



ISSUE 57

WINTER 2023

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Noticeboard

23 Nov	<p>Killearn Golden Years' Club Bingo Evening. Kirk Hall, 6.30pm for 7pm.</p> <p>The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley Lecture by Scott Anderson, 'The Art of Cameo Glass'. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am. theartsocietystirling.org.uk</p> <p>Drymen & District Local History Society Illustrated talk by Alastair Dinsmor, 'The History of Glasgow Police'. Drymen Village Hall, 7.30pm. drymen-history.org.uk</p>	25– 26 Dec	<p>Killearn Health Centre Closed. For help or advice contact NHS 24 on 111.</p>
28 Nov	<p>Killearn Kirk Guild Relevant information for us all – Stirling Carers with Andra Henderson. Kirk Hall, 1.15pm–3.15pm.</p>	31 Dec	<p>Killearn Kirk Songs of Praise, 10.30am.</p>
30 Nov– 2 Dec	<p>FADs Pantomime <i>Aladdin</i>. Menzies Hall, Fintry, Thurs–Sat, 7.30pm and matinee Sat, 2pm. Email tickets@fintrydrama.org.uk.</p>	1–2 Jan	<p>Killearn Health Centre Closed. For help or advice contact NHS 24 on 111.</p>
1 Dec	<p>Strathendrick Film Society showing <i>Are you there God? It's me, Margaret</i>. Balforn High School Theatre, 7.30pm. £5 entry or membership (£30; £25 concessions).</p>	9 Jan	<p>Killearn Kirk Guild Away Down Under – Linda and Kevin Clarke. Kirk Hall, 1.15pm–3.15pm.</p>
2 Dec	<p>Colourful Killearn putting up the Christmas tree. Killearn Kirk, 10am. Contact mike@kfcf.co.uk.</p>	13 Jan	<p>West of Scotland Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers Zoom talk by Carol Keepax, 'Colours of Scotland: Dyeing traditions'. CE Centre, Milngavie G62 8PN, 10am start. New members and visitors welcome. Visit weave-spin-dye-glasgow.org.uk or contact the secretary (weavers.in.glasgow@gmail.com) for link.</p>
3 Dec	<p>Killearn Kirk Sanctuary Service. 3pm. A special service of reflection.</p>	16 Jan	<p>Strathendrick Stitchers New Year, New Stitches. Also bring your own projects; progress exhibition pieces. Sales table and library. Kirk Hall, 10am–2pm. New members and visitors welcome. £3 per session, first visit free. Contact strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com.</p>
7–9 Dec	<p>FADs Pantomime <i>Aladdin</i>. Details at 30 Nov above.</p>	17 Jan	<p>Killearn Community Council Meeting. Garden Room, Village Hall Garden Room and live stream over Zoom, 8pm. For the link to join the live stream, email Fiona (fiona.rennie@killearncc.org.uk).</p>
10 Dec	<p>Killearn Kirk Gift Service, 10.30am. Gifts will be donated to Stirling Salvation Army for distribution in the Stirling Council area.</p> <p>Strathendrick Singers Christmas Concert. Killearn Kirk, 7pm. Enjoy a jazz influence on seasonal music and carols for all. Tickets on the door, from choir members, or email hello@strathendricksingers.org.uk.</p>	18 Jan	<p>The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley Lecture by Peter Ireland, 'The Art of Ancient Mosaic'. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am. theartsocietystirling.org.uk</p>
12 Dec	<p>Killearn Kirk Guild and Thursday Club Christmas Lunch. Fintry, 12noon for 12.30pm.</p>	23 Jan	<p>Killearn Kirk Guild Pablo's story – Pablo Fernandez. Bring and Buy sales table. Kirk Hall, 1.15pm–3.15pm.</p>
14 Dec	<p>The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley Lecture by Richard Burnip, 'Welcome Home Jeeves: P.G. Woodhouse in London'. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am. theartsocietystirling.org.uk</p>	25 Jan	<p>Drymen & District Local History Society Talk by Len Murray, 'The Legacy of Robert Burns'. Drymen Village Hall, 7.30pm. www.drymen-history.org.uk</p>
16 Dec	<p>Killearn Kirk Guild Christmas Coffee Morning. Kirk Hall, 10am–12noon.</p>	26 Jan	<p>The Mad Ferret Band entertains with a Burns-themed evening. Village Hall, 7.30pm–10.30pm. Adults £12 (concessions £10); adult plus 1 child under 16, £15. Tickets on sale on Eventbrite (www.eventbrite.co.uk).</p>
20 Dec	<p>Killearn Community Council Meeting. Garden Room, Village Hall Garden Room and live stream over Zoom, 8pm. For the link to join the live stream, email Fiona (fiona.rennie@killearncc.org.uk).</p>	2 Feb	<p>Strathendrick Film Society showing <i>My House in Umbria</i>. Balforn High School Theatre, 7.30pm. £5 entry or membership (£30; £25 concessions).</p>
24 Dec	<p>Killearn Kirk Pre-Christmas Service, 10.30am.</p> <p>Family Christingle Service, 6pm. Watchnight Service, carols from 11pm followed by a short service at 11.40pm.</p>	10 Feb	<p>West of Scotland Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers Talk by Cally Booker, 'Design: Stories and Principles'. CE Centre, Milngavie G62 8PN, 10am–1pm. New members and visitors welcome. Contact details above.</p>
25 Dec	<p>Killearn Kirk Christmas Day Service, 10.30am.</p>	13 Feb	<p>Killearn Kirk Guild Musical mates – Linda More and her wee band. Kirk Hall, 1.15pm–3.15pm.</p>
		15 Feb	<p>The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley Lecture by Carole Wilhide Justin, 'The History of Japanese Woodcut'. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am.</p>

Noticeboard continued

- 20 Feb **Strathendrick Stitches** Workshop: 'Inchies'. Sales table and library. Kirk Hall, 10am–2pm. New members and visitors welcome. £3 a session, first visit free. Contact strathendrickstitches@gmail.com.
- 21 Feb **Killearn Community Council** Meeting. Garden Room, Village Hall Garden Room and live stream over Zoom, 8pm. For the link to join the live stream, email Fiona (fiona.rennie@killearncc.org.uk).
- 22 Feb **Drymen & District Local History Society** Illustrated talk by Eddie Edmonstone, 'The History of Duntreath Castle and Estate'. Drymen Village Hall, 7.30pm.
- 27 Feb **Killearn Kirk Guild** Healthy Feet Equals Happy Feet – Jennifer Malley. Kirk Hall, 1.15pm–3.15pm.
- 1 Mar **Strathendrick Film Society** showing *Where the Crawdads Sing*. Balfron High School Theatre, 7.30pm. £5 entry or membership (£30; £25 concessions).
- 5 Mar **Colourful Killearn** Spring meeting. Village Hall, 8pm. Contact mike@kcfc.co.uk.
- 8 Mar **Killearn Horticultural Society** Whist Drive. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm. Entry, including refreshments, £2 at the door. Raffle.
- 9 Mar **West of Scotland Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers** Basketmaking with Anna Leibermann, an all-day workshop. CE Centre, Milngavie G62 8PN, 10am start. See 13 Jan for contact details.
- 12 Mar **Killearn Kirk Guild**. An afternoon with Stuart Sharp. Kirk Hall, 1.15pm–3.15pm.
- 19 Mar **Strathendrick Stitches** Meeting. Kirk Hall, 10am–2pm. Talk by Alison Templeton, 'Stitching, Weaving and Printing' at 11am. New members and visitors welcome. £3 a session, first visit free. Contact strathendrickstitches@gmail.com.
- 20 Mar **Killearn Community Council** Meeting. Garden Room, Village Hall Garden Room and live stream over Zoom, 8pm. For the link to join the live stream, email Fiona (fiona.rennie@killearncc.org.uk).
- 21 Mar **The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley** Lecture by Karin Fernald, 'The Blue Hour: Painting the North'. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am.
- 21 Mar–
9 Apr **Strathendrick Stitches Annual Exhibition**. Drymen Library during regular library hours.
- 23 Mar **Killearn Kirk Guild** Easter Coffee Morning. Kirk Hall, 10am–12 noon.
- 24 Mar **Strathendrick Singers** Spring Concert. Killearn Kirk, 7.30pm. Rossini's *Messe Solennelle*.

If you have dates of events for the spring 2024 issue of the Noticeboard (mid-March until mid August), please contact Heather McArthur (07985 082678; heather.mcarthur@virgin.net).

Editorial

Hello and welcome to our final issue for 2023. I don't know where the time went, but here we are, approaching Christmas and the end of the year.

Did you know that Killearn was voted one of the best place to live in the UK in *The Sunday Times* several years ago? I think it still is, especially when you read some of the articles inside this issue.

For example, you can learn about the proposed Local Place Plan, which gives you the opportunity to give your views on the shape of the village in the future. The Advent Windows are back, giving you the chance to take part in a much-enjoyed event – and do a good deed. We even take the weather into consideration. For those cold, sunny days, there is Active Killearn, but if you want a bit of peace, quiet and companionship, check out the Killearn Warm Space.

Killearn's population increased when 38 houses were built at Buchanan Views and the village has benefitted from the 'newcomers', who rapidly became part of the community, with many joining, and even fronting, local groups. Let us hope that the next increase in the village's population (11 units at Lampson Road; 80 houses at the hospital site) sees the same enthusiasm.

However, it is not all sweetness and light, with random acts of vandalism taking place and concern about drivers continuing to speed through the village in spite of the 20mph restriction. Don't they realise it is their village too? Discussions are ongoing about training local volunteers to monitor and record speeders (*very Archers*), but this is at a very early stage. Almost anything would be better than having speed bumps all over the place!

The *Courier* has been published for some 20 years, and we are always looking for new ideas. If you think you could become part of the dream team, please contact us at courier@kcfc.co.uk.

Our thanks go to our advertisers and deliverers and we hope that you, along with them, have a Happy Christmas and a prosperous 2024.

Ian

Cover

Our cover photo looking down Drumbeig Loan was taken by Jim Thomson and remains his copyright.

Killearn Village Hall Classes and Clubs

MONDAY

Monday Club: Main Hall and Garden Room. 1pm–4.30pm.
Badminton and bridge.

TUESDAY

Badminton: Main Hall, 9.15am–10.15am.

Foot Health Clinic: Committee Room 9.30am–2pm. Contact Jacqueline Morton for availability (07703 799112).

Story Sense: Garden Room 10am–12 Noon. Bringing Stories To Life. Baby & Toddler Sensory & Developmental Classes. Contact lauren@storysense.co.uk.

DIY circuits: Main Hall, 6.30pm–7.30pm. All welcome. Contact Fiona (fiona.rennie@btinternet.com) or Nick (07860 700928).

Adult Jazz Dance Class: Main Hall, 7pm–8pm. Contact Yasmin (07979 856837; yasmin@throthegrapevine.co.uk).

WEDNESDAY

Yoga Class: Main Hall, 9.30am–10.30am. Suitable for all. Contact Sarah (sarahfleming99@yahoo.com).

Ear Wax Microsuction Clinic: Committee Room, 9.30am–2pm. Contact Jacqueline Morton for availability (07703 799112).

Lynda Turner School of Dance: Main Hall, 4pm–5.30pm. Contact Lynda (770390; geolyn2000@hotmail.com).

THURSDAY

Pilates: Main Hall, 10.15am–11.15am. Suitable for all. Classes include a mix of exercises to mobilise, strengthen and tone the whole body whilst having a gentle workout, too. Contact Linda (email@talltreesaberfoyle.co.uk).

Children's Music Class: Main Hall, 2.10pm–2.50pm. Contact Clare (claremondaymusic@gmail.com).

Linda Turner School of Dance: Garden Room, 4pm–4.45pm. Pre-school dance class. Contact Lynda (770390; geolyn2000@hotmail.com).

Dance with Julie: Garden Room, 5.30pm–7pm. Contact Julie Symmonds (07496 231913; jjsymmonds36@gmail.com).

FRIDAY

Dancercise (adult 50+ fitness class): Main Hall, 10am–11am. Low-impact dance-based exercise and routines for over 50s, ladies and gents. Contact Yasmin (07979 856837; yasmin@throthegrapevine.co.uk).

Dance for Parkinson's: Main Hall, 1.30pm–2.30pm. Providing creative movement and dance to the Parkinson's and mobility disorders community. Contact Julie Symmonds (07496 231913; jjsymmonds36@gmail.com).

Buchanan Castle Bridge Club: Garden Room, 2pm–5pm. Contact Lesley Nicholl (07720 978998; lesleynic7@icloud.com).

News in Brief

On Yer Bikes! – a concerted effort by the village, led by Cycling Killearn, has resulted in our gaining the silver award from Cycling Scotland as a 'Cycling Friendly Community'. We are only the fifth village in Stirling to receive this accolade. Well done, everyone!

Strathendrick Film Society – our last film for 2023 on Friday, 1 December is *Are You There God? It's Me Margaret*. The 2024 series opens on 2 February with *My House in Umbria* followed by *Where The Crawdads Sing* on 1 March. See their website www.strathfilmsoc.org.uk or Noticeboard for more details or simply come along at 7.30pm.

Stirling Rural Housing Association – building on Lampson Road will include 11 units, comprising eight cottage flats and three houses. The preferred contractor has been selected, and a funding application has been approved by the Scottish Government which, along with funding from Stirling Council, will allow the site to progress. A site start date will be agreed soon. For latest information check www.rsha.org.uk.

Ink Cartridge Recycling – Killearn Nursery now have a collection box for recycling old ink cartridges. Please consider recycling using this.



Children's Hospices Across Scotland

Killearn Christmas Post

Post your local Christmas cards at
The Co-op
The Pharmacy
The Kirk
from
Friday 1st December
to addresses within the village.
Please remember to put full name and address on the envelope (no post code required)

Please give generously to CHAS via the collection tins

Final pick ups
Co-op & Pharmacy – 5pm Sat 16th December
Kirk – 1pm Sun 17th December

Delivery from 18th December

www.chas.org.uk
Children's Hospices Across Scotland is a trading name of Children's Hospices Association Scotland
Scottish charity number SC 038704



Simply the Best



Four nurseries across the Stirling area have been praised by the Care Inspectorate for delivering the very best outcomes for children. Nurseries in Balfron, Fintry, Killearn and Killin have received a grading of '5' (Very Good) in each of the four core evaluations of their service: setting, leadership, staff team and care, and play and learning.

