

# CLOCHANDIGHTER

**Portlethen's Community Magazine**

**EDITION 127 – Spring 2026**



**A host of golden Portlethen daffodils**



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# Editorial



Here we are, Spring at last! I had promised a number of people that I would not bleat on about weather in this edition of the Cloch (and if you go back to the last edition, you'll understand why), so... I'll just say that I'm sure I'm not the only one looking forward to snowdrops, daffodils, tulips, and the many wildflowers throughout Portlethen, even (dare I say it?) a bit of sunshine! The front cover shows a lovely display of daffodils in Berrymuir Road in 2025.

We have a packed Cloch for you as always. Plenty of updates from the various groups as well as the usual advertisements, providing a useful reference in times of need. If your company or group would like to feature in the next edition, please get in touch using the email at the bottom of this page.

Unfortunately, as happens occasionally (though rarely, I would hope), human error crept into the last two editions of the Cloch. My sincere apologies to Michael Morton whose contact details were missed off his advert. Rest assured they are back now where they belong (p.30).

Planning ahead for the Portlethen Gala in August, the Gala Committee is now looking for both stallholders and sponsors. Could either of these be you or your company? Email: [gala.portlethen@gmail.com](mailto:gala.portlethen@gmail.com) for more information.



But first, on behalf of all at the Clochandigher, may I wish you a very Happy Easter?



Alison Lloyd-Wiggins - Editor

Email the Clochandigher on [clochandigher.editor@gmail.com](mailto:clochandigher.editor@gmail.com)



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## Councillor Catherine Victor

### Blog for Spring

Firstly, I have to apologise for missing the Christmas addition. I had some health issues and then by the time I got back and caught up, I was too late.



I hope everyone enjoyed some fun and family time over the Christmas break. I had a mixed recess, Christmas was lovely, surrounded by family, but NY saw me in A&E for Hogmanay. Not me, but my husband took ill on the 30<sup>th</sup> December, and we landed up there and then into hospital on New Years Eve. All good now though, and we had fabulous treatment from our NHS as usual. I cannot praise the NHS staff enough, I know not everyone has the same story as my husband and me, but we have never had to wait long to be treated when required. Maybe we are just lucky.

Of course, I need to mention the weather that faced us on 1<sup>st</sup>. January. Our winter maintenance staff battled to keep main routes open to allow supplies to get through. It was tough with the amount of snow and the high wind undoing their good work behind them. There are over 3500 miles of roads in Aberdeenshire, and it was critical to keep all main accesses open. This meant that the minor roads and streets had to wait. There was a tremendous effort made by our farmers and contractors, to help clear as many of those roads and streets as they could across the whole region. We must give them our heartfelt thanks for a sterling job done. I hardly dare mention Grit Bins, as they were the cause of a huge amount of my emails over the period. My party did foresee this happening in the conditions we experienced and warned the Council of the likely problems that would arise. We are hoping that it might warrant a rethink but unlikely. I'll keep you posted on that.

The Men's Shed Portlethen have managed to secure the Rowanbank building from the Council for £100. This was a hard-fought campaign led by Colin Pike and his team. I was able to take part in the debate at Full Council and put forward the motion to agree the transfer for £100, dismissing the Council's proposal of a charge exceeding £90,000, and I had my motion seconded by Cllr. David Aitchison. We won the vote and therefore the asset transfer will now go ahead. This was so important for Portlethen's Men's Shed as well as the community. I am excited to see what the future of Rowanbank holds for us now and wish the Men's Shed all the good luck they may need going forward.

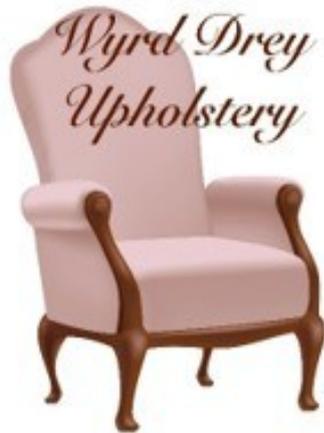
I would also thank Daniel Skene of Portlethen Sports club, on all his hard work to take forward the proposal to have the area at Hillside, already designated for football pitches, transferred to the club as an asset transfer. Hopefully this is the start of a positive move and will bring us closer to realising the plans for a dedicated pitch for our young aspiring footballers.

I will keep pushing for better facilities in Portlethen, that is my goal as your elected councillor, to make life better for all the residents in the town.

Thanks for reading my blog and get in touch if you need help.

[cllr.c.victor@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.c.victor@aberdeenshire.gov.uk) You can also come along to my monthly surgeries, dates and times are on my Facebook page.

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## Portlethen: From Winter Cheer to Spring Promise

“It’s March already!” is a phrase many of us have found ourselves saying lately, and in Portlethen it feels especially true. The past few months have flown by in a blur of community spirit, hard work, festive cheer, and - yes - a fair bit of challenging weather. Yet through it all, the town has shown exactly what makes it such a special place.

One of the most exciting developments has been the successful community asset transfer of the old social work office to the Men’s Shed. This is a huge milestone, not just for the Shed itself, but for the many community groups who supported the application. The building will provide much-needed space and new opportunities, and there’s a real sense of anticipation about how this shared community hub will grow and be used in the months and years ahead.

Christmas, as always, was a busy and joyful time in Portlethen. From festive fayres and community dinners to the Santa Run and countless other events, there was no shortage of reasons to wrap up warm and get involved. A particular highlight this year was the addition of the festive scene at the real tree site, which brought a magical new focal point to the season. It looked fantastic, and thanks are due to everyone who made it possible - especially JM Maintenance Services, GSS Joinery, and IM Grant Bodyshop. A special mention must also go to the “Christmas elves” who took on the task of putting up the lights on the tree and lamp posts, adding that extra sparkle to dark winter evenings.

Santa himself was once again a familiar and welcome sight, travelling the streets of Portlethen and spreading Christmas cheer far and wide. His visit wasn’t just about smiles and waving - it raised an impressive £4,400, which was split between the local primary schools and the larder, making a real difference to families in the community.

Winter did bring its challenges, however. The heavy snowfall caused major disruption, with a full week of snow bringing daily life to a standstill. Frustrations were heightened by ongoing issues around grit bins. Back in October, there had been calls to simply leave the grit bins in place with clear signage stating they were not in use by the council. Instead, plans for a consultation and an “adopt a grit bin” scheme were proposed. In the meantime, bins remained unfilled, and when the snow arrived, the consequences were felt by everyone. Many couldn’t help but feel that listening earlier might have saved a lot of trouble later.

Now, though, the darker days are easing. The lighter nights are creeping back in, bringing with them a sense of optimism and renewal. Spring is on the horizon, along with all the colour and life it brings. Ken Watson’s wildflower patches are already something to look forward to, promising a vibrant reminder of what community care and dedication can achieve.

So much has been happening in Portlethen that it’s hard to capture it all, but one thing is clear: whether facing challenges or celebrating successes, this is a town that pulls together. As winter fades and spring approaches, there’s plenty to be proud of - and even more to look forward to.

Darren Robertson,  
PTA Chair



## Clochandighter Accounts

Transactions in the quarter to 31/01/26

	Credit	Debit	Balance
Balance b/fwd 13/10/25			£10,595.11
Advertisers	6,020.00		£16,615.11
Winter & Simpson Printers		-3,433.00	£13,182.11
Xmas tree decorations		-87.90	£13,094.21
Defib stores/parts		-150.00	£12,944.21
Bank Charges		-17.00	£12,927.91
Larder volunteers xmas meal		-245.47	£12,681.74
Postage		-40.00	£12,641.84
Santa Grotto donation		-250.00	£12,391.74
Xmas Tree Festival charge		-20.00	£12,371.74

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## Portlethen Library

Portlethen's top library loans for 2025 showcase the fantastic variety of books available at your local library. Claiming the number one spot was the ever-popular *The Thursday Murder Club* by Richard Osman, with Scottish author Jenny Colgan close behind at



number two with her cosy small-town romance *Close Knit*. Thriller and mystery fans were well catered for too, as titles by LJ Ross and Claire Douglas proved to be big hits, while the latest books from David Nicholls and Graham Norton were also among the year's most borrowed.

Younger readers continued to show their enthusiasm for reading, with Jeff Kinney's *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series dominating the charts once again. Much-loved classics such as *Harry Potter* and *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* also remained firm favourites.

If you'd like to explore more titles by our popular 2025 authors, pop along to the library or try our free eBook and audiobook collection online. Looking ahead, Easter will see the return of our Spring into Easter sessions during the school holidays, featuring crafts and coding activities.

Don't forget our regular events too, including Bookbug at Asda Café on the first Wednesday of every month at 11am.

