friday 2.30pm-4.30pm and Saturday 10am-12pm**. Our volunteers are there to help anyone during this cost-of-living crisis and you do not need a referral from another organisation.

We are always very grateful for donations, large or small, as this enables us to spend our grant money and donated money on fresh items that we need to purchase. The Portlethen and surrounding areas communities, continue to amaze us with all the support we receive, and we would like to say a huge thank you to each and everyone of you who has supported us this year!!

Have a lovely Festive Season and Best Wishes for 2024.

The Larder Team



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Jingle Drums from Newtonhill Pipeband



The main 2023 season is over for Newtonhill Pipeband, so the band is going into the winter months with a few engagements over the festive season but concentrating on getting new tunes and sets ready for 2024.

Although a non-competitive social band, they tutor young and old pipers and drummers, who have had individual successes throughout the season. A major success for the junior band was the number of medals won at the Braemar Junior Highland Games in July, where there were successes on chanter, pipes, and drums (pictured). This was added to with excellent results in Nat 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Music for players who chose to use pipes or drums in their exams.



This year saw the band have its usual set of engagements with venues from Braemar to Inverbervie and everywhere in between. Highland Games, school fairs, shows and special occasions were all covered. Closer to home the band supplied pipers to pipe out the P7s at all 3 primary schools in Portlethen and had a great day out at the Portlethen Gala (pictured), followed by the band BBQ.

The penultimate engagement of the year is always the ASDA bag packing fundraiser. The band will be in ASDA Portlethen on the morning of December 23rd, shaking buckets and playing through the aisles to bring some festive cheer. After that, the band will be at the Fireball ceremony in Stonehaven to pipe in the new year.



Pipe Major Domhnall McLennan said, "A big thanks to all the parents and helpers of the band, their help is invaluable both during practice and at performances. On behalf of the band, I wish everyone a peaceful and happy festive season and we will see you at ASDA or in the new year. All the Best!"

The band has a buoyant pipe corps but is looking for drummers to boost the drum corps. If you have played before, however long ago, we would welcome you to get in touch or come along to one of our practices. We meet every Tuesday night between 7.00pm and 9.30pm at Portlethen Academy. You can either contact us through Pipe Major Domhnall McLennan on 07889 106527, e-mail on [newtonhillpipeband@gmail](mailto:newtonhillpipeband@gmail.com) or through our Facebook page.

Newtonhill Pipeband is a Scottish Charity: SCO41533



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Councillor Catherine Victor

My article for this quarter is about planning.

This is an area that I am passionate about, and hope that decisions I make are for the benefit of all the residents in Aberdeenshire and in particular, Ward 17 North Kincardine.

We cannot, as elected members, get into discussions on planning applications before they come in front of area committee or otherwise. That does not mean that we do not take on board comments that are sent or related to us. We do listen to residents and Community Councils when they voice their opinion, but we must keep an open mind and make a judgement on all evidence that is presented to us on the day.

As I am sure you are aware, there are many policies that must be followed in determining a planning application; some set by Aberdeenshire Council, through the Local Development Plan, and some set by Scottish Government, through the National Development Plan. They are similar in content and help to guide decisions to the best outcome for all concerned.

With policies, there can always be reasons why elected members may vote against the Planning Department's decision to Grant or Refuse an application.

So it was with the application for 175 houses to be built at Hillside, Portlethen. When all the evidence had been presented to us, by the Planning Officer, at the Area Committee meeting, and after many questions and debate on the day, Mel Sullivan, your Lib Dem Councillor put forward an amendment, which I seconded, to the decisions by the planning department to grant planning permission. The amendment was to refuse planning on the grounds that the application did not:

- 1) Allow enough usable open and green space for the development;
- 2) Look at improving infrastructure and services;
- 3) Answer to our satisfaction the questions on the extension to Portlethen Academy, already over capacity, to enable it to accommodate the extra pupils.

Although the plan showed 40% open space, as is required re policy, in our estimation, it was not space that children could freely play on. We are not against new development in Portlethen, but it must give existing and new residents the quality of life that they expect. For too long, Portlethen has been a collection of housing estates, with no real thought, into planning of quality of life and infrastructures, essential to a comfortable environment. It is no secret that I am campaigning for more football space, a Sports Centre / Community Centre, a more affluent entrance to Portlethen and a proper Town Centre. Some of these are ambitious, to say the least, but I believe that you must have a vision and ambition and should follow that vision/ ambition, to the best of your ability.