The four nurseries provide care for more than 100 children in total and recently underwent unannounced inspections by the National Regulator.

Margaret Campbell, Principal Early Childhood Educator at Killearn Nursery, said: 'I'd like to thank our staff team, children and families for nurturing and developing such positive and kind relationships. We are thrilled the inspectors recognised our children as being confident and with a strong sense of belonging.'

Read the full article at www.stirling.gov.uk/news.

Macfarlane – Evans



On 19 August, Emma Macfarlane of Killearn and Matthew Evans of Waterbeach, Cambridge were married by Rev. Stuart Sharp at Killearn Kirk. Much to everyone's delight the sun shone just as the happy couple came out of the church.

Celebrations continued at Killearn Village Hall which were enjoyed by both the families and friends from Killearn and Cambridge.

Emma is an airline performance trainer based at Stansted Airport and Matthew is a senior aircraft engineer. The couple are currently living in Waterbeach.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir

The Summer *Courier* had a piece about the Advent Windows again this year. I hope there are enough interested people to make it happen again.

Money that's raised from the Windows goes to Shelter, which is a good cause. The question I would like to raise is why are there empty houses in the village? Some of them have been empty for years and decades. They must belong to someone, so why isn't anyone living in them? I'm not saying that they should be sold necessarily, but why can't they be rented out to people who need a home? Then maybe Shelter wouldn't have so much to do. (Name and address supplied)

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Thurs 7th to Sat 9th Dec

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IN 2022 ALL SHOWS SOLD OUT!
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Courier Interview: Dr Stuart Cumming

It might be a cliché, but Stuart Cumming was that boy who always wanted to be a doctor when he grew up because he always had a drive to help people. He grew up in Glasgow, initially near St George's Cross (now under the motorway!) and then in Hillhead. He studied medicine at the University of Glasgow, and then went on to work in Gartnavel and the old Southern General, followed by three years in Paisley, during which time, in common with most new medics, he was introduced to a host of specialties on rotation. He was interested in them all. What attracted Stuart to General



Practice was the variety, and the possibility of using the knowledge he had gained from all aspects of his training.

Back in the 1980s, being a GP was a sought-after position, particularly in Killearn, and Stuart was pleased to be appointed following quite a competitive selection process. Why was he keen to come? He liked the idea of working, living and raising a family in a beautiful place, and the independence often found in rural practices. In addition, the opportunity to get to know patients and provide continuity of care was equally appealing. Then there was the variety of work – no two days were likely to be the same.

Stuart, along with his wife, Carol, a highly-qualified scientist in her own right, moved from Glasgow's West End to the village when he became a partner in the Killearn medical practice in 1987. Things were different in those days. The practice at that time had 3,500 patients on the list, handled by three doctors (Drs Davies and Elms making up the trio) and two part-time receptionists. But there were innovations, too. Stuart says he first hit the headlines by being part of the group championing the creation of a 24-hour ambulance station in Balfron, to replace the on-call situation at that time. He was delighted to see a pharmacy come to Killearn. House calls were more commonplace, and the on-call rotation was a '1 in 3' (without benefit of mobile phones). So Carol was on-call, too.

It wasn't always plain sailing. Shortly after his arrival, Stuart received a call-out for an alarming incident. What he heard was the caller saying that he'd been hit by a bullet. Carol was instructed to inform the surgery, and off he went to deal with what he anticipated being a very serious situation. Arriving at the scene, it was clear that there had been an accident, but no bullets were involved. The gentleman, it transpired, had been hit by a bullock. Retelling this tale, Stuart laughed, explaining the misunderstanding by saying, 'There weren't many bullocks in Paisley.'

Since that time, the practice has seen many changes. The list size has risen to 4,500. Primary care has become much more complex over the years, with many things traditionally done in hospital now carried out at practice level.

There are now four partners, four receptionists, an office manager, a practice manager and two practice nurses, a mental health practitioner, a pharmacist, an occupational therapist and physio on the roster, as well as a couple of doctors in training.

The building has doubled in size to accommodate them. And while on-call may be thing of the past, the doctors still do house

calls for frail or palliative patients.

From 2010, Stuart also worked as Associate Medical Director (Primary Care) for Forth Valley Health Board, a role which focused on improving patient safety and quality of care in all the general practices in the region, and which he had hoped to give up in 2020. But then Covid loomed into view, and he was 'gifted' the role of Covid Lead for Forth Valley. This required the immediate setting up of assessment centres for patients with Covid symptoms, ensuring a clinical workforce for these, and communicating the constantly changing guidance to practices while working with the Health Board and the Scottish Government. He then went on to coordinate the initial Covid immunisation programme with the 55 Forth Valley practices.

Stuart is proud of the way the Killearn practice handled Covid. They never closed their doors to patients, although face-to-face appointments were initially uncommon – replaced with telephone contact in most instances. They moved back to a more usual regime as quickly as possible, backed by a vaccine roll-out which was handled smoothly and quickly by the practice.

Stuart will be retiring in December, after 36 years looking after patients in Killearn. He professes never to have tired of his job, though he's ready, as they say, for new challenges.

What next? He is looking forward to doing more of the many of the things he's always enjoyed – more travel; more hillwalking, perhaps taking in a few more Monros and long-distance routes; more skiing and generally keeping fit. Even a touch of gardening was mentioned.

Stuart and Carol raised their three daughters in Killearn, and there are now six grandchildren close by to occupy them. They have no plans to move, so at least that won't be changing!

NB

Advent Windows are GO

You may remember in the Summer *Courier* that we were looking for local homes and businesses to volunteer for our fourth year of Advent Windows. As well as brightening our village during December, we have raised over £3,000 as a community for Shelter in this time.

We are delighted to say that we received enough window volunteers to continue our tradition!

Watch out for the notices that will appear in various 'hot spots' throughout the village, and for our social media posts, to identify which houses will be open when, and what the trail looks like this year.

Over the past couple of years, we've been lighting houses in the same area in consecutive nights, so you will be able to visit one part of the village and see all the lights at one time. We're hoping to have another group of houses that we can open on the same night, such as we saw in the Branziert and Drumbeg Loan last year. The good folks of Branziert put on hot chocolate, Christmas cookies, hot chestnuts and more for us to



enjoy as we walked around, opening four windows on the same night. No pressure, then.

So do look for our fliers on various lamp posts and notice boards around the village, and come along to a window opening or follow the

trail when it's established. And please donate to Shelter – there will be donation buckets at each window opening, and around the village, as well as a QR code you can link to on your mobile device, or you can donate online at <https://tinyurl.com/advwins>.

And a final word of thanks to everyone who has given their time to create a window design, to everyone who has engaged with and enjoyed the trail and, of course, to the people who have donated to this great cause. We couldn't do it without all of you – it's a real village effort. Thank you.

If you would like more information, contact Glenda (killearn.advent.windows@gmail.com).

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On the cover of our summer edition of the *Courier*, we carried Kay Roxby's beautiful picture of the oak tree in the 'Big Park'.

We invited readers to contribute thoughts or pictures of their favourite trees. Priscilla from 'the Branziert' sent us two lovely photographs of trees in Ibert Road.



'This was taken one autumn morning in 2018 – it often attracted me as I walked past. I love the shape, and the morning light was an added bonus.'



'I wish I was a tree and could hear all the tales this character has to tell. The tree is at the boundary between field and human habitation – which is a perfect place. I've taken photos of this tree in most seasons... though I sometimes allow it a bit of privacy and walk on by.'

Do you know these two fine specimens? Do you have a favourite tree, plant, bird or animal?

If so, please contact the Killearn Natural History project at heritage@kfc.co.uk.

The project is building a natural history section of the KHT website.

If you would like to be involved in research or copy writing for the project – please get in touch.

The project has organised a talk, 'From Killearn to Kenya... and back again – Wildlife film-making and behind the scenes stories' with Nigel Pope and Jackie Savery on Sunday, 19 November, Killearn Village Hall, 7.30pm.

Their newest series, *Scotland – The New Wild* is available on BBC iPlayer.



The Press Gang Report

Another year older and another year wiser here at Killearn Primary School. After the summer, settling back into the school routine can be challenging. Here are some of the things we are doing to settle back in again.

Our new P1s have been venturing into the outdoors to do some bramble picking in the park with the Nursery. This will help them see that school is not such a scary place and encourage them to be excited for the future. They were very excited when Kika, the guide dog from the dog squad, came in to teach about senses. They have been having fun with their new buddies while learning some valuable cycling skills.

To start their second year of school the P2s have been reading *The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch* by Ronda and David Armitage which has inspired them to make their own lighthouse. They have also been expressing themselves by doing some creative mindful colouring in and participating in team building activities.

P2/3 have been excited to be creating a chocolate factory. After reading *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, they were inspired to make it and they have decided to call it The Super Legendary Fastest Chocolate Factory. They are also describing the different parts of the factory and the chapters from the book in their writing. They received some Wonka's chocolate and decided to do some taste testing and one of the children even got a golden ticket!

P3 have enjoyed getting back to their work. They have been excited to start some new, more challenging reading books. They have also been doing a lot of work on the school values and SHANARRI (which stands for 'safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included'). They have been doing some 'getting to know you' tasks to get to get to know their teacher and their peers a bit better. They have been doing a lot of tasks on their unique qualities and skills. They have been sharing talents and using art skills to make some amazing self-portraits.

P4 have been delighted to be reading a novel called *The Iron Man* by Ted Hughes. They have also decided that they are going to have this as their topic. They have also been doing some writing on the iron man. They have been learning about school values and SHANARRI, which will help with their focus on kindness. One of their main topics has been Christian weddings, and they have been learning how the ceremony goes on and other things. They have been making some 'all about me' school bags to tell the other people in their class and their teacher about them.



P5 have been working on teamwork and doing some tasks on natural disasters, making buildings to see if they are earthquake proof. In PE they have been exhilarated to do lacrosse and hockey as a new sports experience with Active Stirling. They have made a compliment corner to sit in when you are maybe feeling down, to get you back in a learning mood. In science they have been looking at the inside of the earth, which they have enjoyed a lot. They have also been doing a competition to see who could make the best portraits of Mrs Gibson and Mrs McCormick

for the website.

Here is what activities P6 have been doing since the start of term. They have been doing some Amazon rainforest factual writing. They have been reading *The Boy at the Back of Class* by Onjali Q. Rauf as their class novel. In PE they have loved playing hockey and capture the flag as a new experience. To get to know each other they have been doing some 'get to know shoes' with all their favourite things on them. They have been making some positive posters to get them in the right mind-set to learn.

Here is what is happening in P7 with Mrs McLean. They are learning about the blood circulatory system in science and even had a parent who is a biology teacher to dissect a cow and pig heart with the children. Most of the children enjoy PE. Some weeks they do lacrosse, and others they do football and netball. They also love doing weekly RME and grammar with their amazing teacher, Mrs Kelly. Everyone has been really enjoying their last year at the school.

CLAUDIA TOAL, ABBIE SIM,
MATTHEW WALKINSHAW AND KELLEN MORRISON

Another Successful Annual Show



With the Horticultural Society's Annual Show a distant memory, the Horti committee want to thank everyone who exhibited, attended, volunteered and helped clear up afterwards. It was a great day and it was lovely to see so many people enjoying the hundreds of exhibits.

The 157th Annual Show was held on Saturday, 26 August and featured a multitude of flowers, vegetables, baking, art, hidden gardens, photography and craftwork.

Paul Searle, Vice-Chair, said, 'We raised nearly £200 for Strathcarron Hospice by selling the cut flowers afterwards, and supplied surplus veg and fruit to a local foodbank. And this year the Horti committee made extra efforts to promote it as a family-friendly event and so we were very pleased at the large number of youth entrants.'



There were over 850 entries in total, and a range of Horti-related stalls, including the 'Wee Spuds' – youngsters from Blanefield Allotments.

One visitor commented that it was lovely to see all age groups coming together to share a great community activity.



A vintage tractor, renovated by eight-year-old Ewan, took pride of place outside, with youngsters scrambling to have their photo taken on it.

An online competition centred around 'My Garden' received more than 50 entries, with the winning entries on display at the Show.

There was great innovation and style to be found in the scarecrow competition. The winner can only be described as scary, with its feathery angel wings, spooky blue, unblinking eyes, and gorgeous roses and sunflowers

adorning its dress. The judges said that, all in all, the entries were 'absolutely fantastic' and the entrants were to be congratulated for their creations and efforts.

Grant Farquharson, Show Convener, said, 'Many thanks to everyone who exhibited and attended, especially the school and nurseries, those who organised and volunteered, and everyone who helped clear up afterwards.'

John Phillips, Chair, said, 'It was a great day and it was good to see so many people enjoying the hundreds of entries.'

The Show followed on from July's open garden event in Killearn organised by Horti members, which raised more than £4,000 for charities, as part of the Scotland's Garden Scheme.

The Horti's website (killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk) now has the dates for next year's events – so get the dates in your diary.

Meanwhile, the Horti are looking for more Friends to join their team. Being a Friend doesn't have a job description, but it could involve volunteering to assist,



helping set up at events, being a steward, selling schedules, serving teas, all without being on the committee (unless you want to be!). Events do take a fair bit of planning, effort and elbow grease. If you would like to be our Friend, read more on the website, email kchs@killearn.org.uk or talk to a committee member.

PAUL SEARLE



Open Garden Success

In July, nearly 450 people paid for a map to see the eight open gardens of Killearn, as part of Scotland's Garden Scheme (SGS).

The Horti committee helped organise the event with SGS volunteers and ticket sales alone raised more than £2,600 for charity. However, due to the generosity of Allister Ferguson, who donated all £800 of the takings from his woodwork craft stall, and Killearn Tennis Club, who served homemade teas and cake throughout the day, together with the plant sale takings of over £500, the final amount going to the chosen charities was well in excess of £4,000.

Organisers are grateful to everyone who contributed to the day – garden owners and their families, those who put up the signs, the tea servers and cake makers, the growers of the plants, all the people who helped set up in the Village Hall and car park, the volunteers who staffed the plant sale and ticket gazebo, the Scotland's Garden Scheme team and everyone else who helped make the day such a success.

It was a fantastic effort by all, and it is most satisfying to know that Colourful Killearn, Strathcarron Hospice and the charities of Scotland's Garden Scheme will all benefit.