For more information visit our website

[www.livelifeberdeenshire.org.uk](http://www.livelifeberdeenshire.org.uk) or our Facebook page:

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

Nicole Hepburn, Senior Library Administrator

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## **Portlethen Moss Conservation Group**

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### **Our Group's Projects - Portlethen Moss, Portlethen Community Woodland, & Community Wildlife & Sensory Garden**

#### **Portlethen Moss – Local Nature Conservation Site (LNCS)**

Portlethen Moss is such a special place and loved by everyone who visits it. Lots of work went on in the background last year to help conserve the peat, this included the rebuilding of gorse dams in the ditch at the south end back in December by our Kincardine & Mearns Ranger and the Branching Out Plus Group - what a great job they did.

We're hoping all the vandalism and fire-starting of 2025 has ceased and that 2026 can be a year of restoration and increased habitat for our local flora and fauna. The heavy snow of January will have helped to keep the hydration levels up on the moss.

By restoring the peat and the growth of sphagnum moss, which holds water and stops it from escaping, we're hoping this will ease flooding.

#### **Community Woodland**

The WW1 Memorial orchard was tidied up for winter, and we sowed yellow rattle seeds. The plan is for the yellow rattle to weaken the areas of thick grass where we have perennial wildflowers growing.

The new paths have held up well over winter, keeping the popular woodland site accessible to all. Thanks to Aberdeenshire Council for their work to achieve the funding for them.

As with the Moss, we hope that the vandalism will cease this year, the seating feature at the entrance has been there since around 2010 and it was not vandalised until 2025. Let's hope the perpetrators have 'grown up and out' of this destructive stage in their lives and moved on to become better more responsible citizens.

#### **Community Wildlife & Sensory Garden**

I was amazed to see flowers and berries on the new honeysuckle plants right into December, they'll mature into fantastic beautifully scented swathes along the fence in the years to come. We will be busy in the garden come Spring when we start the work to create the 2 new sensory beds. Thanks to the Meikle Carew Community Windfarm Fund we secured funding to purchase a scythe so we can manage the wildflower meadow at the back of the garden in a sustainable way. This is still a very 'young' project and we're very excited to see how it has matured from 2025 to 2026.

It's lovely to see the Bourtree Nursery and Fishermoss School visiting the garden. If you've not made it along to visit it yet, please do so, especially in Spring and Summer, but remember the flowers are for the pollinators so please don't pick them.

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 that everyone is welcome to take part in. 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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**British hedgehogs have declined by between 30-75% in rural areas since 2000.**

**4 March 2025 -  
the date when the  
first hedgehog out of  
hibernation visited  
my garden**



At the time of writing this article it was early January 2026 when we had the heavy snow. Hopefully, by the time you read this Spring will be showing itself and our local hedgehogs will be waking from hibernation.

Hedgehog numbers are declining at a critical rate; I hope if you're taking the time to read this article that you're already helping them in your gardens or you want to know what to do to help them - read on...

First make sure they have access to your garden, a 13cm hole is all they need. Even if you don't have a biodiverse garden or have inherited a hard landscaped one you can still help them with supplementary feeding. A bowl of dry kitten food and one of water provides everything they need. Providing a hedgehog house is another good way to help them. As they're nocturnal a wildlife camera is a great tool which enables you to see what they get up to while you sleep – it's very compulsive and great for the kids.

If you want to make your garden more biodiverse plant lots of native plants and shrubs that are sold as pollinator friendly (look for the bumblebee and butterfly sign). A hedge is always a great addition to a biodiverse wildlife garden.

**As always a hedgehog out in the day is not ok** so, if you see one, no matter how well it may look, 99.9% of the time it's a very poorly hedgehog and needs containing in a high sided box while you call The New Arc for advice tel: 01358 701723.

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.

**We are not a rescue, but can advise on how to help hedgehogs.**

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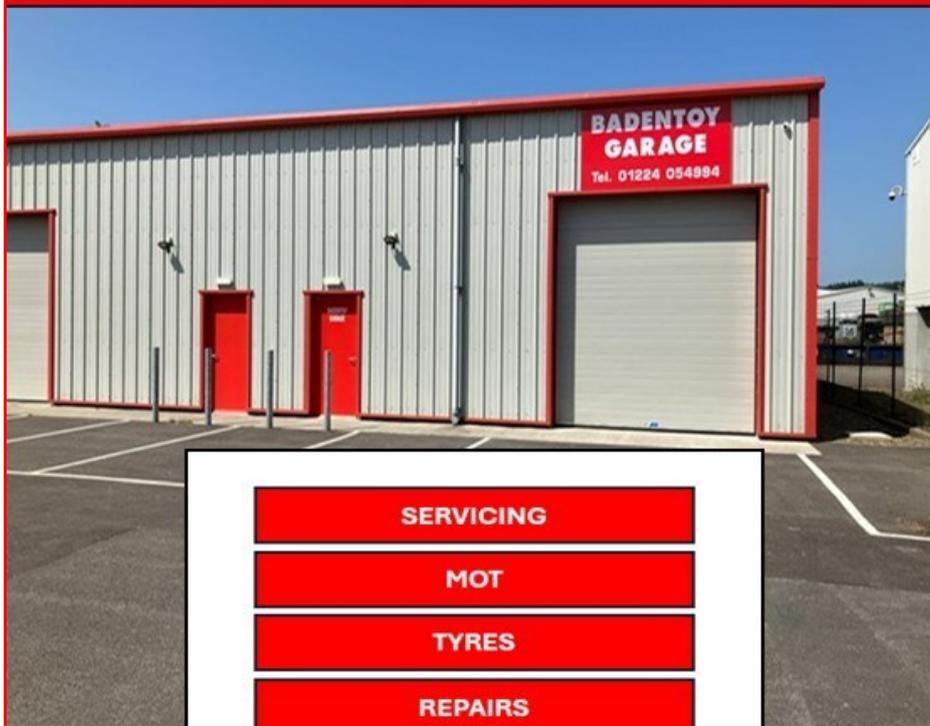
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Bacon Burger	£4.60
Bacon Cheeseburger	£5.00
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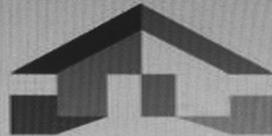
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## Portlethen Community Allotment



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

Welcome to our news for a soon-to-be new season of growing and producing another range of edible and non-edible produce.

You, as members and growers, produced a wonderful array of fruit, vegetables, and flowers in a truly short space of time. A credit to your enthusiasm and hard work.



It is coming up to our first year on site in mid-March, and so much has developed over that time - from a grass field to an amazing variety of plots with sheds, polytunnels and water storage.

Looking back to last March, a transformation has taken place, and I am sure it will do so again this coming year.

Highlights of the past year include the wonderful range of things produced such as pumpkins, tomatoes, chillis, a range of root vegetables, tatties (early and main crop), peas, beetroot, carrots, kale, onions - the list goes on.

With the help of Portlethen Primary, I was able to capture a variety of photos of your produce (a record for the future), and together we made a calendar for them to sell at their Christmas Fayre.



Then, of course, there was the beetroot that all the schools grew and pickled, and we sold on their behalf at the Gala Day.

I would like to thank members for supporting me to deliver a range of outdoor experiences for our local schools. You may have seen the children all full of enthusiasm, and the same type of experiences are in place for this coming year.

The site had seen a very dry spring and summer with our water harvesting troughs being at times dry through lack of rain and members were having to bring their own on site. We thank you for that and ask that you consider rainwater capture on your own plot from your sheds into water butts. The issue of having mains water is still to be resolved between the water company and the council. Our MP Andrew Bowie has written to them in support of a resolution for us.

For this year, we are planning to purchase another row of troughs on the North side of the Polycrub and to introduce more IBC tanks around the site. You may see pallets already on site for them.

We will still encourage you to harvest water where you can and compost your own waste on your own plot.

We recently held our AGM, on 22<sup>nd</sup> of January (rolled over from December due to the weather). It was well attended, and all committee roles and support roles were filled by an open vote.

We plan to meet on the last Thursday of each month, the location being communicated via our Facebook page.

As a group, we have submitted a formal request to Aberdeenshire Council to take over the site as an Asset transfer known as a CAT (Community Asset Transfer). This will allow us to own and manage the site going forward, especially as we are now a registered charity. The process can be a little protracted, but we plan to form a working group to be able to respond to the necessary requirements and deadlines needed for a successful outcome.

In respect of this, we now ask for up to six members (anyone with relevant experience, a legal background, or just a can-do person, who can support these roles) to devote a little time over the next six months or so, for the benefit of the whole community, schools, and other local groups.

Our Men's Shed is in the process of doing the same thing and can provide a route map of the requirements going forward.

Our committee hopes you have a wonderful experience this coming year in developing your plots further, and the good news is we also have a waiting list for plots, and we have two currently for storage of materials. These are allocated to those on our waiting list.

Do visit us with your groups to see what is happening on your doorstep.

**Martin Dear, on behalf of the Committee**

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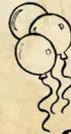
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## **House of Salvation Church, Portlethen.** **Scottish Charity No: SC045795**

### **Sharing Joy, Building Community**

As we look back on the close of 2025, our church family is grateful for the opportunities we had to share joy and kindness in the community.