That is what I will be doing for as long as I am your elected representative.

I will take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Xmas and a Good New Year. Let's look forward with positivity to 2024 and a better life for all residents in Aberdeenshire and Scotland.

Get in touch through: cllr.c.victor@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Tel: 07787 800678

or message me on my Facebook page: **Councillor Catherine Victor.**

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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Creating places for people

Term 1 (Session 2023-24) in Portlethen Academy has gone by in an absolute flash! It has been very busy, but with lots of successes and achievements to be very proud of.

We started this session by looking ahead to our next 3 years (2023-2026) in terms of our Improvement Priorities. This is a great position for us to be in post-COVID recovery and following two years of consistent self-evaluation. It has been possible, following the relaunch of our shared Vision and Values from Term 4 last session, which you can see below at the top. Our whole-school community was a part of this work.

Our top 3 priorities are in the middle red box in the graphic below, and we look forward to working with everyone across our whole community – pupils, parents/carers, staff, partners to achieve these goals:



PORTLETHEN ACADEMY


Indicative School Improvement Plan (2023-2026)

In Portlethen Academy, our Vision is 'to be the very best we can be!'

To achieve this, we are 'READY':

- Ready for learning.
- Ready to contribute to our local community.
- Ready to overcome challenges.
- Ready for life and the world of work.

Underpinned by our Values of **RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY** and **RESILIENCE**.



Over the next three years (2023-2026), we aim to:

1. Improve ethos, relationships, behaviour and communication across our school and wider community.
2. Enhance our Learning, Teaching and Assessment and Curriculum to ensure all pupils are equipped with skills, qualifications and experiences for life beyond school, and in an ever-changing society.
3. Empower all to support the wellbeing of all across our school community, increasing resilience, aspiration, and mental wellbeing.

<p style="font-size: small; margin: 0;">Core Q1 1.3 Leadership of Change</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed our Shared Vision and Values. • Increase Leadership Opportunities for All. • Communicate effectively with our whole school community. 	<p style="font-size: small; margin: 0;">Q1 2.2 Curriculum</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and refresh our Curriculum to provide clear and innovative pathways for all. • Continue to Map our BGE (S1-3) Curriculum and focus on Skills Development and deeper learning. 	<p style="font-size: small; margin: 0;">Core Q1 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upskill in all aspects of Universal Support. • Continue to improve our pedagogy and practice. • Agree and implement our high-quality learning, teaching and assessment position statement. 	<p style="font-size: small; margin: 0;">Core Q1 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equity and Inclusion</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refresh our Expectations of All and embed our training to improve relationships and behaviour. • Continue to support all aspects of mental wellbeing and attendance in every classroom. 	<p style="font-size: small; margin: 0;">Core Q1 3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review our approaches to assessment. • Continue to increase aspirations and overall attainment. • Review our whole-school approach to Achievement within a BGE Level.
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Whole-School Sponsored Walk

For the first time in 5 years (!) we brought back our whole school Sponsored Walk on Friday 22nd September 2023. This is a real highlight across our school and was an opportunity to raise some money for school funds. Thanks to the generosity of all sponsorship, we managed to raise more than £5000 for our funds. A HUGE thank you to all pupils, staff, parents/carers and those who sponsored us for making this possible, alongside our Sponsored Walk organising committee.

Communication - Reminders

A reminder that the best way to keep in contact with the school is via our Twitter/X account which can be located here: [@PortyAcad](#) Please do follow us here to be able to see some highlights, pupil successes and achievements, and reminders of upcoming events.



Barry Drennan, Head teacher

Emma from OGV visits Porty Tuckshop at Portlethen Academy

Emma Davidson from OGV came along to visit our tuck shop team here at Portlethen Academy, in order to give us some advice and tips as we grow our business. We were very grateful to hear her insights as we have big plans to diversify and offer a drinks service to staff and pupils in the future. As a social enterprise, we want put our profits back into the local community by supporting groups such as “The Young at Heart Group” which provides support and friendship for older people in the local area.



Emma and Porty Tuck Shop team



Emma gave us an interesting overview of OGV Energy, their magazine and podcast, the Tap Room and events. We felt we could learn a lot from the way the company has so many different interests. Emma gave us tips on managing our budgets, how to look for sponsorship, how to promote ourselves, and how to develop as a team. We have a lot of work to do now as we work towards making Porty Café a reality.