Here we show a snapshot of each of the eight gardens, but they can be seen in all their colourful glory at www.killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk/open-garden.

PAUL SEARLE



Killearn Bridge Club opened for the winter season in September with a healthy face-to-face turnout of five tables, in part helped by the lovely weather. This season, we shall be holding some club nights in the Village Hall and some online. We have also re-entered a team in the Western District league and hope to have some success with a re-invigorated team. To join us for Tuesday club nights or to get involved in bridge classes, please email us through the contact page of our website.

The challenge in this issue is how to make the tight contract shown below.

Dealer: South Vulnerable: Neither

	♠ 8 6 3				
	♥ K 6				
	♦ A K 5 3 2				
	♣ K 6 4				
	North				
♠ -	West Z East	♠ -			
♥ -		♥ -			
♦ -		♦ -			
♣ -		♣ -			
	South				
	♠ A Q J 9 5				
	♥ J 8 2				
	♦ 9 4				
	♣ A Q 7				

South	West	North	East
1S	Pass	3D	Pass
3S	Pass	4S	Pass
Pass	Pass		

West leads ♠2.

As Declarer how do you plan to play the contract?
See page 41 for the full description.

Once again the ‘Microsoft’ scammers are at work. If you get a cold call from ‘Microsoft’, ‘BT’, ‘Apple’, or someone claiming to be from similar high-profile companies, be very suspicious. Think: if you ran a business with millions of customers, would you phone them up individually offering help? No, you wouldn’t. You would hopefully respond to a call **FROM** a customer, but not the other way round. My advice is simple – just hang up, or maybe tell them that you are about to record the call ‘for fraud prevention purposes’, and see what their reaction might be.

The Bank of Scotland say that they have seen a 75 per cent increase in people getting scammed when shopping for things like cars, tickets and clothes on Facebook Marketplace. Here are some things they advise people to look out for:

- Is it too good to be true? It’s not a bargain if it never turns up.
- Do you have to pay right away? A genuine seller won’t pressure you into a quick sale.
- Can you meet the seller in person? Look for things locally so you can check the item before you pay.
- Will they let you pay by card? Never pay by bank transfer. Pay by debit or credit card to protect your money.

The Bank of Scotland has a fraud hub webpage for more tips when buying online. Finally, if you get an unsolicited call, you can call the bank on 159; with a scam text, you can forward it to 7726; with a scam email, forward it report@phishing.gov.uk and finally, if you think you have been defrauded, their contact information is on the BoS website. Go to Fraud and Privacy, then Protecting Yourself from Fraud where you’ll see a ‘Contact us now’ link. Other banks have similar set-ups.

If you’re a business owner, beware of an email supposedly coming from Companies House requiring you to confirm or renew your password. If you check the actual sender, or hover over the presented link, you can see that these are fraudulent.

DOUG ASHWORTH

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Killlearn Community Council

The new council year is now well underway, and we have been delighted to welcome two new members; Michael Bowdidge, who has plunged in at the deep end by heading up our response to the Local Place Plan survey, and Lachlan Mackenzie, who as our youth member brings us a much needed perspective from that demographic.

We also have the option to have two additional members, by co-option, and this process is currently underway – hopefully our numbers will have risen to ten by the time you are reading this!

The main business of the council continues as before, with road related issues remaining at the forefront. Bridge closures have been problematic throughout the region, but there has been recent improvement there.

The 20mph speed limit continues to cause concern, with multiple reports that it is both frequently disregarded and wholly unenforceable. KCC continue to discuss with Police Scotland regarding their proposal that volunteers be trained to observe and record speed. This would, however, involve financial outlay which may prove prohibitive unless there was interest also from our neighbouring villages. This remains an ongoing action.

The requirement for an upgrade of the Station Road pavement also remains high on the agenda. The most recent update is that work is scheduled to start in early 2024, carried out by Stirling Council, but funded by CALA, as part of their commitment to the village. We are currently seeking information about the exact nature of the upgrade work.

New to us this year will be our involvement in creating a Local Place Plan, and our thanks go to Michael for his explanatory article on page 19 of this edition of the *Courier*. We are very lucky in Killlearn to have two other community bodies to partner us, so we will be working closely with Killlearn Trust and the Killlearn Community Futures Company to get the results that are as inclusive and comprehensive as possible.

We will continue for the time being to operate our monthly meetings with two options: in person in the Village Hall Garden Room and by Zoom link into the meeting. We look forward to seeing you on the third Wednesday of the month. If you wish to join the meeting by Zoom, or need more information, please contact us on ContactUs@KilllearnCC.org.uk.

Visit our website www.killlearncc.org.uk, where you will find the latest community news, planning, minutes of meetings and answers to lots of the questions we are often asked.

ELIZABETH JONES
CHAIR, KCC



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The Weather Channel

After the warmest June on record in the UK, we had an extremely wet July followed by a windy and quite wet August. September did not deliver an 'Indian Summer', but in Killearn was the second wettest this year. This unsettled weather was due to areas of low pressure that kept heading to our shores, whereas southern Europe had blistering heat with some countries experiencing devastating wildfires.

The Met Office announced that worldwide data indicated that September was the warmest month across the globe, with an average temperature of 16.38°C exceeding the previous record by 0.93°C. Climate scientists are forecasting that 2023 could be the warmest year on record in the UK. Watch for confirmation, or otherwise, of this in January 2024.

May 2023 also set a record for UK sea surface temperatures with 1.6°C rise.

It seems that our weather patterns became stuck with the jet stream weakening, buckling and bending, creating stationary areas of high pressure that formed heat domes over southern Europe and wet and windy weather over the UK.

So what is wind?

Wind is simply the movement of air that is caused by pressure differences which are, in turn, caused by temperature patterns.

It all starts with the sun, which warms the earth's surface and the atmosphere. This warming is uneven due to our land masses and oceans, and uneven solar heating leads to areas of high and low pressure.

As air heats, it warms, expands and rises, leaving behind an area of low pressure. Air then moves from



Image: Freepik.com

surrounding higher pressure areas to attempt to even things out and the resulting rush of air is our wind. The bigger the difference in pressure areas, the faster the air will move.

The earth's rotation ensures that air does not flow directly from high to low pressure. In the northern hemisphere it is deflected to the right (by what is known as the Coriolis effect), giving us prevailing west to south-westerly winds across the UK which bring moisture in the form of rain to Killearn.

The strongest winds are usually in mountainous areas, with 173mph recorded on the summit of the Cairngorm on 20 March 1963. At lower levels, the record is 142mph on 13 February 1989 at Fraserburgh.

Winds in our geographic location are relatively light and rarely reach gale force, whereas Orkney and Shetland have over 30 gale force wind events every year.

TOM RENFREW

Summary January to September 2023 for Killearn

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept
Highest Temp	10.3	10.6	15.8	17.3	24.2	28.9	24.2	22.4	26.6
Lowest Temp	-4.1	-3.5	-6.7	-2.4	4.2	5.3	6.6	7.3	6.6
Mean Temp	4	6.1	4.8	7.8	11.8	15.7	14.1	14.5	13.4
Days Below Freezing	8	4	12	2	0	0	0	0	0
Highest Wind Gust	31	36	20	21	23	15	26	28	18
Monthly Rain	136.2	52.2	120.8	61	31.2	57.6	104.6	48.4	126.6
Most Rain in 24 hrs	19	9.8	26.6	24	16	12.8	16.4	6.2	23.2
Days without Rain	9	11	11	18	22	14	6	9	7
Cumulative Rainfall	136.2	188.4	309.2	430	461.2	518.8	623.4	671.8	798.4

Temperature in °C, rainfall in mm, and wind speed in miles per hour

Broadband Update

I can report that there now is upgraded connectivity to almost all parts of the village, especially to properties in the Branziert, and it's full-fibre (FTTP) connectivity! There are possibly now only 20–30 premises in and around the village that do not have some kind of fibre-based service. I don't know how soon a connection can actually be made, but it is possible to order the upgrade now. These connections have only just become available, so we are probably looking at four to six weeks for a completed installation.

Boquhan premises and those along Ballochruin Road are also showing as having been upgraded to an FTTP service, though I'm not sure about premises along the Fintry Road at the time of writing.

There still seem to be some anomalies. Some premises on some postcodes are not yet showing an upgraded service for some reason. Specifically these are: G63 9LE (Baptiston), some parts of Main St (G63 9LF, 9RJ and 9SL), G63 9NJ (Balfron Road), G63 9PE (Station Rd) and G63 9PL (The Square).

This FTTP connectivity can currently provide download speeds of up to 1Gbps. However, upload speeds of 20Mbps might be more typical with the FTTP service, although you can request it to be higher.

The DigitalScotland website postcode checker is currently still not working, but you can check the availability of fibre speeds to your own premises on the BT Openreach Fibre Checker – although not when it will arrive if faster speeds are not currently listed as an option.

This great news means that this may be my last update, apart from a revival of the information about the BT-named Digital Voice change planned to be complete by 2025. This VOIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) replacement will mean the conventional phone service that we have used since the 19th century will be phased out. (See *Courier* issue 50.)

Finally, we should recognise the enthusiasm and innovation of Euan Shaw, who has put in lots of time and effort to provide a fast, radio-based service over the last few years, primarily to premises on the outskirts of the village, while BT efforts have been lagging.

DOUG ASHWORTH
CHAIR, KILLEARN BROADBAND GROUP

Killlearn Community Futures Company



Killlearn Community Futures Company (KCFC) held their AGM as the *Courier* went to print. Look out for an article in the spring edition. For those who are unfamiliar with KCFC, it is a charitable company set up to involve the community of Killlearn in making the village an even better place to live. Find out more about KCFC on the website (www.kcfc.co.uk) – how to join/be a member, get involved in a group or how to donate.

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Mulberry Bush Montessori's 30-year Birthday Walk

Montessori settings around the world celebrate birthdays with a special 'Birthday Walk' recognising a child's birthday as a 'celebration of life'. On 4 October 1993, Robert Hope Aga Showroom became Mulberry Bush Montessori – so they will be walking for quite a while celebrating over a thousand graduates!

When Mairi Maciver Clark couldn't access a childcare place for her daughter, Anna, in order to return to work in broadcasting, she and her architect husband set about renovating the old Aga showroom into a purpose designed space for children. This took eight weeks, with local tradesmen, family and friends working day and night for the grand opening with 16 children enrolled.

Mairi's background is in primary teaching, social work and family therapy. She learned about the Montessori Method from a parent, and its focus on independence and self-directed learning where children are encouraged to take ownership of their education and to explore their interests at their own pace struck a chord. As a result, she added Montessori diplomas in early years and primary, meaning that the focus of the centre was firmly anchored to this approach.

The Mulberry Bush emphasises, Mairi said, 'love and respect for following the child and the development of their unique potential, based on the understanding that each child has a unique way of learning, interests and passions, and our role is to observe, guide and support each child in their own unique development.'

The learning potential of the natural world has been at the heart of wider Montessori practice since its earliest days, and the Mulberry Bush's forest nursery school was developed and in use by late 2015.

'Our work is hugely rewarding and no two days are the same. The responsibilities we share are significant and the rewards we glean are enormous in the face of so much policy change,' Mairi emphasised.

She finished by saying, 'So, this October, Happy Birthday to us, to all of our children and families, past and present, for your faith and trust in us, in recognition that we do the most important job in the world. To all of our MBK staff presently and those who have ever been part of the rich tapestry of who we are. To Vicki, Sarah, Jane and Alison, who've walked the birthday walk every year since 1993, and to Shona, for over 16 years of fitting in so snugly. Here's to the next 30!'



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Have you sat on the new bench down Drumtian Road? It arrived recently thanks to the kindness of Joanne Boyle, Coordinator and Facilitator for 'Our Connected Neighbourhoods' – Dementia Inclusive Places Grants. Joanne visited The Friendship Group one Tuesday afternoon with the offer of 'something' which would enhance the village and be dementia-friendly. This was an offer we couldn't refuse, so the Killearnites in the group donned their collective thinking cap and came up with the idea of a bench to be placed on Drumtian Road. Many of you will remember a bench there which gradually fell apart and finally disappeared. It was placed two-thirds of the way up the hill just where a seat was often needed!

So the process of replacing our bench began. Thanks go to a number of people. Firstly to Daye Tucker and Lawrence Martin, for kindly allowing us to place the bench on Carbeth Home Farm land and for storing the bench for us while we prepared the

ground for it.

That preparation was begun by our 'boys' from the village hall – Graeme, Ado and Mike – digging out the site, supervised by Fiona and me with suitable words of encouragement!

The following day, Joanne and her husband, Alan, came with the necessary concrete and slabs to make the site secure. Alan fitted the bench the day after, and special thanks are due to him for giving up two days of his holidays to help us. The bench is made entirely of recycled plastic so should be maintenance free.

The feedback we have received has been very positive. It is placed opposite a gate and thus gives lovely views of the hills. It doesn't just provide a welcome seat on the way back up the hill – it gives opportunity for a blether together.

Finally, I must tell you the funding came from Stirling Council, so thank you Stirling Council.

DOREEN SNADDON

Vaccinations

We would like to remind all patients that Forth Valley NHS Board are now responsible for the administration of all vaccinations to our patient population. This will include the flu, Covid and shingles vaccinations currently being administered, as well as childhood immunisations.

As a result this does mean that Killearn Health Centre will have no part in the scheduling of appointments or the delivery of the flu or Covid vaccinations to our patients.

Our understanding is that you will receive direct communication from the Vaccination Teams regarding appointments. If you have any queries regarding any vaccinations, please contact the Forth Valley Vaccination team on 0800 130 3120 or the National Vaccination Team on 0800 030 8013 rather than the Health Centre, as we will have no access to appointment information.

Please note the vaccination teams may use the Health Centre as a venue. This will not be staffed by the Practice team.

Mental Health Services for young people aged 12 to 17 inclusive

We are pleased to announce we now have access to a Mental Health Nurse, Jane Yule, who offers appointments to young people aged 12 to 17 inclusive. Appointments can be made for issues such as low mood/depression, anxiety, stress, relationship challenges, sleep issues, situational crisis, bereavements and emotional regulation. Please contact reception to book an appointment.

Staff Update

Dr Cameron McCloskey our Foundation Year trainee will leave us in December 2023. Dr Gary Cook will be replacing him from December 2023 to April 2024. Dr Natasha Szmids will rejoin us in November 2023 to finish her ST3 training.

