



Killearn. Courier

ISSUE 64

SPRING 2026

£1





Gard

17 Mar **Strathendrick Stitchers** Kirk Hall, 10am–2pm. Talk by Ian Whiteford of Bute Fabric at 10.30am. The sales table and library will be available. New members and visitors welcome. Contact strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com.

18 Mar **Killearn Community Council Meeting.** Garden Room, Village Hall and live stream over Zoom, 8pm. For link to join live stream, email contactus@killearncc.org.uk.

19 Mar **The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley** Lecture by Douglas Skeggs, ‘David Hockney, the Old Master of the Modern World’. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am or over Zoom. theartsocietystirling.org.uk

21 Mar **Killearn Kirk Guild** Easter coffee morning. Kirk Hall, 10am–12 noon.

22 Mar **Strathendrick Singers** Spring Concert. Killearn Kirk, 7pm. Two terrific composers and more: Francis Poulenc – *Gloria*, and Morten Lauridsen – *Lux Eterna*. Tickets from choir members, on the door and Eventbrite. Contact hello@strathendricksingers.org.uk.

24 Mar **Killearn Kirk Guild** AGM followed by the Ukelele Band. Kirk Hall, 1.30pm–3.30pm.

26 Mar **Drymen & District Local History Society** Ronald Graham, ‘The History of Buchanan Castle’. Drymen Village Hall, 7.30pm. Membership £10 a year. Visitors welcome, £3 per visit. drymen-history.org.uk

26–28 Mar **FADS Play: *The Book Club of Little Witterington*** by Joan Greening. Menzies Hall, Fintry, 7.30pm. Tickets £10 including pakora and a glass of wine! For details visit fintrydrama.org.uk.

28 Mar **South West Stirling Climate Action Network** AGM. Garden Room, Killearn Village Hall, 10am–12.30pm. Join to connect, collaborate and champion community-led green initiatives across southwest Stirling. For more info or to book a place visit SWScan.org.

Balfron Community Singers Spring Concert. Balfron Church, 7pm.

28 Mar **Tartans Through Time** Ceilidh. Killearn Village Hall, 7pm–10pm. Tickets at the door.

3 Apr **Strathendrick Film Society** showing *Black Bag* (not *Anora* as previously advertised). Balfron High School Theatre, 7.30pm. £5 entry or membership fee £20, £15 concessions.

5 Apr **Killearn Kirk** Easter service, 10am.

15 Apr **Killearn Community Council Meeting.** Garden Room, Village Hall and live stream over Zoom, 8pm. For link to join live stream, email contactus@killearncc.org.uk.

16 Apr **The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley** Lecture by Chantal Brotherton-Ratcliffe, ‘Art Transported’. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am or over Zoom. theartsocietystirling.org.uk

21 Apr **Strathendrick Stitchers** Kirk Hall, 10am–2pm. Beading Workshop. The sales table and library will be available. New members and visitors welcome. Contact strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com.

23 Apr **Drymen & District Local History Society** Members Night. Cheese and wine from 7pm. Short talks by members followed by a brief AGM. Drymen Village Hall.

30 Apr–2 May **FADS Play: *Fintry’s Fairmer Wants Wife!*** by Alan Cochrane. Menzies Hall, Fintry, 7.30pm. Tickets £12. For details and tickets visit fintrydrama.org.uk.

2 May **Spring Craft Fayre.** Village Hall, 11am–4pm.

12 May **Strathendrick Stitchers** Outing to Culross and Wemyss School of Needlework. Members have preference, but interested non-members (for whom there will be a fee) should contact strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com.

16 May **Killearn Horticultural Society** Plant sale and coffee morning. Village Hall and car park, 10am–12 noon. For further info, see facebook.com/killearnhorti or killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk.

17 May **Spring Tea and Cake Party.** Village Hall, 2pm. Further info: killearnvillagehall.co.uk.



Noticeboard contd

- 20 May **Killearn Community Council Meeting.** Garden Room, Village Hall and live stream over Zoom, 8pm. For link to join live stream, email contactus@killearncc.org.uk.
- 21 May **The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley** Lecture by Janusz Karczewski-Slowikowski, 'Going Potty about Commodes'. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am or over Zoom. theartsocietystirling.org.uk
- 17 Jun **Killearn Community Council Meeting.** Garden Room, Village Hall and live stream over Zoom, 8pm. For link to join live stream, email contactus@killearncc.org.uk.
- 18 Jun **The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley** Lecture by Ian Keable, 'The Art of Trickery: How Magicians are seen in Paintings, Prints and Cartoons'. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am or over Zoom. theartsocietystirling.org.uk

- 26 Jul **Killearn Open Gardens Day.** 12noon–5pm. For further info, see killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk.
- 29 Aug **Killearn Horticultural Society Annual Show.** Village Hall and Kirk Hall, 2pm–4.30pm. Place your exhibits from 7.30am–9.45am. Restricted mobility visitors from 12.30pm. Scarecrow competition in car park, entries before 1.30pm. For further info, see facebook.com/killearnhorti or killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk.
- Summer Craft Fayre at the Horti.** Village Hall, Garden Room and in outside gazebos, 1pm–4pm.