### **Christmas Carol Service at Lethen Park Care Home:**

In December, voices young and old joined together to bring festive cheer to residents at Lethen Park. Beyond the music, the carols reminded us of the true heart of Christmas – the birth of Christ, who came to bring hope and light into the world.

### **Christmas Gift Boxes for the Community:**

Through the Portlethen Larder, our church family was able to donate Christmas gift boxes to support local households. It was a privilege to share hope and love in such a practical way, blessing the wider community at a special time of year.



### **Looking Ahead – Community Fun Factories:**

This year we're excited to host two Fun Factory events for children aged 5–11 at Jubilee Hall:

- **Mother's Day Edition** – Saturday 7th March, 1-3pm
- **Father's Day / Summer Edition** – Saturday 13th June, 1-3pm

These afternoons promise laughter, creativity, and friendship - a safe and joyful space for children to play and grow.

### **A Warm Invitation**

We'd love to invite you to attend our Sunday Service at 11am at Portlethen Academy Theatre. Whether you're new to the area or have lived here for years, there's a place for you in our community.

Contact - Joy on 07877 103721 / 01224 516003

Email – [pastor@houseofsalvation.org.uk](mailto:pastor@houseofsalvation.org.uk)

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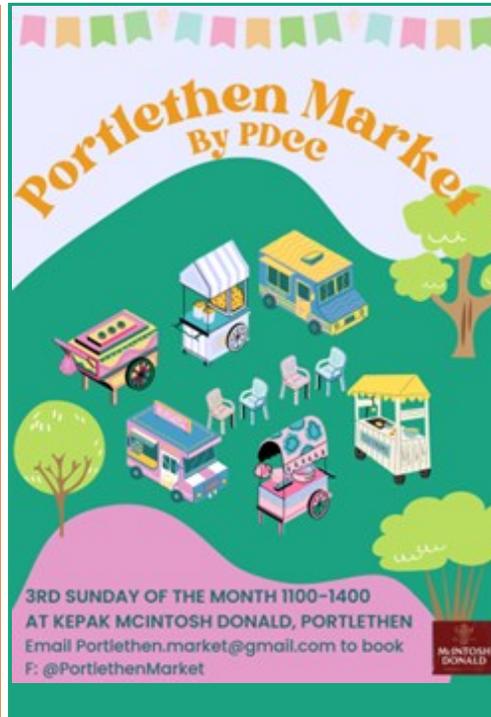
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## Rotary Portlethen and District



We have been busy the last few months despite having reduced numbers, and as well as completing our plans for our youth activities, we have been supporting other clubs by attending their fund-raising efforts for their projects.

**Youth: PSQ:** We always look forward to the annual Rotary Primary School Quiz for our local cluster of Portlethen, Fishermoss, Hillside and Newtonhill primaries which will take place in March in Portlethen Academy. Recently it has become part of the transition experience for P7 pupils, with the whole class attending to support their teams. The winners will go forward to the next round to be held in April in Aberdeen. What a great learning experience for our young people in broadening their horizons.

**RYLA:** We had a fantastic presentation from our RYLA candidate Maya and our runner-up Lauren (who picked up a place from another club whose candidate had dropped out) after their week at Abernethy in July. Both young ladies gave an excellent account



of their week of physical activities and how their motivational speakers had really stretched their expectations of what they could achieve. So far, we have received applications from two male candidates for RYLA 2026, with the closing date this weekend. Although the male and female camps are entirely run and mentored by Rotarian volunteers, the cost of a week of full board accommodation and the qualified instructors does not come cheaply so unfortunately, we can only fund one place. We hope that our selected candidate will benefit from their week's experience.

**Kids Out:** We look forward to being involved with this great day out for special needs children across the Aberdeen and shire area, this year with a possible change of venue and more under cover areas.

We've been supporting other clubs with their fundraising for good causes. Rotaract Aberdeen held a quiz and fish supper evening in the Ashvale, and St Nicholas Rotary club have held a Christmas afternoon tea with a visit from the Christmas Fairy and a Burns lunch with the usual haggis and entertainment, both of which raised hundreds for their charitable causes.

We took our turn in the Bon Accord Centre selling tickets for the annual car raffle, in aid of Charlie House care. The winner of the car this year bought his ticket from a Rotarian co-worker offshore. We continue to socialise and invite our friends to join us at events around the area. If you are looking for new friends and have some time to volunteer, please get in touch via the details below:

**Email:** [acm739@btinternet.com](mailto:acm739@btinternet.com)

**or message via our Facebook page, Portlethen and District Rotary.**

## Portlethen Bowling Club

[info@portlethenbowlingclub.co.uk](mailto:info@portlethenbowlingclub.co.uk)

The Club AGM was held on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> January and, as retiring president, I wish to thank all the members for their support over the last two years.

I want to wish our new President, Drew Sloan, congratulations on his appointment and I sincerely hope all the members will be supportive and enthusiastic.

The bowling season will open on 11<sup>th</sup> April at 2.00pm and will close on the last Saturday in September. There will be a warm welcome to all our existing members and any newcomers who wish to come along, and we will be having coaching sessions in both bowling and bowling etiquette on offer to anyone interested.

The announcement for social events will be out soon, and we hope to see these well supported. Keep an eye on the team app for information.

Looking forward to a new season in 2026 and hope to see you all on or before 11<sup>th</sup> April.

Walter McMillan, Past President



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# Kincardine Coastal

Kincardine Coastal Church of Scotland



**Portlethen**



**Newtonhill**

## Services

Kincardine Coastal Church looks forward to welcoming both old and new friends of all ages. **Sunday Morning Service in Newtonhill at 9:30 am** with a later service in **Portlethen** beginning at 11:00 am.

If you need information on any event, please just speak to the Minister or any Elder.

## Soupa Tuesday Lunches

These enjoyable events continue to be offered in Newtonhill Church on the first Tuesday of every month. Everyone is very welcome to join us in the church. **£6 for soup, sweet & coffee**

## Spring Coffee Morning

Our Spring Coffee morning in Newtonhill will be on Saturday, 21st March from 10 am to Noon.

Tickets to be £4 for adults & £2 for children with our usual wide variety of stalls to browse.

## Pub Quiz

The Pub Quiz will be held in the Newton Arms on Friday 8th May starting at 7.30pm. Tables of four at £5 per person. Come along to test your knowledge on a wide range of subjects.

## Bible Study

Every 2 weeks, on a Wednesday evening, our active Bible Study Group meets in The Manse at Portlethen. To suit the activities of other individuals, we are investigating the possibility of running a morning group in the near future.

### **The Girls Brigade**

1st Newtonhill Girls' Brigade continues to meet every Monday evening in Newtonhill Church, beginning at 6.15 pm, with activities for girls from 5 years old and upwards.

They would be happy to welcome any girls from Portlethen too.

Support from the community is always welcome and, if you require further information or if you daughter is looking for something to do on a Monday evening, please contact [girlsbrigade@newtonhillchurch.org.uk](mailto:girlsbrigade@newtonhillchurch.org.uk)



### **The Guild**

The Guild meets regularly in Newtonhill Church on a Wednesday.

New members are always welcome to join us to enjoy a very varied programme.



If you would like to get involved in any of the events or organisations listed above, please speak to anyone at the church or through our website:

[www.kincardine-coastal-church.org.uk](http://www.kincardine-coastal-church.org.uk)

Church Office, Portlethen

Tel: 01224 782883

E: [administrator@kincardine-coastal-church.org.uk](mailto:administrator@kincardine-coastal-church.org.uk)

Tue: 2.15pm- 4.45pm; Wed: 2.15pm-4.45pm; Fri: 9.00am-1.00pm



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## A Home for Confidence, Friendship and a Little Bit of Sparkle



Tucked away in **Studio 6** here in our local community, is something a little bit special.

For over two decades, LA Dance & Cheer and Allstar Cheer Dance & Gymnastics have been helping children and young people grow in confidence, make friendships, and discover what they're capable of, both on and off the floor.

Although they share the same home, they offer two very different journeys.

**Allstar Cheer Dance & Gymnastics (ACDG)** provides fun, weekly recreational classes with no competitions, no pressure and no experience needed. It's a place to try something new, stay active and make friends — with no costumes or commitments beyond enjoying the class.



ACDG also welcomes children from as young as **3 years old** in their **Tumble Tots** class every Wednesday from **4:45–5:30pm**, giving little ones a playful and confidence-building start to movement and sport.

This season, recreational athletes are preparing for their **End of Season Showcase & Awards Night in June**, where families can see everything they've been working on - and there's still time to join.

**LA Dance & Cheer (LA)** is the competitive pathway, for athletes who want to challenge themselves further. Teams train with purpose, build strong friendships and take part in competitions across Scotland.



This season, competitive athletes are attending **four competitions in Dundee and Glasgow** across Cheer, Pom, Jazz and Hip Hop, with try-outs for new team members taking place in June. We'd love to welcome more athletes into our exciting comp teams.

Both clubs share the same values — kindness, encouragement and inclusion - whether an athlete is stepping into their first class or onto a competition floor.