Closures

For times when the Health Centre is closed, please see the Noticeboard on page 2.

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Colourful Killearn – Good News and Bad

It's been a mixed bag this year. Our 45 tubs and 11 wall troughs around the village have worked hard to give some amazingly colourful displays, despite being alternately baked and drowned! An unsolved case of wilful damage at the Well Green added to the challenges, the latest episode in a long history of low-level vandalism – plants being trampled, pulled up and stolen along with barrels being overturned. Dispiriting, given the effort that volunteers put in to maintaining them.

On a happier note, thanks to a generous donation from the *Courier*, we have been able to locate new tubs at the Well Green seating area and on the path to the Health Centre entrance. These have replaced ageing, less aesthetically pleasing green plastic pots. The perennial planting should improve with passing years. We have also been able to buy a stack of bright signs that now affirm ownership of CK planters.

The good financial news continued due to our association with the Killearn Open Gardens day. We assisted with the running of a plant stall on the day, and were generously nominated as one of the local beneficiaries. We duly received an incredible donation of over £1,220 from Scotland's Open Gardens Scheme and are currently discussing how this money can be used to provide an enduring legacy in the village and in the spirit of Colourful Killearn.



It was with great sadness that we received the news of the death of Jim Henderson. He has been a passionate long-term friend, supporter and benefactor of Colourful Killearn, right from the earliest days. He will be greatly missed.

MIKE GREY



Killearn's Local Place Plan

Killearn Community Council are currently working towards submitting a Local Place Plan (LPP) towards the end of 2024. KCC member Michael Bowdidge is leading on this, and we are very pleased to announce that a draft timeline for the production of the LPP has now been agreed by KCC.

An LPP is a proposal by a community body (such as Killearn Community Council) made in consultation with local people, which sets out that community's preferences and aims for local development and land use. LPPs offer communities the opportunity to voice their aspirations for their local area and shape how it might look in the future. By producing LPPs, communities also ensure their voices are heard in the development planning process, as planning authorities must consider valid LPPs when preparing Local Development Plans.

This is a great opportunity for Killearn to have a conversation about the kind of place we want to live in, and how we can go about achieving that. The Community Council will be consulting extensively with the community over the next year to fully understand everyone's priorities, and there will be a series of

public meetings to keep everyone informed. There will also be regular updates at KCC meetings and online, and a parallel consultation process with all key local stakeholders. We want to produce an LPP in which everyone has a say, so please look on the KCC website and Facebook for details of forthcoming events.

For first stage of the consultation, we are using Planning Advice Scotland's tried and tested Place Standard Tool. The Place Standard Tool is a short online questionnaire which asks 14 questions about aspects of place. It's completely anonymous, and very easy to complete, so we'd be extremely grateful if all *Courier* readers could spare a few moments to complete the survey over the coming weeks. We'll be running this first phase of the consultation until the end of January, so there's plenty of time to get your views heard.

Please use this link to complete the survey:
www.ourplace.scot/tool/start/killearn-adult-pop.

If you'd like a paper copy of the survey or have any questions about the LPP, please contact Michael Bowdidge (07939 963604; michael.bowdidge@killearncc.org.uk).

Killearn's Warm Space



Killearn Warm and Friendly Space
Sundays, anytime between 2pm and 4pm
From 7 January 2024
Village Hall's Garden Room
(downstairs from The Kitchen Window)

For four months last winter a space was set aside in Killearn Village Hall for any of the village's older residents to meet.

Colder weather and less daylight can make people withdraw from village life, but with others wanting to offer support and rally round the older generation, the Village Hall's Garden Room was turned into a warm and friendly space every weekend afternoon.

Whether it was for a cuppa, to play a game, or just have a chat, everyone who dropped by said how much they enjoyed the sessions.

Sometimes there were biscuits, often there was homemade cake, but everyone who came along agreed it was a warm and friendly space to meet and while away the wintry afternoons. Some folk played dominoes, others Scrabble or Happy Families – some showed they were dab hands at table tennis, others at jigsaws. Some were very content just to sit and have an occasional chat.

The Sunday afternoon sessions were facilitated by two or three volunteers, serving teas, joining in the chat and the activities. On occasions, volunteers came along to demonstrate the clàrsach or the violin, and others who got everyone to join in chair yoga or 'brain gym' exercises. For this winter we have pencilled in Sunday afternoons, 2pm to 4pm, from 7 January 2024. If you want to get out of the house and meet people, do drop by on a Sunday afternoon.

Indeed, as the population changes and new residents settle in, those not on social media are not always aware of what 'village life' offers to whom and when, so please tell someone – a neighbour maybe – who would welcome

the opportunity of being in a warm and friendly space on a Sunday afternoon. It's good to bring people together for smiles and warmth, connecting people and encouraging the sharing of stories and daily endeavours.

Lastly, a huge thanks to the volunteers – some of them pictured above – who embraced the warm and friendly space experience and made it a success, either transporting folk needing a lift, serving tea or joining the conversations and games.

PAUL SEARLE

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Killearn Village Hall

Sometimes it's good to remember that there is a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow...



As the colder weather approaches, we are in the process of renewing our services contracts for gas and electricity. It's mind boggling, and as with many other community facilities and organisations, we are facing huge increases in charges. So we're now taking on the challenge to understand better what makes the wheels on the gas and electricity meters spin around so quickly and how we can work more sustainably at the hall.

And back to that gold at the end of the rainbow... We loved working over the summer with the team from the Killearn Cottagers' Horticultural Society. It was exciting to be the hub for the Open Garden Scheme

day at the end of July, seeing people, some from far afield, coming to Killearn to enjoy wandering around the gardens and sharing stories over tea and cake at the Village Hall.

Then a month later, there was the Horti show itself, with the competition for the best onions, dahlias, lemon curd and hand-knitted garments as strong as ever. Read all about it on page 10. If you haven't experienced the Annual Show, then it is definitely one to note for next summer. www.killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk

Last month we hosted the Active Travel event which is something we should all be doing more. There were lots of chances to talk to people about walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure in wider Killearn in order to facilitate more active travel and more sustainable local transport, as well as creating more liveable streets. For more information go to <https://killearnactivetravel.blog>.

And on that note, coming soon to the hall are some cycle racks, with thanks to Stirling Council and Cycling Killearn. We look forward to offering some more safe parking for those who want to travel on two wheels.

We're currently gearing up for a kids party with a bouncy castle and a 50th birthday party with an old school disco at the hall.

If you fancy a party, we are on your doorstep – we're keen to help – come and chat or email us at killearnvillagehall@gmail.com.

FIONA RENNIE

THE OLD MILL KILLEARN

CHRISTMAS OPENING TIMES

Christmas Eve Sunday 24th December
Restaurant 12pm - 9pm Bar 12pm - late

Christmas Day Monday 25th December
Closed

Boxing Day Tuesday 26th December
Restaurant 12pm - 6pm Bar 12pm - 11pm

Wednesday 27th - Saturday 30th December
Restaurant 12pm - 9pm Bar 12pm - 11pm

Hogmanay Sunday 31st December
Restaurant 12pm - 9pm Bar 12pm - late
Karaoke Babz in the bar from 9pm

New Years Day Monday 1st January
1pm to 6pm

BOOK YOUR TABLE AT
www.theoldmillkillearn.co.uk
01360 550068

From the Wine Shelf

This Christmas, once all the presents are bought and the food is chosen, it is a good moment to think about what wine to serve. If you are a traditionalist or looking for something a little off the beaten path, there are great options to go with any Christmas dinner.

If you like to start with a traditional smoked salmon dish the usual pairing would be Champagne, or the more affordable Cremant de Bourgogne. Both made in the same way, they have the high acidity needed to cut through the fat of the salmon. Or if fizz is not your thing, then Chablis has to be one of the best pairings to be found.

However, if you fancy breaking into something different, a good strong gin and tonic works perfectly as, like the Champagne, it has the acidity to balance the texture of the salmon. And if you are feeling adventurous, you can even cure your own salmon with your gin!

When it comes to the main course there aren't many spirits that would work with all those trimmings, but there are interesting alternatives nonetheless. A big oaky Californian or Bourgogne Chardonnay would be great.

If you are craving something red by this point, a Pinot Noir would work well, whether your preference is something more traditional from Burgundy or something a little richer from Chile or New Zealand.

For Christmas pudding, it is easy. If you can take more sweetness, match it with a Pedro Ximenez sherry or dessert wine. Fancy a slightly more savoury balance? Then an aged rum would be beautiful.

If there was only one white and one red that works best all the way through it would be a Bourgogne Chardonnay or a New Zealand Pinot Noir – for when you just want to keep it simple.

ELAINE TAYLOR



Have Our Dogs Gone Barking Mad?

We have all heard and are upset by recent reports of serious, and even fatal, dog attacks and their connection with 'American Bully XL' dogs. A ban of this breed mix (it is not a recognised breed) is now in the pipeline, and no doubt other legislation on breeding and responsible dog ownership will follow. But will it solve the problem?

The problem is not new – I gave vet student lectures on this topic some 20 years ago. While breed specific legislation decreases the numbers of one type of 'dangerous dog', another imposing breed mix is being created and distributed, every time.

And while we're on the topic of 'aggressive breeds', scientifically, there are none! Every breed examined appears to have a huge variation of this behaviour, and none of our breeders have been selecting for it for hundreds of years.

But as every practising veterinarian will tell you, all dogs can and will bite if pushed far enough. This means a waterproof plaster in the case of a Yorkie biting, but a potential hospital visit in case of big dogs, especially if a 50kg XL bag of muscle is involved, the sort that social media advertises as the 'must-have' dog. (Thankfully we haven't created giant cats and rabbits yet.)

However, rather than intent on murder, dogs generally want to avoid 'having to bite', using subtle body language, like growling and barking, to communicate their unease and asking us to please stay away. Disciplining or forcing dogs at this point makes us the aggressor and very frequently leads to biting.

We shouldn't feed an irrational fear of dogs. We should employ common sense, especially regarding appropriate dog contact. Supervision of children when around dogs, no hugging or being face to face with a dog, and no rough play should be taken as read.

Appropriate dog management is also important – using a lead when needed, safe fencing, providing a suitable environment for the type of dog chosen, educating the dog and giving it time to settle in and feel safe. All of these basic factors played a role in the publicised fatalities.

Finally, your qualified pet professional is there for you should you have any questions regarding all of your pets.

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Tune In

Tune in every Sunday morning, 10am–12noon, to local lad Ian Kidd. He grew up in Killearn and hosts a programme called ‘The Ceilidh Kidd’ on Celtic Music Radio.

He plays a variety of ceilidh/dance bands, modern traditional bands (like Skipinnish and Manran) as well as some old Scottish classics that all the Grannies will enjoy. Great tunes along with some light-hearted chat and sketches featuring Killearn’s very own celebrity chef, Govan Rab (aka Robert Kidd, who lives in Killearn and used to be the chef at Oakwood). You also have the chance to take in some very brief Gaelic lessons from a world-record holder

Competitions? Of course there are competitions. As well as all that, there’s a weekly run-down of live traditional music events in the greater Glasgow area.

You can send your requests and birthday messages to ian.kidd@celticmusicradio.net.

Our signal does reach parts of Killearn and can be found on 95 MHz FM, as well as via smart speakers (by saying ‘Enable Celtic Music Radio’) or simply listen online at www.celticmusicradio.net.

Sounds good? Why not tune in!



Recyke-a-Bike visits Killearn!



It was a sunny day in July when Recyke-a-Bike visited Killearn. And it proved a great success: 26 bikes checked, 14 people attended bike



maintenance workshops and 17 bikes donated! Hopefully by the time you read this our second event planned for October half term will have been equally successful.

Recyke-a-bike (www.recyke-a-bike.co.uk) is a charity which aims to help people, local communities and the environment by promoting cycling for low-carbon transport, better health and wellbeing; providing employment and training; and stopping bikes ending up in landfill.

These events were organised by Cycling Killearn, which aims to promote cycling for local journeys, pleasure and wellbeing.



Read about our plans at www.cycling-killearn.org. Join @CyclingKillearn on Facebook and follow us on Instagram!

SARAH DEAS, CYCLING KILLEARN, CO-LEAD



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The Holidays are Coming

A few festive ingredients to get you in the mood – even a song for your party piece!

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS CARD



In 1843, entrepreneur Sir Henry Cole, commissioned artist John Callcott Horsley to design a card for him to send to his friends and acquaintances. The postcard-sized card had a central image which depicted a prosperous family enjoying a party while side panels showed the poor being given food and clothing.

Around a thousand were produced and Sir Henry sent half to his friends, offering the rest for sale at a shilling each – thus marking the birth of the commercial Christmas card. They became popular among the more affluent in Victorian society, as a shilling was a lot of money for most at the time. However, despite their popularity, the cards caused controversy as the Temperance

Movement objected to the fact that it represented a family drinking a Christmas toast, with a child being given a sip of wine!

The introduction of the ‘penny post’ and the development of the railways led to greater use of the postal service by ordinary people in the mid 19th century. Cards could be posted for a halfpenny in an unsealed envelope, and as printing methods improved, Christmas cards became more popular and started being produced in larger numbers from around 1860. At the start of the 20th century, the Post Office was already dealing with an extra 11.5 million deliveries during the Christmas week. Nowadays, around one billion Christmas cards are sent in Britain each year.*

CHRISTMAS TREE VARIETIES

The most popular tree varieties in the UK include:

Nordmann Fir – the most popular tree in the UK as it keeps its needles well; symmetrical branches are great for displaying ornaments.

Noble Fir – has bluish-green needles and short, stiff branches; keeps well.



Fraser Fir – has great fragrance with dark green needles, silvery underneath; pyramid shaped with branches which turn upwards; ideal for small spaces.

Douglas Fir – probably strongest scent of all Christmas trees; great shape, but being

CHRISTMAS Plants and Bulbs

- Poinsettia
- Hellebores
- Christmas Rose
- Flowering Cyclamen
- Scented Hyacinth bulbs
- Planted Amaryllis bulbs
- Christmas Flowering Cacti
- Winter flowering Muscari bulbs



FESTIVE Foliage & Berries for Wreaths & House



- Hypericum berries
- Ilex berries
- Holly stems
- Eucalyptus
- Spruce
- Noble fir
- Rose hips
- Dried Hydrangea
- Cupressus
- Birch branches
- Laurel
- Ivy
- Ozothamnus
- Rhododendron
- Salal
- Senecio
- Pittosporum
- Willow branches
- Metallic sprayed greenery
- Dried mixed foliage
- Malus stem – mini apples on stems



denser may be harder to decorate.