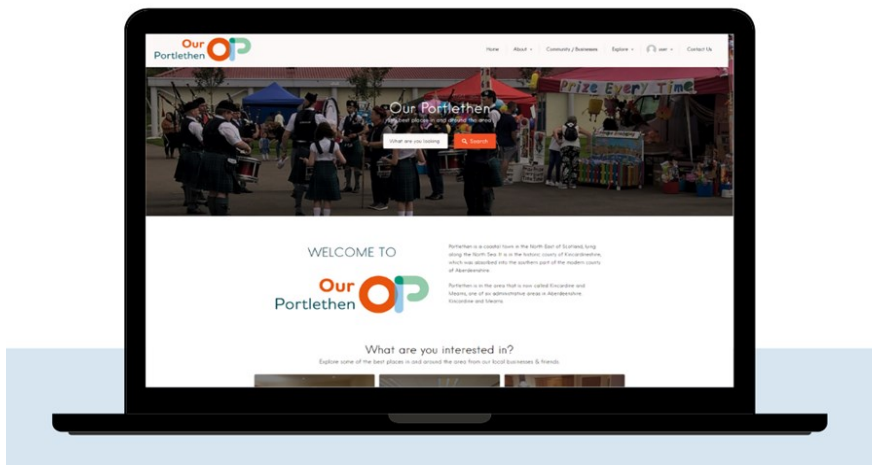
Our vision is to be a sustainable social enterprise, which can provide a friendly space for people to meet and enjoy drinks and snacks. The café would also provide opportunities for young people in the school to gain qualifications in barista training and customer service.

Tuck shop members donate time and cakes to the Young at Heart Group

If you are interested in supporting us to achieve our dream, please get in touch with Jess Copner at Portlethen Academy at jess.copner@aberdeenshire.gov.uk.

Thanks again to Emma and everyone at OGV for inspiring us to keep going.

Our Portlethen OP



Portlethen A2B dial-a-bus

The service operates weekly with an Aberdeenshire Council wheelchair-accessible minibus

Wednesdays: 9.45 – 13.30 hrs

The A2B service is open to:-

- People who have difficulty walking
- People with other disabilities
- Residents who don't live near a bus stop or bus route.



If you think you need door-to-door transport you may qualify. We can take you anywhere within Portlethen e.g. shopping, medical centre, the library or to connect onto another bus service. You can ask for a trip at any time between 9.45 and 13.30 hrs, but you will need to fit in with other passengers. Phone us to find out more about the service.

All passengers have to be registered as an A2B member.

All trips must be pre-booked. Bookings can be made up to 7 days in advance, or up to 14 days for a medical appointment.

Call us on the A2B hotline number **01467 535 333**. Choose **option 1** for bookings, **option 2** for cancellations, **option 3** for general enquiries.



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

**MAY THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS ENRICH YOUR LIFE,
BRINGING JOY AND PEACE TO YOU AND YOURS.**

WE ARE PLANNING CHRISTMAS EVENTS WE'D LOVE TO SHARE WITH YOU, PLEASE SEE OUR WEBSITE IN THE COMING WEEKS FOR DETAILS.



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 at The Jubilee Hall, Portlethen, 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! Cost is £3 per family per session.

Please contact Susan on 07513 387 810 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. We also enjoy doing card-making, decoupage coasters and other crafts together. We meet weekly on a Thursday, from 7:00 - 9:00pm with a £4 fee towards costs per session.



For more info, contact Frances on 07740 427 272.

SUNDAY SERVICES

Every other week we meet at The Porty Cabin, Portlethen at 2pm for tea/coffee before a watch service at 2.15pm. 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 ACTIVITIES

WWW.PORTLETHENCF.COM / INFO@PORTLETHENCF.COM

Rotary



In the last edition we were eagerly awaiting the return of our two RYLA candidates, Claire and Alison, from Abernethy, along with Bailey who had taken a place offered by one of the Inverness clubs, and on Tuesday 12th September they all visited the club to give their presentations. RYLA (Rotary Young Leader Award) is designed to challenge the young people in many ways, overcoming challenges and developing leadership skills. We were delighted that a couple of the camp leaders along with Mr Drennan the Academy Head Teacher could join us, fortunately they were able to help connect our tech with the speakers' presentations! All three spoke very well about the challenges they had faced and overcame and the benefits this will give them going forward in life.



We hope to be able to sponsor at least one candidate in 2024, if you know of anyone who would like to contribute to giving a second young person this great opportunity, please get in touch, information opposite. If you know of any young person who will be 16 and under 18 in July 2024 and would be interested in RYLA, please ask them to speak to their guidance teacher for more information.