Their shared home, **Studio 6** (Barclayhill Place, Portlethen) is also available for daytime and weekend hire for community groups and classes looking for a bright, welcoming space.

From first friendships to proud performances, Studio 6 continues to be a place where young people grow - in confidence, courage and community.

**Recreational enquiries:** [allstarcdg@outlook.com](mailto:allstarcdg@outlook.com)

**Competitive enquiries:** [ladanceandcheer@outlook.com](mailto:ladanceandcheer@outlook.com)

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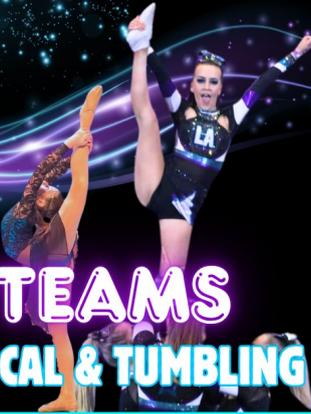
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## 1st Portlethen Scout Group - Community Update

As we begin 2026, we'd like to share a few important updates about our Group, upcoming changes affecting volunteers and parent helpers, and some recent highlights from our busy programme.



But first, a moment to remember Steve Davidson, one of our previous Scout Leaders, who recently passed away after a short illness. He was a good man, a family man, who stepped up when we needed help. Our hearts go out to his loved ones.

### **Annual Membership Fee Update**

Due to increases in both hall let charges and capitation fees (the amount passed to District, Region, and Scouts Headquarters at Gilwell), it was decided at our 2025 AGM that the annual membership fee will increase to £120, split across the usual three terms for ease of payment. This adjustment ensures we can continue delivering a high quality programme for all sections while covering rising operational costs.

### **Important Changes to the Disclosure (PVG) Scheme**

All adults in Scotland carrying out a regulated role must now hold a PVG disclosure before beginning that role. This applies to new volunteers, Trustees, taster-session helpers, and those participating in parent rotas. Young Leaders aged 16–17 also require a PVG disclosure before volunteering in a regulated role.

If you're a parent helper or interested in volunteering - even occasionally - please speak to a leader, and we'll support you through the updated process. It will require an ID check and any existing disclosure membership number. Everyone must have a PVG in place by April 1<sup>st</sup> 2026, including parent helpers.

### Recent Group Highlights

While our last community article was not too long ago, we've still been busy!

- We had our 2025 AGM, with only one parent attending (who wasn't a volunteer).
- Hillside Beavers & Scouts and Bourtree Scouts participated in a reverse advent calendar in support of The Larder.
- Bourtree Scouts have displayed their cooking and construction skills through their Ready, Steady Cook and Creative Christmas (gingerbread house) challenges.
- Hillside Scouts have become a close-knit group of young people, and by the time you read this, they'll have been away for their first camp – the first ever for many, and for all of them the first they've planned from scratch themselves.
- Bourtree Cubs have hunted haggi and creatively used strawberry laces to display their promise, and designed and built future energy systems with Hillside Cubs.
- Bourtree Beavers went to see the RNLI and were foiled by adverse weather in their latest night away plans.
- We also had our ceilidh, held once again at Portlethen Parish Church Hall - an evening full of community, music, and celebration.

We'll continue sharing photos and updates on our Facebook page, so please keep an eye on 1st Portlethen Scout Group on Facebook for the latest adventures and achievements. There's also a handy link if you'd like to add your child to our waiting list!



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**MEET THE TEAM  
GREG STEWART - RELIEF DRIVER  
(Our newest, and youngest, recruit)**

"I've been driving the Community Ambulance since June last year. I'm originally from the Peterhead/Fraserburgh area but moved to Cove in the early 2000s, then on to Newtonhill with my family about 8 years ago. In my spare time you'll probably find me under a car, building something or tinkering with some gadgets or electronics.

I still work and have a few years left before I can retire but, as I work offshore on a rotational basis, I have spare time that I can give back to the community. I became aware of the Community Ambulance by seeing it at the Bettridge Centre and parked outside the Portlethen Medical Centre. I thought it looked like a very worthwhile charity and an asset to the local community. I have category D1 on my driving licence, so I contacted the team to express my interest in volunteering. At the moment, I've been covering shifts as a relief driver as and when required, but mostly Friday afternoons. Every second Friday during school term times, the Newtonhill Lunch Club meet at the Bettridge Centre so we take passengers to and from their homes to attend the Centre for a meal and to gather socially. This is followed by runs to the Portlethen Medical Centre or Portlethen Dental surgery.

I find it very rewarding and I'm glad I can help people who otherwise may not be able to get to medical appointments. All the passengers I help are very grateful for the service, and some have commented that it's a lifeline service for them"

\*\*\*\*\*

2025 proved to be another very successful year for the "Wee Blue Bus". Throughout the year we transported 2283 passengers in total to the Portlethen Medical Centre, the Portlethen Dental Practice, and the local social groups we assisted.

As we moved into 2026, we were scuppered with that heavy snowfall in early January and had to postpone our service for a week – we apologise for this, but with the safety of our volunteer drivers and passengers at the forefront, we considered it too dangerous to transport passengers and this was supported by the Medical Centre. We are also noticing that it can take a bit longer to get passengers to and from their appointments due to the 20mph speed limit enforced throughout the locality. We will always do our best to get you to your destination on time (and within the law!).

We continued to provide weekly transport to the Young at Heart Club and the Newtonhill Lunch Club. When the ambulance was free from routine commitments, we helped out other local organisations such as Brio Landale Court and Newtonvale Court, with outings to various places. We again assisted at local events including the Chapelton 10K run in July, where several of our volunteers assisted with the car parking and transportation of race marshals.

It was an honour when the Charity received an invitation from one of the Deputy Lord Lieutenants in Kincardineshire for one of our volunteers to attend the Garden Party at Holyrood Palace, where the King was in attendance. Our charity Trustee Colin Stratton attended with his wife May.

We participated in a passenger survey for the Community Transport Association (CTA) which formed part of a full report on Healthy Communities in Scotland and thanks to all passengers who provided feedback.

We acknowledge the support we receive from William Nicol (Aberdeen) Ltd for their help at their wash-bay, and Lethen Motors for our ongoing maintenance requirements. We also are very grateful for all the donations we receive, from our passengers keeping our charity tin topped up, and from various individuals, local organisations and companies. The support provided is very much appreciated. As we move forward into another year of busy times with increased mileage, we will soon be thinking about the next vehicle replacement and the need to start our fund-raising efforts again.

**If, having read this, you have some spare time on your hands each week and would like to help out as one of our drivers, then, if you have a D1 on your driving license, give us a call; we are always looking for more volunteers to join us onboard.**

Contact Lee Drain on 07876 301062 ([ldrain@aol.com](mailto:ldrain@aol.com))  
or Bill Fraser on 07974 971055 ([billfraseramb@yahoo.com](mailto:billfraseramb@yahoo.com))

## **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](mailto: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](mailto:audrey.nicoll.msp@parliament.scot)  
X (Twitter): @Audrey4ASNK



***A Festive and Reflective End to the Year for 865  
(Portlethen) Squadron***

The final months of the year were a busy and enjoyable time for 865 (Portlethen) Squadron, with cadets taking part in a mix of social activities and important acts of remembrance.



**Halloween Party Fun**

The squadron kicked off the seasonal celebrations with a lively Halloween Party, giving cadets the chance to unwind and enjoy some light-hearted activities. One of the highlights of the evening was pumpkin cookie decorating, where cadets showed off their creativity with some impressively designed (and tasty) results.

Another popular activity was “What’s That in the Box?”, which challenged cadets to put their nerves to the test by guessing mystery items using only their sense of touch — with plenty of laughter along the way.

**Remembrance Sunday**

Alongside the celebrations, cadets also took time to reflect and show respect during Remembrance Sunday. Cadets from 865

Squadron proudly attended a church service at Portlethen Parish Church, representing the squadron and the wider RAF Air Cadets with professionalism and dignity.

Their attendance demonstrated the squadron's continued commitment to remembering those who have served and sacrificed.



### **Christmas Celebrations**

As the year drew to a close, the squadron came together once again for their Christmas Party, providing a well-earned opportunity to relax after a busy term. Cadets worked in teams to take part in gingerbread house building and decorating, producing a range of creative and festive designs. A pizza break kept everyone fuelled before the evening continued with a quiz, testing both general knowledge and festive trivia. The celebrations concluded with karaoke, where cadets confidently took to the microphone, ending the night on a high note full of laughter.

### **New Year Start to 2026**

865 (Portlethen) Squadron made a strong return at the start of 2026, with cadets and staff getting back into a routine after the Christmas and New Year break. The first parade nights back focused on re-establishing standards and settling back into training.





Tuesdays at 10am  
Jubilee Hall, Portlethen

A group for parents, carers and toddlers to come and sing, play and snack together.