Norway Spruce – this traditional Christmas tree is dark green; has a strong fragrance and a great conical shape; keep well watered for good needle retention.

Blue Spruce – known for its unique blue colouring, needs to be well watered; good stiff branches, great for hanging heavy decorations.

St. NICHOLAS, SANTA CLAUS, FATHER CHRISTMAS

Nowadays Father Christmas and Santa Claus are thought to be different names for the same person. However they have quite different histories, which have merged across the years.

Origins of Santa Claus can be traced to St. Nicholas who is thought to have been a bishop in the fourth century, in what we now know as Turkey. The most famous legend about him is how the custom of hanging up stockings came about. The story goes that a poor man couldn't provide a dowry for any of his three daughters to get married. One night, Nicholas dropped a bag of gold down the chimney and it fell into a stocking hanging by the fire to dry (could this also be the origin of chocolate coins at the bottom of stockings?). He repeated the gift for the other daughters and when the news got out, anyone who received a secret gift thought it might be from Nicholas. This is most likely why he is now traditionally associated with Christmas.



But how did St. Nicholas become Santa Claus? In the early 1800s, Dutch settlers in America carried on the tradition of celebrating the feast day of St. Nicholas on 6 December, referring to him as 'Sinterklass'. It's easy to see how the name then became Santa Claus to English speakers.

In the UK, prior to the 19th century, 'St Christmas', 'Father Christmas' or 'Old Man Christmas' was merely a symbol of the Christmas season, often depicted as an old man presiding over parties, and appearing in plays and folk dramas. During the Victorian era, when Christmas became more focused on family and children, Father Christmas became synonymous with gift giving and Christmas cheer, so that by the end of the 19th century, English Father Christmas had become Santa Claus in all but name.

But why does Santa wear a red suit? St. Nicholas is thought to have worn red and white robes which could possibly be one of the reasons. However, it's more likely he result of drawings in the 1880s by Thomas Nast, an American cartoonist, who was the first to draw Santa wearing a red suit with fur lining, a nightcap, and a black belt with a large buckle.

It is said that Santa lives either at the North Pole or in Lapland. But it's universally agreed that he travels through the night on a sledge pulled by reindeer, bringing presents. Don't believe it? NORAD clearly does!

Track his travels at www.noradsanta.org/en/.



Image: Wikimedia Commons

A FOODIE PARODY

On the **FIRST** day of Christmas my true love cooked for me: **a turkey to feed an army**



On the **SECOND** day of Christmas my true love cooked for me: **2 boiled hams** and a turkey to feed an army

On the **THIRD** day of Christmas my true love cooked for me: **3 tons of stuffing**, 2 boiled hams and a turkey to feed an army

On the **FOURTH** day of Christmas my true love cooked for me: **4 dozen mince pies**, 3 tons of stuffing, 2 boiled hams and a turkey to feed an army



On the **FIFTH** day of Christmas my true love cooked for me: **5 million sprouts**, 4 dozen mince pies, 3 tons of stuffing, 2 boiled hams and a turkey to feed an army



On the **SIXTH** day of Christmas my true love cooked for me: **6 sherry trifles**, 5 million sprouts, 4 dozen mince pies, 3 tons of stuffing, 2 boiled hams and a turkey to feed an army



On the **SEVENTH** day of Christmas my true love cooked for me: **7 pints of bread sauce**, 6 sherry trifles, 5 million sprouts, 4 dozen mince pies, 3 tons of stuffing, 2 boiled hams and a turkey to feed an army

On the **EIGHTH** day of Christmas my true love cooked for me: **8 lemon cheesecakes**, 7 pints of bread sauce, 6 sherry trifles, 5 million sprouts, 4 dozen mince pies, 3 tons of stuffing, 2 boiled hams and a turkey to feed an army



On the **NINTH** day of Christmas my true love cooked for me: **9 festive puddings**, 8 lemon cheesecakes, 7 pints of bread sauce, 6 sherry trifles, 5 million sprouts, 4 dozen mince pies, 3 tons of stuffing, 2 boiled hams and a turkey to feed an army



On the **TENTH** day of Christmas my true love cooked for me: **10 trays of roasties**, 9 festive puddings, 8 lemon cheesecakes, 7 pints of bread sauce, 6 sherry trifles, 5 million sprouts, 4 dozen mince pies, 3 tons of stuffing, 2 boiled hams and a turkey to feed an army



On the **ELEVENTH** day of Christmas my true love cooked for me: **11 pints of gravy**, 10 trays of roasties, 9 festive puddings, 8 lemon cheesecakes, 7 pints of bread sauce, 6 sherry trifles, 5 million sprouts, 4 dozen mince pies, 3 pounds of stuffing, 2 boiled hams and a turkey to feed an army

On the **TWELVTH** day of Christmas my true love brought to me: **12 packs of Rennies...!** Ooft

From the Archive: ‘Logarithm’ John

In a display cabinet in the Village Hall you will find ‘Napier’s Bones’. These are the invention of John Napier, a near contemporary of the better known, Killearn-born Renaissance scholar, George Buchanan. John had a home at Gartness Castle, now vanished, and probably spent more time in the area than Buchanan, although the only obvious reference to him is the name of Napier Road. His ‘Bones’ can be considered a very early form of calculator.

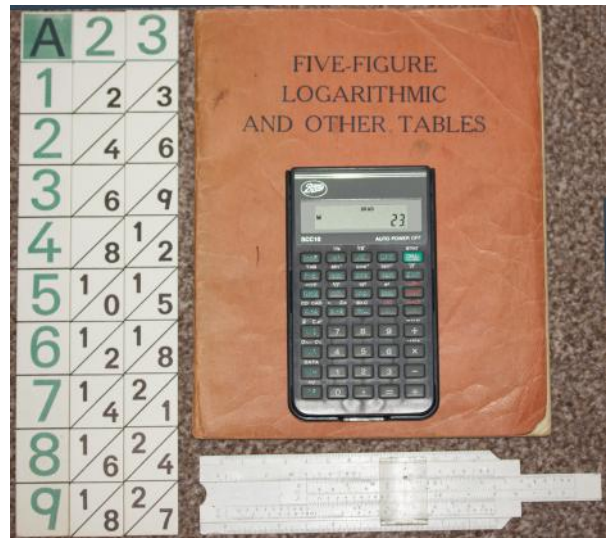
Napier was born in 1550 at the family home of Merchiston Castle on the outskirts of Edinburgh. The tower house still stands as part of Napier University. As the eldest son, he was required to learn Latin and study law at university. He duly went to St Andrews, aged just 13.

The following year, on advice from his uncle, the Bishop of Orkney, he travelled to the Continent to further his studies. This may have been because of the turbulence of the Reformation or because he wanted to learn Hellenistic Greek in order to study the Bible. It is not known where he studied, so he may have been at various universities.

On his return to Scotland in 1571, he contracted to marry Elizabeth Stirling of Keir and was granted the ownership of Gartness. They married in 1572 and had two children before she died in 1579. Later he married Agnes Chisholm of Cromlix, and they had ten more children.

In 1596, he wrote a letter claiming to have invented a burning mirror for use against ships, an artillery piece capable of long-range bombardment and a tank. None of these seem to have got beyond the drawing board, although a family legend claims that a tank-like machine is buried at Gartness.

In those days, it was necessary to use long division and multiplication to work out mason’s measurements as well as navigational and astronomical calculations. These were laborious and subject to many errors. Around 1590, he became obsessed with making arithmetical



calculations easier. He is said to have been distracted in his work by the noise from the Gartness Mill, close to the castle, and to have the mill stopped at times, so that he could concentrate on his calculations.

He discovered a way to convert numbers so that multiplications and divisions could be made by simple addition or subtraction. It took him 20 years to draw up tables to make this process available, but in 1614 he published the tables. He called these tables ‘logarithms’ – from the Greek ‘logos’ meaning ratio and ‘arithmos’ meaning number. In this publication, he also standardised the use of the decimal point in writing decimal fractions. His ‘Bones’ followed soon afterwards, making multiplication easier.

In these days of computers and calculators, it is difficult to understand the importance of the development of logarithms. However, the tables were used up until the 1970s, and the logarithmic scale led to the invention of the slide rule, another form of calculator.

Napier died in Merchiston Castle in 1617 and was buried in St. Cuthbert’s Church in Edinburgh. AKA

ALEXANDER STEWART MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament for
Mid Scotland and Fife Region



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All Together Now

With the summer now a distant memory, it is comforting to think back to some of the highlights. Not only was the weather brilliant in early summer, before the schools closed for the holidays, naturally, but also there were summer events worth remembering.

Whoever thought up the idea of the Open Garden Scheme should be proud of themselves. Not only were the gardens lovely to look at, they were also inspirational. Fresh ideas abounded. People were encouraged to think beyond their current borders and redesign the odd flower bed. Our garden has never been considered for the scheme, for a very obvious reason. We have decided to respond to the suggestion that we all leave a corner of our garden for the wildlife, and have in fact given over the whole thing to the bees and the butterflies. Except for the grass, which Jim keeps in a state of elegant stripiness, and the hedges which Robert keeps from taking over everything else, the garden is an anthem to wild nature.

Now, with the season dying and the afternoons darkening, we are brought indoors to the delights of traditional telly. In our house we play safe and watch the gardening programmes, which tell us what we should have done this year and what to do next time. We also watch quite a lot of repeats, to the point where I find myself reciting the script along with Lewis or Endeavour. These are quality productions, and the script is good. I am less certain of *Midsomer Murders*, which I think of as light entertainment. It is an indication of how light it is that a lot

of the interest is focused on how many ludicrous ways one can think up to kill someone, rather than the heightened emotion that produces the murder in the first place.

What I find irritating about *Midsomer* is that there is always an episode in a series that deals with a religious cult. I'm happy for people to belong to any religious persuasion they fancy, but why do they have to wear horned hats and talk about astral planes? Could they not be satisfied with the blue moons and super moons we had so recently? They were the genuine article, even if a constant cloud cover made them difficult to verify. Once the autumn equinox is past, you know you're in for winter without a druid wearing mistletoe telling you. So I generally give those episodes a body swerve.

In no time it will be Christmas, that cheeriest of festivals, preceded by Advent. It's maybe a little early to call the Advent Windows a village tradition, but they're a great idea on several counts. Not only do they brighten the darkest winter evening, but they're inclusive. Anyone, of any faith or none, can enjoy walking round the village admiring the different interpretations of the upcoming festival. The old story and its modern counterparts sit side by side, encouraging everyone to join in. Not unlike the Open Gardens Scheme, we are invited to come and be part of the experience, to admire the efforts of our neighbours and the difference they make to the beauty of our village.

Happy Christmas, Everyone.

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Community Engagement and Reassurance

Police Constable Matt McCammon commenced his new role as Community Constable for the Forth and Endrick Ward based at Balfroun Police Station. Matt arrives in his new post with nine years policing service, having previously served in the Callander and Stirling areas. PCs Graeme McNulty and Matt McCammon are based at Balfroun Police Office, and can be contacted on 101 or at ForthEndrickCPT@scotland.police.uk. We recommend that this email is used for contact by the local community. It should not be used for crime reporting.

Theft

A number of chickens were stolen from a residential garden recently and enquiries remain ongoing. This was not an isolated incident – there have been several similar offences elsewhere. If you notice any suspicious activity, please let us know.

Motorcycles have been stolen from a nearby village, so if you see any suspicious activity in this regard, please contact us immediately.

Some basic home security guidelines will make it harder for criminals to break into your home or steal from your property:

- If you are away from home, use timer switches on lights and radios to make it look as if your home is occupied; set your house alarm.
- Ensure all doors and windows are secure when you leave and when you go to bed.

- Have security lighting at the front and back of your property, and make sure all garden tools and ladders are locked away when not being used.

For further advice, please contact us.

The onset of winter affects drivers, cyclists and pedestrians due to inclement weather and longer hours of darkness, so we should take steps to ensure our own and others' safety:

- If you are out walking in the dark, consider wearing bright coloured or reflective clothing, and if you are walking home late at night, make sure someone knows.
- If you are out on your bike, wear bright reflective clothing and ensure you have good, bright lights front and rear.
- If driving, make sure your car is fit for the road and pay attention to the road conditions.