As usual we will imminently be distributing Rotary Shoeboxes to participating schools, to be collected in November and sent to eastern Europe, last year they went to Ukraine. The purple crocus corms have also arrived to be distributed to some schools and community groups. The purchase of the crocuses forms part of our contribution to the eradication of Polio.




We have been supporting our international project in Uganda, providing The Amazing Love School with a wood burning stove cooker and a water capture system which will cut the cost of importing water.

Socially, some of us are about to play Laurencekirk club in our tabletop games competition, The Gavel, the winner progressing to the next round. On World Polio Day we are planning a safari supper where those who will be dining make a contribution. Worldwide, there are only 7 notified cases this year of the wild polio virus, and Rotary must help finish the vaccination job.


Please speak to the car raffle Rotarian ticket sellers in The Bon Accord Centre during November and December and spend at least £1 to help Charlie House progress with their children's hospice, you could win a car!! Portlethen Rotary will be taking our turn on duty.



If you think you would like to help with any of the above please contact our executive secretary Alistair via email: acm739@btinternet.com or find us on Facebook.



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Portlethen and District Voluntary Community Ambulance Association

MEET THE TEAM

COLIN STRATTON - FUNDRAISING CO-ORDINATOR



A couple of years before I retired, I told my wife that I would like to give something back to the community in Portlethen, and so decided I would volunteer to drive the Community Ambulance I have now been driving the Ambulance for 11 years.

I was born and raised in Aberdeen. I had experience in a variety of jobs before joining Shell UK in 1977, where I spent the next 35 years.

Shell afforded me tremendous opportunities to develop my career. Prior to retiring, I worked in the Marine Logistics Department, chartering offshore supply vessels, which allowed me to travel to Norway and Holland on a regular basis.

I joined the Community Ambulance as a relief driver and, after a few months, was offered a permanent slot as the Tuesday morning driver, which I have been doing ever since. I enjoy driving the Ambulance, as well as helping residents it also allows me to meet a lot of interesting people. For some passengers, the driver and the medical staff may be the only people they see that day.

Here, I would like to say "Hello" to all my regular passengers.

In 2016 I was asked to take over the role of chairperson from Noreen Harding, which I did for 6 years and was happy to hand over the reins to David Walton last year. I enjoyed the role as it kept me busy for about 8 hours a week. I was involved in purchasing our current vehicle and whenever I could, I publicised the work of the Community Ambulance in the local press. Of course, running a charity is not a one-man band and I was ably supported by the excellent volunteers on the committee.

Whilst on holiday in May this year, I missed a committee meeting – **big mistake (ha ha)**. When I returned home, I was told I had been

nominated as the Fundraising Co-ordinator for the new vehicle we were in the process of purchasing!

Since then, I have been busy contacting community councils, local businesses and the Community Funds of large companies, who have a presence in Portlethen and Newtonhill, seeking donations to assist in raising the funds to buy the new vehicle. We have had some success but are still looking for more donations.

If anyone reading this article would like to support us by giving a donation towards the new vehicle, we would be most grateful. Please give me a call on 07875 179861.

Hopefully you will soon see the new “wee blue bus” out and about on the roads of Portlethen, Newtonhill, Muchalls and Chapelton – please give the driver a wave as it will make their day!

We have had one new recruit join our team since the last edition of this magazine, but we are still looking for more relief drivers to give our busy team more occasional breaks from their regular half-day slots. If you have some spare time, have category D1 on your driving licence, and would like to be part of our hard-working friendly team, please get in touch to discuss your availability.

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



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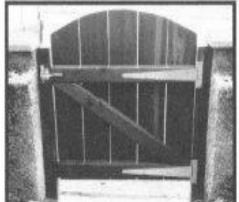
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Aberdeenshire Council Area

Office

Viewmount
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

Morrisons Daily
Unit 4-5
The Green
Berrymuir Road
Tel: 01224 783752

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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HMRC Business Helpline:	0800 0159 559
Employers' Helpline:	0800 019 2211
Housing Helpline:	0808 800 4444
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Mental Health Helpline:	0800 83 85 87
Parents Helpline:	08000 28 22 33
Domestic Abuse Helpline:	0800 027 1234
Rape Crisis Scotland Helpline:	08088 01 03 02
LGBT Health and Wellbeing Helpline:	0300 123 2523
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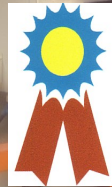
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