Please get in touch with Jennie (07725989147) to find out more

Craft Group

Thursdays at 7pm  
Porty Cabin, Portlethen

Come to a relaxed evening. We make crafts, learn new skills, have a blether and connect with others each week.

## Sundays at PCF

10:30am  
Jubilee Hall

We meet every Sunday together as a growing church family with all ages. We connect together, pray worship and hear a message from the Bible

If you want to find out any more  
email [zak@portlethencf.com](mailto:zak@portlethencf.com) or  
check out our website

[portlethencf.com](http://portlethencf.com)

# EASTER at Portlethen Christian Fellowship

## Good Friday

April 3rd  
7pm at Jubilee Hall

A short reflective service  
to remember the work of  
the cross

## Easter Sunday

April 5th  
10:30am at Jubilee Hall

Join our all-age  
celebration. Jesus is risen!



## Easter Egg Hunt!

Starting 12pm at the  
Jubilee Hall



## News from Cllr Mel Sullivan



What a start to 2026! Repeated heavy snowfalls meant schools got an extra week off, with a 'major incident' declaration meaning staff were redeployed to try to keep up with the winter maintenance. The enforcement of the grit bin policy (so, not refilling bins in the 'wrong' place) unfortunately came at precisely the wrong time. Remember, bins can be adopted, and the snow warden scheme is still ongoing. Well done to everyone who did their bit – whether clearing the snow from the path in front of their house, checking in on a neighbour, or using their 4x4 to deliver vital medicine to otherwise cut-off residents.

Budget talks are as terrible as last year. At the time of writing, we still have to 'find' around £20 million in savings, or council tax will need to rise above the previously indicated estimate of 8%. At least the program of rationalising council properties is doing well - £2.5 million was raised during 2025, with

The old social work offices in Portlethen did not go onto the open market – the Men's Shed was successful in their asset transfer application. (Once all the paperwork is completed, they will start the process of converting the offices and moving equipment across from their current premises next to the Porty Cabin.) The benefit to the community was judged to be a greater value than what might have been raised through a commercial sale – the proceeds of which would go into the general coffers, rather than being used locally.

There are now less than 500 days until the next council election. If you want to have a chat about the job, or how to stand for election, please get in touch. There *are* moments of joy as well as all the doom and gloom!

As always, you can find me on Facebook as 'Councillor Mel Sullivan, North Kincardine'. My webpage is <https://melsullivan.mycouncillor.org.uk>. You can sign up to receive my non-political weekly news emails. These include the latest planning applications and other local items of interest.

My email address is [cldr.m.sullivan@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:cldr.m.sullivan@aberdeenshire.gov.uk).

If you'd like to find out more about the Scottish Liberal Democrats, my email is [mel.sullivanNK@gmail.com](mailto:mel.sullivanNK@gmail.com)

### Contact your Local Councillor

David Aitchison - [cllr.d.aitchison@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.d.aitchison@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

Shirley Burnett - [cllr.s.burnett@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.s.burnett@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

Mel Sullivan - [cllr.m.sullivan@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.m.sullivan@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

Catherine Victor - [cllr.c.victor@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.c.victor@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

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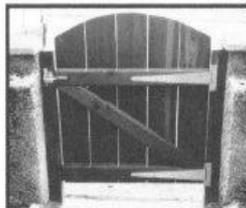
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# McINTOSH DONALD

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## VALUE PACK

- 1LB MINCE
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- 4 PORK CHOPS
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- 2LB ROAST BEEF



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Facebook - Jubilee Hall Portlethen



### News from your community hall.

#### Spring Update!!

Well, Christmas is past, in a flash as usual! Happy New Year to one and all!

The new year will bring many exciting changes at the hall. We have applied to transition to an Integrated Organisation, which sounds a bit technical, but will simply give the committee more say in how the hall is run, allow us to apply directly for funding and carry out significant capital projects, like the major extension you can see in the architect's drawings posted in the hall. We have been granted Planning Permission, so all we need now is some funding!

Some things, however, do not change in the Jubilee Hall, and Julie and Veronica will continue to run our Flagship enterprise, the Fine Piece Café on Wednesday mornings. Their tireless efforts to welcome, seat, feed and entertain dozens of locals every week is a wonder to all! As if that wasn't enough, they also run our Lunch Club once a month for those in the community with special needs, a very worthy cause which has been recognised widely in the local community.

Julie wants to share some images of the weekly offerings:



Julie spends every Tuesday baking for the café and the delicious cakes and pastries together with freshly made breakfast rolls go down a treat with a hot freshly brewed tea or coffee.

The café runs every Wednesday from 09:30am until noon. You really must give it a try!

Let me also share some other news. Over the last couple of months, we have updated our website, [jubileehallportlethen.com](http://jubileehallportlethen.com) and the site now has information on the hall itself, how to book the space, and general information on all of the events taking place week by week. This can be useful if you are looking to join any of the many activities taking place. Contact information for each of our regular events is there to allow you to get more information if you would like to join in. \*Booking the hall is now a simple process - check the hall diary and if the time you want is free, simply reserve the time you want, and our Booking Clerk will be in touch to confirm the booking. Invoicing has also been simplified with invoices issued at the end of the month to those individuals and organisations who had bookings during that calendar month. Check it out!

We look forward to seeing you soon!

Dave Johnstone, Chair

[Jubileehallportlethen@gmail.com](mailto:Jubileehallportlethen@gmail.com)

## BOOK THE HALL

\*NEW SYSTEM: Booking the hall is easy. Go to our updated website  
[www.jubileehallportlethen.com](http://www.jubileehallportlethen.com)

where you will find our diary and times available.

Reserve your space and our Booking Clerk will be in touch  
to confirm the booking

The booking rates are as follows:

- Rental of hall: £20 per hour
- A projector, screen and high quality sound system are available for an extra £20 per booking.

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## The Lodge of Portlethen No. 1805

*On the roll of  
The Grand Lodge of  
Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Scotland*

Allan Malcolm. Secretary

E.Mail:- 1805lop@gmail.com

Hi, to everyone. Well, I hope everyone had a good Christmas and a Happy New Year, now we or most of us will be looking at a holiday or a break for a week or even just a few days, whatever you do we hope you enjoy it. Now, what has the Lodge been up to? The Bourtree Hall has now had a really deep clean and looks fantastic with more enquires on renting the hall for various activities. We also took part in the Provincial Ball, held in Stonehaven where the five Lodges in the Province of Kincardineshire members and guests come together. This year we are able to give to:

- The Forestview Day Centre amenities fund, the sum of £5000 to purchase a wheelchair swing. Hopefully that will bring joy and happiness to the kids.
- Along with £1000 to each of the five foodbanks in the Kincardineshire area,



Portlethen, Stonehaven, Inverbervie, Johnshaven and Laurencekirk. Hopefully this will give relief to some people in the area who require a little help.

The Lodge has a busy time ahead with invites to other Lodges within and outwith the Province. As I mentioned, the project to update the Bourtree Community Hall, is all but finished with a few minor on-going jobs, but that will allow the hall to be used by the communities for parties and get togethers. The cleaning company have done a splendid job and, with the floors now all sealed, the hall is looking like new.



### **Just a wee reminder:-**

There is a De-Fib outside the Bourtree Community Hall door, just in case you need to use it. You'll need to call the emergency services, ask for the Ambulance Service, give them the location and you will receive the code to open the box

The Province of Kincardineshire has two well-versed gentlemen, total volunteers, who are quite willing to spread information about Prostate Cancer to any group at an agreed time. This includes women's groups as typically, men seem to leave the symptoms for another day whereas the lady might be able to spot changes and get him to the doctor for the test. If you are in a group of men or woman who meet regularly, please think about enquiring, it will open your eyes to small changes that could make a huge change, even if you can get the man to take the test.

There are many Freemasons within the Portlethen community. We would like remind those Masons who have fallen away from their Mother Lodge for some reason, hopefully you are not on your own just twirling your thumbs. We cordially invite you to visit our Lodge. We meet on the first Friday of each month, so if you are at a loose end, just come along. We would be happy to see you - this would get you out the house for a while, hopefully make new friends, enjoy a cup of tea /coffee and sandwiches / sausage rolls, and a good blether with like-minded Brothers who you may already know. So don't be bashful, drop me a line and you will be met and introduced to all and hopefully have a good evening with us.

**YOU WILL BE MADE VERY WELCOME**

As always, our invitation goes out to all Honourable men of like-minded thoughts over the age of 18 years to come and join us, just give me an email and I will arrange for you to meet some brothers who will answer as many of your questions as possible. Until the next edition, stay safe and we wish you all good health and happiness.

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## News from the Shed

Portlethen & District Men's Shed is open again to our members after the Xmas and New Year Holidays. The Shed is open to anyone who wishes to come along and see what we do. **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 AB12 4PT, next to the Porty Cabin. Whether you wish to be actively involved 2 or 3 times a week or occasionally you will be made welcome.