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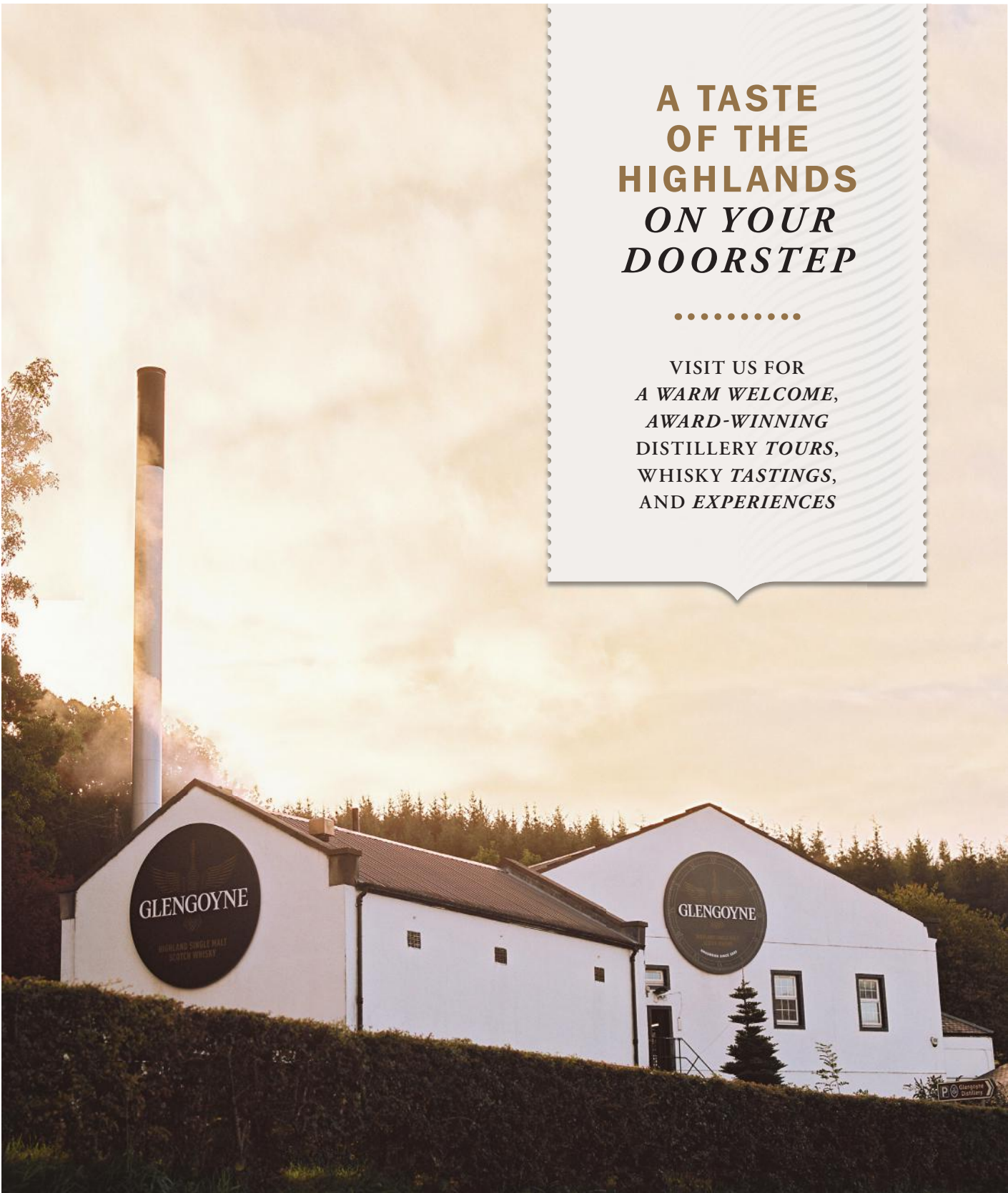
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Killearn Kids Get Active On Travel

On one of the glorious sunny days in September, residents of Killearn came together with a shared eagerness to learn about active travel in Killearn.

From nursery and primary school kids to community members and local groups, from local businesses to Stirling Council, everyone shared a curiosity for walking, wheeling and cycling, making this event fruitful and fun.

The first part of the event took place at Killearn Primary School, where the P1 and P6 children were invited to share their active travel experiences. It was a delight to see so many bikes and scooters in all shapes and colours parked outside the school, as those pupils who were able to do so scooted or biked to school.

In the classroom, the children had an opportunity to share what they liked and disliked about the journey to school, followed by a lively discussion on how improvements could be made to make the trip more pleasant and safe. Outside, the children had great fun pedalling to make delicious and healthy smoothies on the famous smoothie bike, and got creative by decorating their bikes and helmets with colourful stickers and other bike decorations. It was a fantastic, engaging afternoon,

KILLEARN ACTIVE TRAVEL

BACKGROUND

There is currently no safe active travel route for walking, cycling and wheeling between the growing community to the south of Killearn and Killearn Village. This Project wants to connect these areas to enable people to take up walking, cycling and wheeling for everyday journeys

PROJECT AIM

To create better walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure in wider Killearn in order to facilitate more active travel and more sustainable local transport, as well as create more liveable streets.

LONG-TERM VISION

- Increase the number of everyday journeys made by walking, wheeling or cycling
- Support more trips to school made by walking, wheeling or cycling
- Improve the quality of current walking, wheeling or cycling infrastructure
- Make walking, wheeling or cycling more inclusive for the project community, taking into account all protected characteristics
- Decarbonising transportation

PROJECT STAGES

- Stage 0 – Strategic Definition
- Stage 1 – Preparation & Brief
- Stage 2 – Concept Design
- Stage 3 – Developed Design
- Stage 4 – Technical Design
- Stage 5 – Construction
- Stage 6 – Handover
- Stage 7 – In use

THIS PROJECT IS AT STAGE 0-2

EVERYONE SHOULD BE ABLE TO ENJOY THEMSELVES CYCLING, WALKING AND WHEELING

PARTNERS

- The Lead partner is Killearn Community Futures Company
- Killearn Community Council
- Cycling Killearn (part of KCFC)
- Any other local groups involved in active travel.

<https://killearnactivetravel.blog/>

FUNDED BY

and the kids shared some clever and creative ideas that can help shape the Killearn Active Project and the School Travel Plan.

The second part of the event started in the evening at the Village Hall. Local groups involved in active travel showcased their projects and invited the community to try an e-bike or learn more about Alba Nordic Walks or Local Place Plans. Also featured was a Dr Bike session with Country Cycles, cargo bike trial sessions, and the smoothie bike. There were activities for the kids, a fabulous display of photographs, short quotes and colouring-in pictures from the nursery kids, all accompanied by free tea and cake.

Caroline Carrick, a member of the Killearn Community Council, said, 'It was great to see such a big turn out to the active travel event with so many people participating and interested in leaving feedback on how we can improve walking, cycling and wheeling in the village. A big thank you to everyone who came along and all those who helped make it a success.'

It was also a chance to learn more about the Killearn Active Travel Project and the proposed routes. There is currently no safe active travel route for walking, biking





or wheeling between the growing community to the south of Killearn and the village. Parking in Killearn village, particularly around the primary school where congestion is a big problem, is minimal. There is no public transport to link the two areas or for those south of Killearn to travel further afield, as buses run from the village.

An attractive, safe, off-road route between the south of Killearn and Killearn village would link these two areas. A fit-for-purpose path will encourage more regular walking, biking and wheeling for everyday journeys for the growing community. The Killearn Active Travel project is working towards the realisation of this change.

This proposed path can significantly foster wheeling, cycling and walking, especially for everyday journeys to school, work or the shops. It creates many benefits, not only for those involved in active travel, but also for the Killearn community by decreasing traffic congestion, helping tackle the climate emergency, and improving mental and physical health and happiness.

During the event, we asked the participants to give their thoughts on the project, the proposed route and traffic calming measures. Overall, people are very supportive of the proposed path routes as alternatives to Station Road and Main Street, and see this as a priority. It was also clear that the majority of the respondents would like to see speed reduction in Killearn. Some measurements, such as speed cushions, have strong support.

The full summary of the public consultation will be available on the project website: <https://killearnactivetravel.blog>.

This project envisions welcoming and safe paths for all everyday journeys, including school runs. We hope to make this happen so that young and old and everyone in between can enjoy active travel in wider Killearn. Many thanks to everyone who joined the event. Your support and enthusiasm made it a fantastic gathering!

KILLEARN ACTIVE TRAVEL PROJECT



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Calling All Retired Business People



Strathendrick Probus

The Probus Club of Strathendrick is based in Killearn and meets on the first and third Thursdays of the month from September to May in the Killearn Kirk Hall at 10am for a 10.30 start.



Membership is open to men and women who have retired from their professional or business lives, and would enjoy our entertaining and informative talks and the friendly companionship of our meetings.

Probus Clubs arose as a spin-off from Rotary Clubs, which encouraged their senior citizens to form separate organisations for retired members. The first Probus was formed in Canada in 1920, and the first in the UK was sponsored by the Rotary Club of Caterham. The name takes the form of an acronym, PRO(fessional) and BUS(iness Persons Club). In the UK there are more than 1,700 Probus Clubs.

Our speakers come from far and wide, and recent topics included the future of motoring, neolithic excavation, the link between art and science, local

astronomy, human genetics, educational policy, whisky, the atom and much more. An important part of our activities is the pre-meeting 'get together' for coffee, tea, biscuits and a chat with fellow members. There is also a Chairman's Lunch in November and occasional social visits to places of interest. Membership is currently £45 annually.



If you feel this is could be 'the thing for you', come along to a meeting as a guest and introduce yourself to a member or the Secretary, who will give you a membership form to complete.

Alternatively, if you would like to find out more, contact the Club Secretary, David Hale (550880), or the Chairman, Norman McNab (550441).

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KILLEARN CHRISTMAS MARKET
Dear Residents of Killearn,
My good friend Megan has told me about the wonderful new market that has been launched in your village.
Since there are so many of you on my nice list this year, I decided to come along on 2nd December to to meet you all, and see what my crafty little elves have been making this year!
Megan will be making all the arrangements, so make sure you check on facebook and instagram for the details, or drop her an email.
Santa Claus
facebook.com/killearnmarket
@killearncountrymarket
killearncountrymarket@gmail.com



Late spring saw us visit Banchory for a couple of nights before it was back to support the Drymen Show. The rest of the summer programme included lots of well-attended events at both Killearn Village Hall and Loch Lomond. Our annual Car-BQ was again well supported and allowed us to raise £400 for Strathcarron Hospice.



Drymen Show was quickly followed by the Gartmore Gala. Later, the Scottish Torque Show was an interesting mix of cars and flying at Broomhall House near Dunfermline in aid of the RAF Benevolent Fund.

Meanwhile other runs took us round the Campsies to appreciate some of the new road surfaces thanks to the Cycling Championships, northwards to Tyndrum and Strachur, and eastwards to Culross.

In August, we hosted a special event specifically aimed at pre-1939 cars. It started from Dobbies in Stirling, to assist owners who came from all over Scotland, and who then drove through beautiful Perthshire stopping at Cultybraggan for lunch. There are hopes to be able to host this event again next year.

After this sunny summer of mainly weekday lunch runs we have set about planning the winter programme of events including the regular Christmas quiz night,



advice and anecdotes from an ex-police driving instructor and a visit to an extensive collection of cars and motorcycles. These will again be hosted at Ross Priory on the second Thursday of each month between November and April. So if you have an interest in motoring and would like to join us – you don't even have to own a car – then get in touch by email at SCSCC.Sec@gmail.com.

DOUG ASHWORTH, SECRETARY



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2024 Killearn 10K

Entries for next year's event, on 1 June, will open on Thursday, 7 December.

After another very successful and sunny 10K and Mile Run last June, the Killearn 10K committee are gearing up for 2024. Entries for next year's event, on 1 June, will open on Thursday, 7 December.

Places sold out in record time last year (in just over 24 hours), so if you are keen to run, please get your entry in promptly. We'll announce details of the entry process online nearer the time, but remember the date:

7 December.

Thanks again to all our volunteers and marshals who allow for the smooth and safe running of the race day. Many of them attended a 'Thank You' event at The Old Mill which Alice facilitated and also provided the pizza. Thanks, Alice.



Photos courtesy of Alastair Mair



We would love to encourage new committee members to come forward – especially someone to help with communications and social media. If you are interested, email Kirstine (info@killearn10k.com). We are a very friendly bunch.

JH



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Rugby Round-Up: Touring, Tournaments and Travel

We all know about the health and wellbeing benefits of sport – physical and mental – and how sociable team sports can be. One of the unsung joys of playing with or supporting a sports team is the fun and interest to be had travelling to new locations for games. As the exuberant supporters demonstrated at this autumn’s Rugby World Cup, particularly the Japanese and the South Americans, a tournament can be fantastic fun – even if you have no expectation of winning it!

Strathendrick Rugby Club teams travel to a wide selection of destinations to play fixtures: from Maybole (Carrick) and Marr to Oban and Orkney; from Annan and Ardrossan; to Waysiders (Coatbridge) and Wigtonshire. Certainly I would never have visited many of those places if it weren’t for rugby.

Fintry Senior teams have toured to Wales, Kansas, Toronto and Dublin (several times!) – but not for many years. So, plans are afoot to organise something for later this season. As reported in the last *Courier*, Youth teams toured to Sweden and New Zealand at the end of last season, and this year the first-ever Girls Tour will be going to Sweden.

Touring can be a wonderful way of bonding with people and sometimes making life-long friends. Exactly 20 years ago we took a squad of 32 young Strathendrick players on tour to Canada. Playing games against four different schools and being billeted with our hosts – then



Photos courtesy of Mike Bastock

visiting sights such as the CNN Tower, Algonquin Park and Niagara Falls – made for a memorable experience.

Our picture shows some of the tourists from all those years ago. Can you recognise many? And where are they now?

Rugby is great for your fitness and skills development – but it can be so much more. NH


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Curling – Lead Stones

We are starting this year having lost some of our longest-serving members who have decided to retire. John Phillips (who was made an Honorary Member at the AGM), John Bowie, Bob Glass, Rita Harris and Helen Watson have all hung up their brushes, and Archie Banks will probably join them later in the year. John O’Neill and Jim Meikle are also not playing at present.

The main club has been most affected by these departures and have had to reduce the number of teams. We are due to play a double round league with four teams up to Christmas followed by a single round league again with four teams. We intended to finish the season with a single round league with five teams, but this may change.

The Ladies Section have four single round leagues with five teams in the first, second and fourth leagues, and four teams in the third league in January.

The Ladies started with a well-supported practice session. We tried out various shots and playing positions, and finished with a bounce game. This was followed by

an opening bonspiel which was narrowly won by Sally Macfarlane’s team of Jane Weir, Liz Paterson and Kay Bidwell. They won 4 ends and were 5 shots up with the second team on 4 ends and 3 shots up.

The Main Club started with the President v Vice-President competition which forms their opening

bonspiel. The result was a win for the President by 7 ends to 5.

The Club has had some successes in their initial external matches. They won their first and second matches in the Forth Valley Area Knockout and are through to the semi-final.

The photo shows Paul Mosley presenting the Balyarrow Trophy to Gill Smith last season. Strathendrick won the trophy playing against three other clubs also founded in 1846. The medals on the trophy were awarded to the defunct Balyarrow Curling Club from Fife.



The contacts for the Club are Tony Flisch (860580) or Gill Smith (550726) or look at our website at strathendrickcurling.org.uk.

New members would be welcomed by both the main (mixed) club and the Ladies Section. GILL SMITH



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Killlearn Football Club News

As the summer fades and the Forth and Endrick Football League season comes to an end, it can mean only one thing: it's Killlearn FC Golf outing time! More of that later, first a round up of the footy season for the boys.

We continue to improve on previous seasons and even managed to reach our first cup final for a long time. Unfortunately after a brilliant win on penalties against a high flying Buchlyvie team in the semi-final, we fell a little bit short and lost 4-2 in the Telfer Cup Final against an all-conquering Deanston team. In the league, we again had a great start, but faded to a respectable, but mid-table, 5th. In the other two cup tournaments we reached a semi and a quarter-final, but lost out in two close matches.

With the team competing well in all tournaments this was obviously recognised by our peers, as two of our players, Stuart Ashworth and Arran Hamilton, were awarded joint Player of the League, a great accolade for both of them. Congratulations from all at the Club.

Support across the season was fantastic, and it was brilliant to see so many people attending our home games as well as our superb band of 'away' match regulars, who are very much appreciated by the team and staff. Thanks also to our wonderful sponsors The Old Mill Inn for their continued support and sponsorship of our golf outing.

Oh, yes, back to the golf. This year we returned to the amazingly friendly and beautiful golf club at St Fillans in Perthshire. Twenty-six players and supporters enjoyed

a brilliant day. The Hughie Russell Trophy was won by Arran Hamilton, the runner up was Brian Paterson, with Zander Russell finishing third. Colin Banks won the best Scratch score on the day, and the Texas Scramble champions were team Ashworth (Stuart Ashworth, Tom Storey and Ian Mathieson). The sing song on the bus back and the 19th hole celebrations back at The Mill finished off a top day.

Next up is the players' awards dinner and the 'close' season 7-a-sides on Wednesday nights, to keep us going until the 2024 season starts again next spring.


All at Killlearn FC thank you for your support in 2023, and wish you and yours a prosperous 2024 when it comes. Take care.
KILLEARN FC COMMITTEE



Prizegiving at the Old Mill Inn

Photo courtesy of Stuart Tulloch

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New Winners Crowned

Killearn Tennis Club Championships 2023 proved a memorable day after a wonderful summer of tennis.

On Sunday, 3 September, the Tennis Club held a Finals Day for our annual members championships. It was a vibrant, dynamic and fun afternoon, both on and off the courts. The finals featured some brilliant tennis matches, and competitors played with smiles and shared respect throughout, creating many memorable moments in the sunshine.

Trophies were awarded by Club President Gillian Johnstone, and congratulations go to the finalists in each category.

Thank you to everyone who took part this year! Special mention goes to George Douglas for umpiring, and it was great to see an energetic group of supporters attending on the day.

2023 Championship Results

Ladies Doubles Champions:

Heather Maxwell and Alex Stuart

Ladies Doubles Runners up:

Jan Biggart and Karen Crocket

Mixed Doubles Champions:

John Forshaw and Gwen Stewart

Mixed Doubles Runners up:

Keith Kemsley and Heather Maxwell

Gents Singles:

Champion John Forshaw

Gents Runner Up: Keith Kemsley

Ladies Singles:

Champion: Alex Stuart

Ladies Runner up: Sophia Roose

At the time of writing, our Gents Doubles final, Bill Gray and Stephen Hart versus John Forshaw and Ross Aitken, is still to be played, and the result will be announced on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/killearntennis/) as soon as possible.

It was fantastic also to see new members taking part for the first time this summer. If you are interested in playing tennis in Killearn, accessing coaching or becoming a member, just get in touch. Coaching is available through Shaun Tulloch (10outoftennis.com)

Photos:

Top: Mixed doubles finalists: Keith Kemsley & Heather Maxwell (left),

Umpire George Douglas (centre), Gwen Stewart & John Forshaw

Below left: Ladies Doubles Champions: Heather Maxwell (right with cup) & Alex Stuart;

Ladies Doubles Runners up: Jan Biggart (far left) & Karen Crocke

Below right: Gents finalists: Keith Kemsley (left), Umpire George Douglas (centre), and John Forshaw



if you are looking to start playing or improve.

Looking ahead, this year Killearn Tennis Club will launch some special Christmas gift offers – so look out for the promotions online.

We would also like to remind the local community that guests are very welcome to play for £5 a session. Payment can be made via the honesty box at the clubhouse or via bank transfer (details on our website killearntennisclub.org.uk)

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Bridge by Zorro Solution to the problem on page 12

Against South's 4♠ contract, West leads a small trump to East's ♠10 and South's ♠J. South has several ways to play for ten tricks, which include finding the ♥A onside (50 per cent probability of success) or finding the diamonds 3-3 (36 per cent). The best prospect is to ruff a heart in dummy, but the attack on trumps jeopardises that plan. If South mistimes the play, the defence can lead three rounds of trumps and win the ♠K, before declarer can ruff the third heart. Instead of relying on the position of the ♥A or a favourable diamond split, South opted for 'safety play' in hearts.

South led to dummy's ♦K and played the ♥6 away from the ♥K! This gave the E-W pair an impossible choice:

- ♣ If East takes the trick with either the ♥A, or if he has it the ♥Q, South must eventually take a heart trick. East can continue trumps safely, but South would no longer need to ruff a heart to reach ten tricks.
- ♣ If West takes the trick – say, by capturing the ♥J with the ♥Q – then South might never take a heart trick. But West could not lead another spade without sacrificing his trump trick. South can't be stopped from either ruffing a heart in dummy, or if West leads another trump, taking five spades in his own hand.

Note that South gives up the best chance of making a heart trick (leading toward the ♥K). Yet, in doing this, South virtually guarantees ten tricks. Now only a very unlikely defensive minor suit ruff can defeat the contract.

This line of play is called the 'Belladonna coup', which is the play of a low card away from an accompanying high card, giving the opponents an

impossible choice between setting up a winner for declarer and abandoning an attack on another suit.

The provenance of this specific hand is uncertain. A similar layout has been discussed by Victor Mollo in his book *The Bridge Immortals* and also by Paul Lukacs. The coup is named after Giorgio Belladonna, for many years a cornerstone of the Italian Blue Team, although Belladonna later said that he could not recall having made the play.

The full hands can be seen below:

	♠ 8 6 3		
	♥ K 6		
	♦ A K 5 3 2		
	♣ K 6 4		
	North		
♠ K 7 2	West Z East	♠ 10 4	
♥ Q 10 5 3		♥ A 9 7 4	
♦ 10 6		♦ Q J 8 7	
♣ 9 8 3 2		♣ J 10 5	
	South		
		♠ A Q J 9 5	
		♥ J 8 2	
		♦ 9 4	
		♣ A Q 7	

Once again many thanks for this hand to one of the readers of these articles.

Z

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Gillian Maureen Smith 1939 – 2023



Jill, as she was known by all, and her husband, Ron, moved away from Killearn to Suffolk some years ago, but both were greatly involved in the life of the village and gave much to our community in their time here.

Jill spent her early life in the London area and on leaving school trained as a dental nurse. She married

Ron in 1963, and around 10 years later they and their growing family came to live in Killearn until 1985.

As well as being the mother of six daughters, Jill somehow found the time and the energy to devote herself to a range of service to every community in which she lived.

She was a tireless ambassador for the Guide Movement for much of her life, having become a Brownie in 1946 and ending her life as Honorary Vice-President of Suffolk Guiding.

When Jill was in the village, the popularity of the Guide movement had grown so much that a second Killearn company was formed with Jill as its leader. When she moved to Suffolk she continued her work in the Guide Movement, progressing to become a District Commissioner and later a Division Commissioner. When required to retire at the age of 65, Jill introduced to her area the Trefoil Group – an adult branch of Guiding which still thrives in the UK.

Soon after the family's move to Great Glemham, Jill worked as a teaching assistant in a local primary school and also joined a 'friends and neighbours' group, the village Ladies Club, was chair of the PTA and leader of the Six Charities Group. This was an organisation raising funds to support a range of charities to help young and old people.

Her energy and enthusiasm to encourage and inspire others within her community to participate in such charitable work was boundless as was her success in fundraising. She was awarded the MBE for her work in the community and received this from Prince Charles in 2016.

Her naturally outgoing personality and her desire to work for the good of her community was underpinned by her Catholic faith, which became more ecumenical as she grew older. As a devoted wife, mother of six and grandmother of 13 she was very much the lynchpin of her family, cherished and greatly loved by her, as she was by them.

The news of her passing is a sadness, but the fond remembrance of her as a former village resident testifies to the affection with which she is remembered in Killearn. Hers was a good life, well lived.

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Bill Ross

News of the death of Bill Ross has been received by the *Killearn Courier*.

Billy was born and brought up in Killearn, and was well known by many folk here. He ran the bingo for the Old Folks Club in the village and was a regular bowler in Balfron.

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Elizabeth (Betty) Shaw 1935 – 2023



Betty Shaw, as she was known to all, was born in Glasgow to James and Elizabeth McAdam. This is where she lived, with her elder brother, Jim, and her parents until the coming of World War II. Their experience of the bombing of Clydebank

prompted the family to move out of the city to the countryside, and they were billeted in Duntreath Castle along with other families who had lost their homes. Her father and uncle built a house in Gartness Road and the family became countryfolk, with Betty collecting milk in a churn from the farm and water from the burn, while her father kept chickens and bees.

She had her education at Killearn Primary School and Balforn High. In her teenage years a tennis racket and a bike were her prized possession; she cycled everywhere and was a keen member of the Tennis Club for over 60 years. A lady of the village, Miss McCreadie, took an interest in the family, encouraging Jim to go to Art School when he had finished his National Service and giving Betty a job at the Old Mill weaving sample designs that would be produced in the mills in Galashiels.

During this time Betty attended evening classes in shorthand and typing, and this led to her getting a job with the NHS Executive Council in Glasgow. She joined the local Badminton Club where she met her future

husband, Archie Shaw, who was from Balforn. They were married in 1959 and started their life together in Springburn, whilst her parents moved into a house in Graham Road. After the death of her mother, Betty and Archie moved in with her father who needed more care, and within the next few years a daughter, Linda, and a son, Millar, were born.

Betty was always busy. Outside family life, she helped with the Girls' Brigade and later with the Guides, and when her children were a little older she trained as an auxiliary nurse at Killearn Hospital, later moving on to become a night care assistant at Ballikinrain School, a job she did for 25 years.

When her own children were grown up she was proud of them and their career choices, with Millar in the Fire Service and Linda with the airlines. Linda's job enabled her parents to benefit from travel, and holidays abroad became a much enjoyed part of their life as they made many trips to the US and throughout Europe.

The arrival of grandchildren, Holly, Ruaridh, Millie and Jake, was an added source of joy to Betty, and watching them grow and being involved in their lives was a constant pleasure for her and a consolation when Archie died after a short illness in 2005.

As the years passed, Betty retained her independence and her involvement in village life until almost the end of her life. When she became unwell, she received exemplary care from nurses from Forth Valley Royal Hospital and Strathcarron Hospice. She passed away after a short illness with her family around her.

Hers was a long life, well lived, during which her kindness, friendship and strength of character was appreciated by her many friends and neighbours, and which will be remembered with deep affection by her family.

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Prize Christmas Crossword Set by PeeWit

Our prize for the Prize Crossword is a Family Ticket to the Theatre Royal or the King's Theatre, Glasgow, subject to availability and restrictions on certain days. Our prize for the Children's Prize Codeword is £10. Entrants must be 12 years old or under. The *Courier* would like to thank the Ambassador Theatre Group for their generosity in providing the prize for our crossword competition.

ACROSS

- 3 Being blond may end on top of tree (5)
- 4 See 9
- 7 Idler ever around when this person comes with parcel (9)
- 8 Cry after pure cocktail meant I had to . . . (5,2)
- 11 Bored when one in France with old partner mentioned (9)
- 14 Supporter of cables – unhappy, lonely inside (5)
- 15 Sounds like a spooky nest (5)
- 16 Report looks sneakily for writer of a diary (5)
- 18 A nation say (5)
- 24 See 20
- 25 Educated Shakespearean King went back to his retreat (7)
- 26 Plant eater without a name is a star (4)
- 27 A vehicle will only intermittently sing this Xmas song (5)
- 28 A prickly companion to Ivy (5)

DOWN

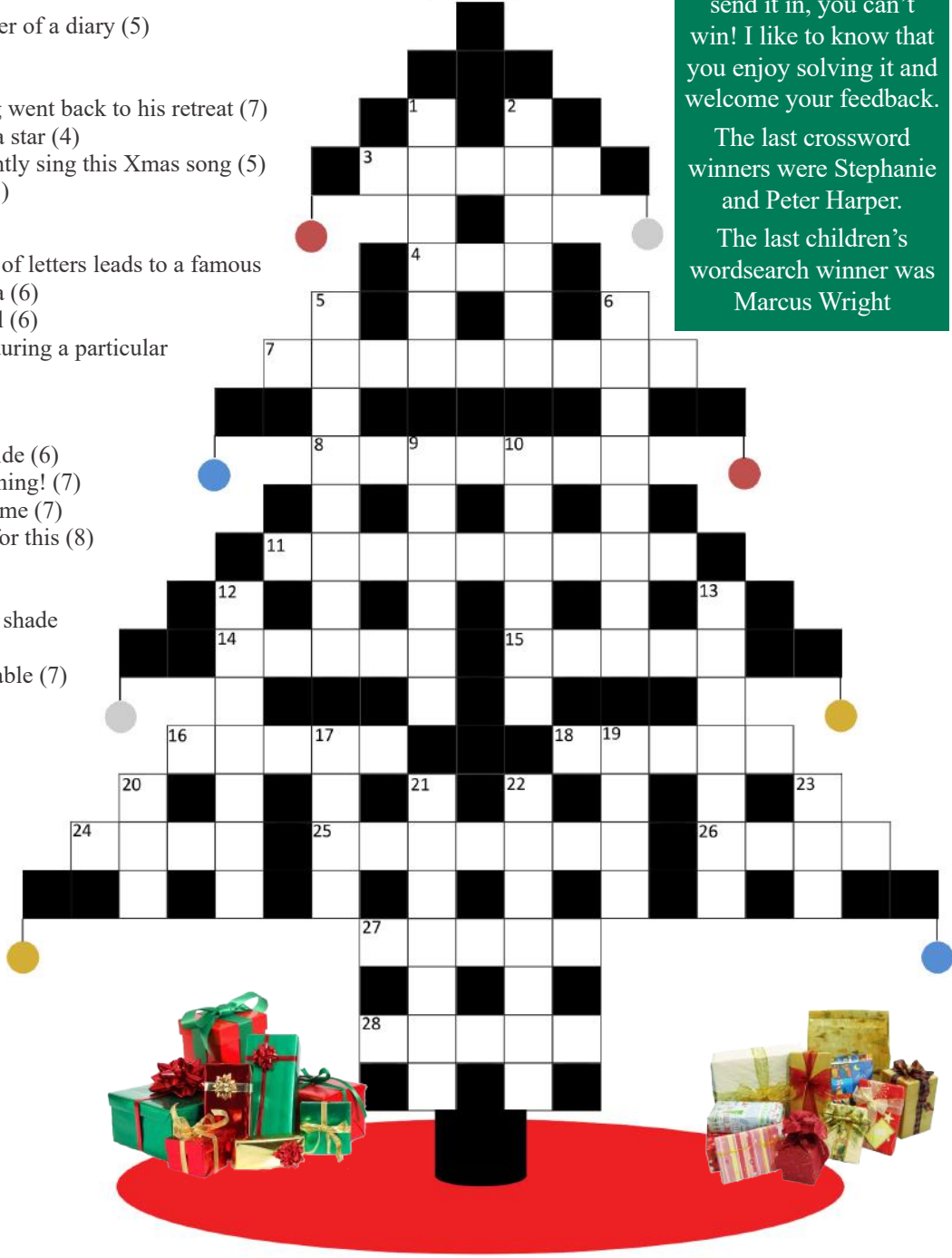
- 1 Starting with G, this sequence of letters leads to a famous female Prime Minister of India (6)
- 2 No grey on collapsing sea wall (6)
- 5 Marine mammal holds a boy during a particular time of year (8)
- 6 5 time to jump (4,4)
- 9,4 5 time to fight (6,3)
- 10 Went up to fundraise daily inside (6)
- 12 Seems a soft fruit starts something! (7)
- 13 See if TV gives you a happy time (7)
- 17,19 Sounds like you'll be tied for this (8)
- 19 See 17.
- 20,24 2024 (3,4)
- 21 Airborne troops love 50 in the shade of this (7)
- 22 Only dug up what is unacceptable (7)
- 23 A Muslim leader's stove (3)



Christmas greetings from PeeWit to all my regular solvers. My commiserations if you haven't won a prize – keep trying! If you don't send it in, you can't win! I like to know that you enjoy solving it and welcome your feedback.