As mentioned in the last Clochandighter, our Men's Shed continues our efforts to take over the unused Social Work building to give Shed members more space to continue and eventually expand the services we provide for the community. After a unanimous vote in our favour by Councillors in Stonehaven last September, Aberdeenshire Council sent the matter to Business Services at Woodhill House in Aberdeen where at the November meeting, the whole matter was discussed again. The resulting vote by Councillors was again in our favour with 9 votes for and 4 against. Since then, we have had regular contact with Council officers and we have now been able to instruct solicitors to submit a formal offer for the Social Works Building. So, things are moving forward but not as fast as we would ideally like.

Members continue to respond to requests from the local community to make or repair a whole range of items. So, if you want your garden furniture repaired, refurbished or just repainted in time for Spring then come by our Shed for a chat. We have started making planters for Spring planting so let us know what you need. 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.

Here are a few examples of the benches and planters we have worked on last year for the local community:



***Rebuilt garden benches***

***Planters***

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.

If you wish to join the Portlethen & District Men's Shed, please contact the email address below and ask for a Membership Form or come along for a blether and learn more about how to get involved.

**Jim Duguid, Secretary**

Email: [secretary@portlethenmensshed.co.uk](mailto:secretary@portlethenmensshed.co.uk)



**Welcome to the Bettridge Centre, your friendly local leisure centre in Newtonhill, here for you and all your family.**

With regular pre-school, after school, sports and keep fit classes; dance, yoga and martial arts; singing and craft groups, lunch club and social occasions – we welcome everyone of all ages and all abilities.

And when you want to celebrate a special event, we can offer you the venue you need at a price you can afford. Our friendly, professional staff are here to help you make it a day to be remembered.

**New Party Packages!**

Our popular Saturday Coastal Play Parties have been relaunched and they're booking up fast – check out our website's Parties page to find out more. DIY parties are also available with a wide range of equipment to hire.



The centre is fully accessible and has disabled toilet and shower facilities. With easy transport links via the A92 and the bypass, plus free car parking - make life simple for your guests by holding your event here.

To find out more about us and what we have to offer, visit [www.bettridgecentre.org.uk](http://www.bettridgecentre.org.uk), follow our Facebook page or call **01569 731320** during office hours, we'd be delighted to hear from you!

## THE LARDER (PORTLETHEN AND SURROUNDING AREAS)

#THELARDER #FORTHECOMMUNITYBYTHECOMMUNITY

The Larder at the Porty Cabin on Cookston Road (opposite Portlethen Primary School) is available for **EVERYONE** in the local community to use.



### Who can use the Larder?

- All families or individuals living in Portlethen and Surrounding Areas.
- No referral needed if you find yourself struggling financially.
- We only need to see proof of your address on your first visit.
- Anyone interested in preventing food waste and stopping excess food items from being sent to landfill.

### How to use The Larder?

- Use the QR Code on our attached poster to place an order by Google Form or follow the link on our pinned Facebook page if you are struggling financially.
- Pop in during our shifts on a **Monday 6pm-8pm, Friday 2.30pm-4.30pm or Saturday 10am-12pm** and one of our volunteers will assist you.
- Drop into the Porty Cabin during our opening hours to see what excess food items we have received from CFine, FareShare and any short dated items from Aldi & the Co-op in Hillside.
- Come in and buy fresh farm eggs, bread, milk and fresh fruit and vegetables.
- **Pay What You Can** – we have a donation jar if you can give us something towards our costs but we understand if this is not always possible.

### How to support The Larder?

- We have a donation trolley in Portlethen Asda and in Newtonhill Tesco for any non-perishable items.
- We accept non-perishable items donated during our opening hours. These can include toiletry items, cleaning items, pet food as well as food and treat items.
- We also accept cash and bank donations, Sum Up donations and have this QR code to receive a donation.

### Who supports The Larder?

- Warburtons; McIntosh Donald; Colin Napier Milkman; One Seed Forward; Co-op Hillside; Co-op Garage; Tesco Newtonhill; Asda Portlethen; Aldi Portlethen; Aberdeenshire Council; CFine; FareShare; Portlethen's Place to Eat; Psycho Berserker Catering; Portlethen Child Minders; Meikle Carewe Wind Farm; KDP; The Leathan; Portletico FC; H&P; other local Businesses; PTA; Portlethen Santa Run; Portlethen Gala; Portlethen Academy; local Primary Schools; Churches; Portlethen Medical Centre; Portlethen Sports Club; local Groups; local Residents; and many amazing **Volunteers**.

### How to contact The Larder?

- By Facebook Messenger
- By email to [c19portlethenhelp@gmail.com](mailto:c19portlethenhelp@gmail.com)
- By phone on 07376 133870.

Please pop in soon to see what The Larder has to offer. **The Larder Team**





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# Portlethen Larder

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**FRESH FARM EGGS**

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**Open to all.**



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**MON 6-8, FRI 2.30-4.30 AND SAT 10-12**

@thelarderportlethen






# Fishermoss School

'Being the best we can be'  
Respect-Honesty-Responsibility-Kindness-Hardworking

## Rights Respecting Schools Award

We continue to develop our pupils' learning about, and promoting, Children's Rights. Rights being things that we need to survive, grow and develop. The United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) lists these rights in the form of 'Articles'. Countries around the world follow the UNCRC in a commitment to protecting children by realising their rights. In Scotland, the UNCRC has now been incorporated into law, and it underpins our wellbeing approach. Schools are quite rightly expected to explore children's rights as part of learning and teaching. There are many ways Fishermoss School highlights the rights of the child and to help recognise our progress we are signed up to UNICEF's Rights Respecting School Award programme. We continue to implement our Action Plan for a Silver Award.

Each class creates an individual Class Charter. A charter helps us reflect on what we need, and actions to take in class, to ensure everyone feels that their rights are met. Each class has collaboratively designed and created a display. Below you can see all our amazing class charters....



We continue to refer to different articles each month in assembly and this term these have included.....**Article 29**.... Children's education should help them fully develop their personalities, talents and abilities. It should teach them to understand their own rights, and to respect other people's rights, cultures and differences. It should help them to live peacefully and protect the environment.



**Article 12**.....Children have the right to give their opinions freely on issues that affect them.

**Article 13**.....Children have the right to share freely with others what they learn, think and feel, by talking,

### Fishermoss Cultural Celebration Day!



our recent '**Cultural Celebration Day**' supported our **Rights Respecting Schools** work. We celebrated what makes our pupils the unique and wonderful children they are, and the diverse cultural backgrounds we have at Fishermoss! Many pupils came to school dressed to celebrate and recognise their nationality and cultural heritage. It was great to see 'dress' representing cultures and nationalities across the globe, including Morocco, Nigeria, India, Bulgaria, Australia, Chile, Poland, Pakistan, Ukraine, Zambia, Latvia, Lithuania, China, Wales, Ireland & Scotland. We focused on the following articles:



**Article 7 - Birth Registration, Name, Nationality, Care** 'Every child has the right to be registered at birth, to have a name and nationality, and, as far as possible, to know and be cared for by their parents.'

**Article 8 - Protection and Preservation of Identity** 'Every child has the right to an identity. Governments must respect and protect that right, and prevent the child's name, nationality or family relationships from being changed unlawfully'.





## Portlethen School News

T rust \_ T eamwork R espect A chievement  
I nclusion N uture



Symbolised  
Communication  
In Learning  
Bronze Award



We are the Pupil Council, and our job is to help make our school an even better place for everyone. Last year, we worked hard to improve our playground by cleaning up the space and encouraging everyone to look after it.

This year, we are planning a community litter pick to help make the area around our school cleaner and tidier.

Recently, the whole school went to the Aberdeen Arts Centre to watch Robin Hood. We really enjoyed the show, and we all agreed that the bus seats were very comfortable.

We are also working on creating new school values. After lots of discussion, we have chosen: **Kind, Ambitious, Inclusive and Respectful.**

### **Scottish Poetry Competition**

Every year, we hold our own Scottish Poetry Competition. Well done to all the pupils who took part! Our overall winner was Brodie who recited Elephant by J K Annand.



### **Allotment Group**

We go to the allotment every second week. When we are there, we grow and weed, and we have fun. We play fun games too with Martin and Mrs Connon. We are beginning to cook things with our produce and ingredients. We are hoping to sell jams, pickles and pesto at school fairs.





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JUBILEE HALL PORTLETHEN



**MOVIE NIGHT**

First Friday of the month  
 At 07:00pm

**FREE ENTRY**

Featured Film: **SEE HALL NOTICEBOARD**

Donations welcome: snacks available to purchase



**BINGO**

Jubilee Hall  
 Cash Bingo

10 Games for £10

Tickets on sale on the door

LAST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH  
 CHECK JUBILEE HALL FOR LATEST GAME INFO  
 LOCATION: JUBILEE HALL, PORTLETHEN

**CASH PRIZES!**

Fundraising for the Jubilee Hall

£1 entrance + £10 for 10 games

**18+**

**Dear Clochandigher Readers,**

Please enjoy reading some highlights from Hillside School.