The last crossword winners were Stephanie and Peter Harper.

The last children's wordsearch winner was Marcus Wright



Solution to the last crossword:

ACROSS
 7. seance 8. armour 9. byte
 10. sidesmen 11 underpin 13 derv
 14 last 16 Rossetti 18 circular 21 sail 22 laybys 23 benzol

DOWN
 1 Kenyan 2 indecent 3 lens
 4 landings 5 emus 6 auteur
 12 purplish 13 dressing 15 animal
 17 taihoa 19 Cuba 20 robe

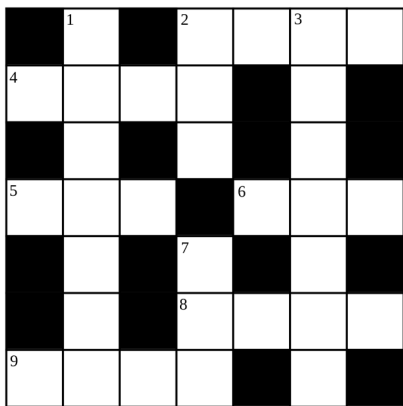
The phrase was:
Killearn Village Hall Clubs

How to Enter

Solve the crossword and place your solution in the postbox outside the Village Hall together with your name, address and a contact phone number. Alternatively, if you don't want to cut it out of your *Courier*, count the number of times the letter 'y' appears in the grid and email to peewit@kfc.co.uk with your name, address and a contact phone number. Entries should arrive by 1 December 2023.

Children's Puzzles Set by PeeWit

Children's Crossword



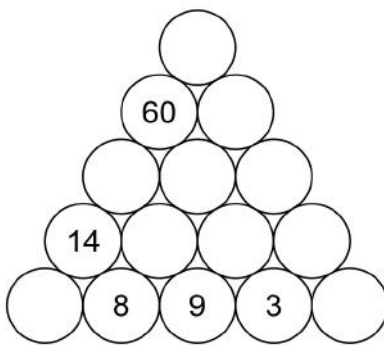
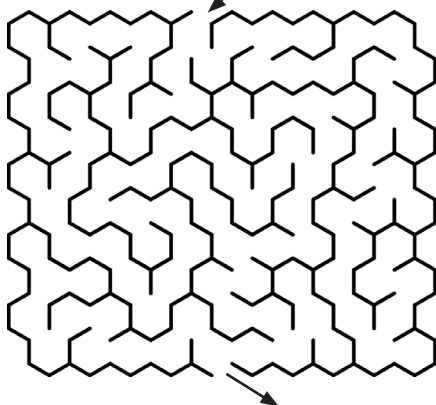
Across

- 2. Young infant (4)
- 4. You wear this on your foot (4)
- 5. Part of the body (3)
- 6. You see with this (3)
- 8. This joins the wheels on a car (4)
- 9. Large boat (4)

Down

- 1. An Egyptian King (7)
- 2. Insect which makes honey (3)
- 3. Correct name for a push bike (7)
- 7. Worn on the head (3)

Find your way through the maze



	3		1		
2		1	5		
4	5	3	1		
1		6	4	5	
6			3	2	
3	1			4	

Children's Sudoku

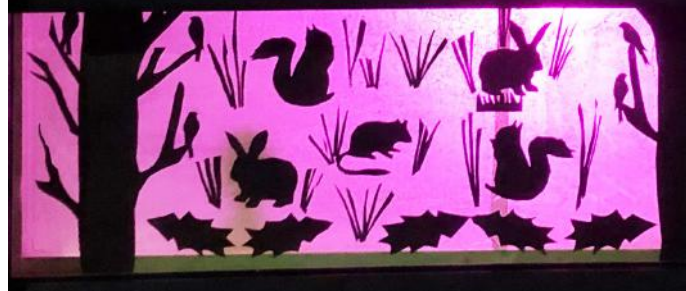
The Sudoku puzzle has six rectangles each containing the numbers from 1 to 6. Find the missing numbers. Each number can appear only once in a row, column or box.

Number Pyramid

Two numbers in two circles next to each other in the same row are added together. Write the answer in the circle above to find the missing numbers.

Solutions may be found at: www.kfc.co.uk/admin/puzzles57.pdf

Children's £10 Prize *Spot the Difference*



These pictures show of one of the Advent windows last year. In the right-hand picture a naughty elf has altered eight things, Can you find them? Write down what they are and email it to peewit@kfc.co.uk, or ring them and post the picture in the mailbox outside Killearn Village Hall, addressed to Peewit. The winner will be selected from the correct answers for our £10 prize. Good hunting! Don't forget to include your name, age and a contact phone number.

How to Make a 'Stashmas' Tree

You know all those bits and pieces you squirrel away because they might come in handy? It has a technical name: stash. Well, this is a fun ornament to make, using your stash.

What you'll need

- ▲ A template; download a free tree (www.paper-and-string.net/y-free-colourful-trees), or draw around a suitable biscuit cutter onto card from a cereal box
- ▲ Scraps of felt, fabric or paper (e.g. wrapping paper or old greeting cards)
- ▲ Pencil, scissors and glue (Pritt Stick or similar)
- ▲ Decorations: small buttons, ribbon, rick rack, tiny pompoms, beads, sequins – anything that will stick or can be sewn on
- ▲ String or ribbon for hanging
- ▲ Optional: pins, needle and thread(s); stuffing (cotton balls, bits of yarn, toy stuffing)



Cut out the design

Decide how you want to make your tree and draw out the design on the material using the template. If both sides are to be the same, make sure you have enough fabric or card to make a front and a back. Don't forget the trunk. I made one side with felt and the other with an old Christmas card.

Get decorating

Dig into your grandmother's sewing basket! Raid the button box! Use whatever takes your fancy: rick rack, tiny pompoms, beads, sequins and bows. Bling is good! I've used beads and some ribbon. Stick your decorations on with glue or use a needle and thread to string beads as in the image.

Assemble the ornament

First, attach the trunk with glue or tiny stitches (if appropriate) to the inside of the ornament's front or back. Then secure the hanging loop on the inside of the back of your ornament, the same way as the trunk. Then secure the front to the back – I used glue to stick the two pieces together. If you have two pieces of felt or fabric, there are lots of fun possibilities, like using running stitch or buttonhole stitch, and then you could even stuff your ornament.



Enjoy making your Stashmas Trees!

NB

CHRISTMAS IS COMING!

...but with all the fun and celebrations also comes some potential hazards for our furry friends that we need to make sure remain out of reach!

Have a go at our wordsearch to see how many festive hazards you can spot!

ALCOHOL
ANTIFREEZE
BATTERIES
CHOCOLATE
COOKED BONES
GRAPES
MINCEPIES
MISTLETOE
POINSETTIA
RIBBONS
TINSEL

I	K	T	F	Y	C	B	A	C	E	X	J	D	J	L	U	Q	T	U	B	Q	V	N
B	Z	M	I	D	P	S	A	R	O	L	M	I	S	T	L	E	T	O	E	J	J	L
F	S	N	O	B	B	I	R	S	A	O	Z	Q	E	T	C	O	X	N	U	X	W	E
F	W	G	L	C	X	U	H	N	C	P	K	A	I	T	T	E	S	N	I	O	P	V
R	I	N	M	R	H	B	Y	L	T	C	N	E	F	Z	E	T	H	Q	I	C	R	E
R	B	N	N	N	I	O	C	W	K	Q	D	O	D	X	X	Y	C	S	O	K	Y	R
N	B	J	I	H	W	K	C	N	E	W	V	M	S	B	P	B	O	M	P	Q	P	Y
O	D	G	M	L	J	P	J	O	S	W	H	Y	I	T	O	A	S	K	F	A	W	F
V	A	X	A	Y	F	G	L	C	L	N	I	Y	C	N	A	N	T	G	F	D	A	G
A	N	T	I	F	R	E	E	Z	E	A	B	D	E	G	C	B	E	U	E	G	L	W
T	V	G	V	V	S	Q	F	H	L	B	T	Y	L	L	R	E	M	S	F	R	C	S
O	N	Q	H	R	E	J	L	D	K	B	L	E	S	N	I	T	P	U	Q	A	O	B
C	R	Y	R	V	E	S	K	M	P	X	Y	R	C	B	F	O	C	I	A	P	H	B
I	C	E	W	X	B	A	T	T	E	R	I	E	S	M	U	Q	K	S	E	E	O	U
U	H	M	O	U	D	E	X	O	F	U	X	M	K	W	X	W	Z	P	S	L	D	
I	H	I	J	F	G	W	T	O	Q	B	Z	K	F	U	S	R	Q	O	D	I	M	T

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Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all at Jackson Vets x

Nature and Nurture

An interest in the natural world can take root at all ages, but not infrequently it germinates in youth. I myself was very young when a fascination with birds, mammals and other animals began. It's difficult to pinpoint a specific sighting or defining moment – it may have been watching coal tits nesting in my Glasgow garden, feeding squirrels in Dawsholm Park or spotting seals during summer holidays in Arran. Or it may have developed osmotically within a familial culture of interest in wildlife and the outdoors. Whatever and whenever it was, I struggle to remember a time when I was not seeking to engage with nature and, having started so young, this drive is now deeply engrained.

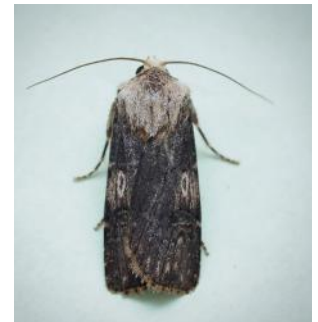
It feels important then to keep this going, not only within future generations of my own family, but also across the local community and beyond. It's one reason why I write these articles – to spread the word and generate interest. And hopefully this in turn promotes not only sustained fascination, but also a desire to cherish, protect and conserve what we have – or at least do it no further damage.

In the last year, a group of us led by Nick Hawkins has been meeting regularly to conceive and create an online Killearn Natural History resource, aligned to the highly successful Killearn Heritage Trail website. It's a work in progress, but we're optimistic that the end product will be informative, interactive and inspiring to local people

and visitors alike. Promoting it has already included a few events in 2023, starting with a Dawn Chorus walk in Kirkhouse Woods in May, expertly led by Nigel Pope, to identify and enjoy the various early morning songsters.

Then in August we held a 'Bat Night/Moth Morning' in the village. With the help of drafted-in and very obliging bat experts, a sizeable crowd enjoyed an outdoor talk on all things 'batty', followed by practising using different types of bat detector. The bats themselves obliged from sunset and by using the detectors we were able to record both common and soprano pipistrelles whizzing around the old Spar. The following morning, two moth traps set up the evening before (one in the Glen and one in Nick's garden) yielded 40 or so moth species for attendees to marvel at prior to safe release. These included a Shuttle-shaped Dart (pictured right), a species which has only reached Stirlingshire in the last two years!

At these events it has been heartening to witness young people joining in enthusiastically to see, hear and touch something new. Perhaps these will be the defining moments they look back on in years to come



MARTIN CULSHAW



Do you need an affordable home ?

Rural Stirling Housing Association aims to support local communities by providing quality homes at affordable rents for families, couples and single people in housing need.

We currently have over 670 rented houses and flats. Around 40 of these become available for rent each year. At present we have properties in the following communities:

Aberfoyle	Doone	Killin	Strathyre
Balfron	Drymen	Kinlochard	Stronachlachar
Buchlyvie	Gargunnoch	Kippen	Tyndrum
Callander	Gartmore	Lochearnhead	
Deanston	Killearn	Strathblane	

Further new build developments are being planned for Killearn, Balmaha, Croftamie, and Drymen. Please let us know if you want to live in a village that is not listed above. Information on local housing need and demand helps us to plan. For a downloadable application pack please visit our website www.rsha.org.uk.

Rural Stirling Housing Association
Stirling Road, Doone FK16 6AA

01786 841101
enquiries@rsha.org.uk
www.rsha.org.uk



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Anyone wishing to contribute to the spring edition of the *Courier* is reminded that it will be distributed on 16 March 2024.

Advertisements and artwork should be sent to us by Friday, 26 January 2024.
Contact: Gwen Stewart (01360 550856).

Contributions and letters to the editor should be in the hands of the editorial team by Friday, 26 January 2024.

Please send them to:
36 New Endrick Road, G63 9QT or

Email: courier@kcfco.uk

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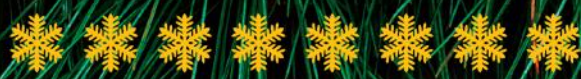
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