**Hillside School and  
Nursery**



### **Christmas Events**

We had a lovely festive period at Hillside School. Our Disney vs Christmas show was a hit, and our pupils were amazing as always! It was a wonderful show case of different classic movies. The Nativity never disappoints and definitely brought the cute factor with 'Humph the Camel'! Hillside School Nursery, once again, pulled out all the stops with an amazing show that featured all the seasons.

Our Primary 7 pupils, accompanied by Miss Gibb, represented our school well at a special lunch for Community Members at HP. The pupils sang a range of Christmas Carols and entertained guests well with their cheery tunes.



### **STEM Workshops**



One of the actions from our school improvement plan this year has been to establish further links with businesses and the wider Community to support our pupils' learning and the development of Metaskills.

In November, our P4-7 pupils were lucky to attend STEM talks/ workshops led by volunteers from **The Association for Black &**

**Minority Ethnic Engineers** (partnering with EnQuest). It was a really interesting day and the pupils were able to reflect on the Metaskills they would be able to use in this line of work.

If there are any local businesses or organisations out there who would like to work with us at Hillside School, then please reach out. We are really keen to make learning as relevant as possible for our pupils by giving them 'real life' experiences. We'd love to hear from you!

### **Community Café**

Once again, we would like to extend a heartfelt invitation to everyone in our local community - parents, carers, neighbours, and friends. Please feel free to drop in for a tasty treat, a hot drink, and the chance to see our wonderful school in action.

Our next Community Café will take place on **Thursday 26th February 2026, from 9.30am to 11.00am**, and will be led by one of our P7 classes.

We hope to see you there!

### **Scottish Poetry Competition**

Our annual Scottish Poetry Competition was held on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January where pupils from P1-7 recited a poem they had been learning. It is always a highlight in our school calendar and the pupils did a great job. Special thanks to our judges from our Hillside Parent Group (David our chair), Graeme Norrie (Men's Shed) and Susan Henderson (Stonehaven Fatherland Burns Club).

Wishing you all a happy and healthy 2026!

From all at Hillside School

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2026 has started in a rather unconventional way due to the adverse weather, and we have more information on that below. However, I continue to be an extremely proud Head Teacher when we reflect on the fantastic work and achievements across Portlethen Academy, thanks to the hard work of our pupils and staff, and strong partnership with parents/carers and partners across our school community. Below are some highlights to share. Thank you for your continued support.



### Winter Newsletter (Dec 2025)

We always thoroughly enjoy pulling together our Newsletter presentations throughout each school session, to collate aspects of our learning in Faculties, extra-curricular opportunities, and our individual pupil achievements. And our recent Winter Newsletter was no exception.

This can be viewed here via the Link:

<https://bit.ly/PAWinterNewsletter25>

or the QR Code. We hope you enjoy!



### Adverse Weather (January 2026)

Our first week back (for the second year in a row) was impacted by significant snowfall and adverse weather; however, I don't think any of us quite expected the amount of snow we received!

Although a very challenging time for everyone, and for schools to make decisions, I want to formally acknowledge the hard work of our Facilities Management Teams across the Academy and Cluster Primaries who were going above and beyond to clear our buildings as best as they could, whilst also doing such a fantastic job of keeping Head Teachers updated on local conditions. The support we received was exceptional!

Also, a huge well done to many of our fantastic pupils for supporting across the local community. We received so many posts, pictures and stories of many of our young people (a lot in S2 Year Group) who were clearing paths for the elderly and their neighbours, supporting the clearing of our local Lethen Care Home (for some very



well-deserved hot chocolate and biscuit rewards), and some who were even braving the elements to go shopping trips for those in need and who couldn't manage. Simply outstanding and what our Portlethen Academy School values are all about! It was so heart warming to read, and made myself and the Senior Leadership Team very proud.

### Subject Choice Information Evening (S2-5 Pupils)

On Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2026 we held our subject choice information evening in the Academy. This was well attended by over 115 parents/carers (which is a positive increase on recent years) to help explain our wide curricular offer and next steps for pupils moving into the next stage of their school careers.

Following the input in the Theatre by Mr Drennan (Head Teacher) and Mr Lawson (Depute Head Teacher, Curriculum), parents/carers selected from a wide variety of short workshops to further enhance their knowledge and understanding.

This session we had the most inputs available, and there really was something for everyone and all levels, including support from local Universities, NESCol (College), Skills Development Scotland, Mr Cowie to discuss Foundation Apprenticeships and the forthcoming Aberdeenshire Advanced Higher learning offer, Mrs Campbell-Robertson (Depute Head Teacher, Learning, Teaching and Assessment) to discuss study skills and digital learning, and a whole lot more.

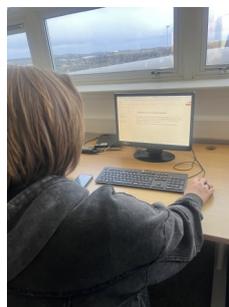
Feedback from pupils and parents/carers was really positive on the whole, and all presentations can be accessed from our school website here:

[Portlethen Academy - Course Choice Information](#)

### Holocaust Memorial Day (27<sup>th</sup> January 2026)

S3 History pupils have been studying about the Holocaust and how this impacts society today as part of their coursework. The class were tasked to use their research skills to create a resource to inform their school community about the Holocaust and why it is important that we remember this together. This was then shared with all staff and pupils via Registration / 'Check In' time, on Holocaust Memorial Day to pay our respects and inform everyone.

We have attached a picture of one of the pupils completing their research and one the finished infographics. We are extremely proud of their hard work and commitment. ProudOfPorty!



## **PORTLETHEN GROUP PRACTICE NEWS UPDATE**



### **Adverse Weather January 2026**

We would like to extend a huge thank you to all our patients for your understanding during the challenging snow conditions that we all experienced at the start of January. Despite the snow we worked hard to keep the practice open during normal working and minimise the disruption to the service. We are incredibly grateful to our staff for adapting so quickly and doing everything they could for patient care while either working in the practice or at home. We would like to extend our thanks to Mr Ewan our local farmer who helped keep the car park and paths around the practice clear as possible for staff and patients.

### **Update from Your GP Practice: Improving Access and Ensuring Safety**

Thank you for your continued support as we continue to work with our new digital access system, Engage, which has now been in place for almost 18 months. While the system has helped streamline access to care, we know there's still room for improvement. We're actively listening to your feedback and making ongoing adjustments to ensure it works as well as possible for everyone.

As part of this process, we've had to make the difficult decision to implement a daily capacity limit for appointment requests. This follows guidance from the British Medical Association (BMA) on safe GP workload levels. It's a necessary step to protect the wellbeing of our staff and, most importantly, to ensure safe and effective care for our patients.

We continue to monitor demand for out-of-hours services, including A&E attendances, and are proud to report that our practice consistently rates lower than average for emergency service use compared to other practices in Aberdeenshire. This reflects the strength of our community's engagement and the quality of care we strive to provide. We remain committed to delivering the best possible care and thank you again for your understanding and continued support.

### **Repeat Prescriptions**

**The online repeat prescription service is available from 8.30am on Mondays through to 5.00pm on Fridays (24 hours a day). Please note the service is not available over the weekend when the practice is closed.**

We encourage patients to use this service as it is the safest and most efficient method for ordering repeat prescriptions. We are continuing 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 are unable to use the online service, you can order your repeat prescriptions by placing your repeat prescription re-order form in the box at the front entrance or by posting the repeat slip to the practice. Please do not hand in the repeat slip to the local pharmacies. This will delay the process of collecting your prescriptions.

**Please note we do not accept repeat prescription requests over the telephone.**

**Please remember we require 3 full working days' notice from when the request arrives at the practice, before you can collect your repeat prescriptions from the pharmacy of your choice.** Please do not request prescriptions that are on repeat through Engage Consult, please use the online service or follow the process for paper requests.

**Staff Training and development days**

The practice will be closed for staff training and development on the following dates. The practice will be providing an emergency service only during these times. There will be instructions on the recorded message advising how patients can contact the doctor.

**Tuesday 28th April 2026 13.00 – 18.00**

**Wednesday 26th August 2026 13.00 – 18.00**

**Thursday 26th November 2026 13.00 – 18.00**

**Staffing update**

Dr Catriona Woodburn GP Partner will be leaving the Practice 31st March 2026. We would like to thank Dr Woodburn for her dedication while she has been with us and wish her all the very best in her next venture.

Our husband and wife GP's Dr Graeme Brown and Dr Margaret Brown will both retire from the practice 30th June 2026. Dr Graeme Brown joined the practice in January 2005 as a GP Partner, he retired from the partnership 31st March 2025 and has been working as a salaried GP since then. Dr Brown's specialist interests have been Diabetes, Child health, teaching. He has been pivotal in the Diabetic provision that the practice has provided to our patients. He has also been one of our GP that has performed the 6 week Baby Development assessment appointments. Dr Brown was one of GP trainers for a lot of years and retired from this role a few years ago. Dr Margaret Brown joined the practice in January 2023 as a salaried GP. Dr Margaret Brown has a specialist interest in Women's Health.

We will miss Dr Graeme and Margaret Brown immensely as we are sure a lot of patients will too. We would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to both Dr Browns for their unfaltering dedication to the practice and patients of Portlethen Medical Centre.

We would like to wish them both all the very best in their retirement.

**Public Holidays**

Monday 4th May 2026 – The Practice will be closed on this date.

**Zero tolerance**

The majority of our patients are polite and courteous however there have been occasions when this has not been the case.

It is important to note that the Practice operates a Zero Tolerance Policy in conjunction with NHS Grampian. The Practice will not tolerate abusive behaviour towards any of our staff. Please be kind and considerate to all of our staff, we are trying our very best to help all the patients in these challenging times.

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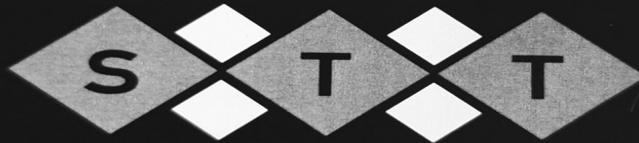


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## **Introduction to Kincardineshire Development Partnership**

Kincardineshire Development Partnership (KDP) is a charity that aims to support and encourage community organisations within Kincardine and Mearns.

Set up in 2014, we look to promote sustainable community development and growth by fostering the necessary skills and knowledge and providing voluntary groups with help and advice. Above all, we are community-led and -focused, concentrating on helping communities achieve their ambitions.

We offer a range of practical help and support, as well as a fortnightly information bulletin, detailing funding opportunities and relevant local news.

KDP is privileged to facilitate various networks across K&M. These networks give people with a common interest the ability to share information, spend time together and learn from each other. At present we have networks for local community halls; community cafes; growing groups and finally a grassroots network.

KDP also administer the Community Funds for several local windfarms on behalf of the windfarm operators. We work closely with the communities within the areas of benefit to ensure as many worthwhile causes can be supported and prosper from the available funds.

The role of KDP is to create confident and engaged communities.

Visit our website to find out more about us, and how to get in touch.

[www.kdp.scot](http://www.kdp.scot)



## Twenty Local Groups Benefit from Wind Farm Community Fund

Back in November [too late to reach the Winter Edition of the Cloch, Ed], funding worth a total of £41,071.70 was awarded to a range of local groups and projects in the area of benefit of the Meikle Carewe Wind Farm Community Fund.

RES, a leading independent renewable energy company, operates the Meikle Carewe Windfarm Community Benefit Fund to support local groups and projects. Funding is available for the benefit of not-for-profit groups and organisations in the Community Council areas of Crathes, Drumoak & Durris, Newtonhill, Muchalls & Cammachmore, North Kincardine Rural, Portlethen & District, and Stonehaven & District. Administered by Kincardineshire Development Partnership (KDP), applications to the fund are assessed by a Decision-Making Panel made up of representatives from all five Community Council areas. The fund is available annually for the lifetime of the wind farm.

Successful applicants this round were:

- Durris Kirkton Hall - £5000
- Crathes, Drumoak & Durris Community Council - £500
- Banchory Academy Greenpower - £1350
- Drumoak Durris Crathes Bowling Club - £1212.18
- Muchalls Village Association - £1563
- Maryculter Community Hall Association - £1300
- Banchory Devenick Neighbourhood Watch - £320
- Portlethen Moss Conservation Group - £209
- The Larder (Portlethen) - £2500
- Tangleha Artists Collective - £3318.64
- Portlethen Bowling Club - £3360
- Stonehaven Town Partnership - £993.33
- Kincardine & Mearns Youth Clubs - £1018.87
- Friends of Stonehaven Open Air Pool - £1119.67
- Stonehaven Business Association - £1250
- Air Training Corps 1297 Stonehaven Squadron - £1340
- Maryculter Driving for the Disabled - £2000
- Oakley ASN - £4311.71
- Mesolithic Deeside - £2880
- Mearns Community Radio - £1025.30

For more information please visit [www.kdp.scot](http://www.kdp.scot) or contact the KDP office on 07903 156864 and [margo@kdp.scot](mailto:margo@kdp.scot)



## **Mearns FM: The Local Radio Station You Might Not Realise Has Changed Everything**

If you think you already know Mearns FM, you may be surprised to discover just how much has changed.

Serving the Mearns, the wider Aberdeenshire area and Aberdeen City, Mearns FM has quietly evolved into a modern, energetic and genuinely community-powered radio station - one that reflects today's listeners while staying rooted in local life. And with its recent expansion ambitions through DAB+ into Aberdeen, plus the emerging streaming opportunities, its voice is reaching further than ever before.

### **Fresh Voices, Real Variety**

Within the last year, Mearns FM has welcomed a strong wave of new presenters - each bringing distinctive experience, personality and musical identity. The result is a schedule that is anything but predictable.

From upbeat pop spanning the 60s to today, rock n roll, album rock, indie, country and soul, through to jazz, blues, dance, disco, funk, Motown, EDM, afro beat, northern soul, ska and specialist genres rarely heard elsewhere — Mearns FM offers true variety. This isn't automated radio or recycled playlists. It's curated, human, and alive.

Listeners tuning in today hear knowledgeable presenters who research their shows, welcome requests, share music stories, spotlight forgotten gems, and mix heritage with modern sounds. The station's programmes now surprise - and that's exactly the point.

### **Radio at the Heart of the Community**

Mearns FM's role extends far beyond the studio.

Every Monday morning, Portlethen Primary School pupils take over the airwaves, learning broadcasting skills and confidence while sharing their voices with the community. The station has also taken radio into social care settings and local cafés, giving residents and regulars the chance to be heard and included.

Beyond broadcasting, Mearns FM actively supports local galas, markets, discos and community events across the Shire - providing equipment, technical expertise and on-the-ground presence. When communities gather, Mearns FM shows up.

### **A Platform for Local Business and Community Groups**

For local businesses, tradespeople, charities and organisations, Mearns FM offers something increasingly rare: accessible, affordable local reach.

The station works flexibly with businesses of all sizes to help raise profile, increase awareness and connect with local customers - without the cost barriers often associated with commercial advertising. Sponsorship on Mearns FM isn't about hard sell; it's about community alignment, trust and visibility.

Many presenters are local workers, parents, musicians, and volunteers themselves, they understand the realities of small business and community life.

### **Why People Are Talking About Mearns FM Again**

More and more people are saying: *"I had no idea Mearns FM sounded like this now."*

That's because the station has rebuilt itself around energy, professionalism, inclusion and relevance, while staying proudly not-for-profit and community-led.

Whether you're a listener, a business owner, a charity organiser or simply curious - now is the time to tune in, get involved, and rediscover your local radio station.

Maxine Smith, Secretary, Mearns FM



**Edzell Gala**



**Hallowe'en gig**



**Stonehaven  
Fireworks**

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Mearns and Coastal Healthy Living Network is a charity-run organisation which provides services and groups to those over the age of 50 living in Kincardine and Mearns. We have a transport, shopping and gardening service and provide a range of groups. We can be contacted on 01561 378130 if you wish to find out more about these.

Current Groups, available to everyone over the age of 50, living in their own home:

#### **Digital Support Sessions**

Do you have your own digital device that you require support to use, bring it along to one of our sessions where we will have someone there to try and help you.

1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month

Portlethen Library

10.30am – 12pm

#### **Portlethen Sunshine Club**

An opportunity to try something new while meeting new people. We invite you to come along and try some crafting, play games and to have a good blether and a cuppy. Everyone will be made to feel welcome.

2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month

Portlethen Community Campus – Larch Room

1.30pm – 3pm

#### **Gardening Group**

Do you know we are the volunteers who keep the train station in bloom? Our group desperately needs some help to continue to do this. You don't need to be an experienced gardener. We end our sessions with a refreshment and a blether – in the winter months we have other activities to keep everyone connected.

The group meets on a Tuesday morning at 9.30am at the train station, but soon will be meeting at the Men's Shed (around 10.30am) to enjoy some winter activities, which will include some crafting, talking, and plenty of cuppies and sweet treats! We will then think of starting back at the station in early spring next year. Get in touch if you wish to find out more. Everyone is welcome to come along.

## Useful Addresses, Phone Numbers, Emails

### **Bourtree Hall**

Bookings  
E: thebourtreehall@gmail.com

### **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  
E: Jubileehallportlethen@gmail.com

### **Kincardine Coastal Church of Scotland**

Church Office, Portlethen  
Tel: 01224 782883  
E: administrator@kincardine-coastal-church.org.uk

### **Portlethen Academy**

Bruntland Road  
Tel: 01224 782174

### **Portlethen Christian Fellowship**

Sundays 10.30am @ Jubilee Hall  
E: info@portlethencf.com

### **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

### **RCCG House of Salvation**

Sundays 11am @ Portlethen Academy  
Tel: 07877 103721, 01224 516003  
E: info@houseofsalvation.org.uk

### **Social Work Department**

Portlethen Academy  
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