If you have any dates for the summer issue of the Noticeboard (end of August until mid-November), please contact Heather McArthur (07985 082678; heather.mcarthur1@outlook.com).

For details of classes, clubs and groups which take place in Killearn Village Hall, please visit the hall's 'what's on' page at killearnvillagehall.co.uk/whats-on.

Editorial

By the time you read this, we will be three months into 2026, well past the Festive Season and our New Year resolutions. So welcome to our spring issue which is our 64th publication.

However, we start off on a sad note; our printer, Scott Macintosh, is retiring. He has served us well over these many years. His service and commitment to the *Courier* ensured that we were able to deliver on time. You can read our appreciation of Scott's time with us on page 6. We wish him well.

Since the last edition, there have been new residents at Ballagan Woods and Lampson Court, as well as new occupiers of houses which have changed owners or tenancy. All are most welcome to Killearn. It is never easy for 'incomers' to integrate into new surroundings.

In this issue, you will learn what various organisations have been up to, read items from our regular contributors (which are always interesting) and learn about matters which affect us – recycling, for example, covered on our centre pages.

It's not all about charities though – there is the Paths Group, Cycling, Colourful Killearn and much more. Look at the activities in the Village Hall.

Lots of these groups not only contribute to village life, but also raise money for various charities. For example, between them, Advent Windows and Christmas Post raised nearly £4,000 for charities, the Fireworks Group raised over £1,500 for local youth groups, and the Malawi Group raised almost £3,500 from their ceilidh and jumble sale. This was all done by volunteers, and you can read more in this issue. These groups only function because of the dedication of their volunteers, and there is always room for additional help. What better way of getting to know people and doing something to keep Killearn as a good place to live?

Finally, let's not forget our advertisers – please give them your support. And thanks also to our deliverers – we need them all.

Enjoy this issue.

Ian

News in brief...

Killearn Malawi Group Jumble Sale held at the end of February was a smash hit. £2,500 was raised to help towards funding all their activities. See page 14 for their full report.

The 'Flying Fox' zip wire in the park which was flattened when a large branch fell from the oak tree during a storm more than 18 months ago is at last being reinstated. As the *Courier* went to print, new supports at either end have been erected and hopefully it will be available for zipping soon.

Potholes are the bane of all drivers' lives, and the roads around this part of Stirlingshire are full of them. Regardless of the rather rough filling-in that has recently 'fixed' the craters on Balfron Road and Station Road, you may still need to know how to contact Stirling Council if your tyre (but hopefully not the wheel) is eaten by one of these. You might be asked to take photos and even measure the offending pothole, but in theory, you might receive recompense for the money you spend repairing your car. Visit Stirling Council website (stirling.gov.uk) and enter 'report a pothole' in the search box.



Killearn Christmas Post 2025
raised

£746.94

for



Children's Hospices Across Scotland

**Thank you to everyone who contributed so generously
and to all our amazing volunteer posties!**

Fireworks at the Glebe

Last year's firework display and bonfire at the Glebe raised more money than the previous year. This was thanks to the generosity of the many people who turned out on the night and to the local businesses who advertised in the event's brochure.

Volunteers from Killearn Community Futures Company (KCFC) organised the display on 3 November. More than £1,500 was raised for the local youth groups who provide organisational support, including Killearn Guides, Killearn Scouts, Blanefield Cubs, Balfron Scouts and Drymen Scouts.

KCFC would like to thank the volunteers who built the bonfire and prepared the Glebe and surrounding area before the fireworks. Also, a massive thanks to everyone who helped on the night by shaking a bucket, to those who cleared up the site afterwards and to the Village Hall team for allowing the volunteers to use the hall for admin and counting donations.

Thanks must also go to the pallet suppliers, without whom there would be no bonfire! So, thank you –

McNairs building supplies
Fraser C Robb
DS McG Ltd
Oakwood Garden Centre
Glengoyne Distillery
MacColl & Stokes
Endrick Trading
Russell Timber Technology
Midland Buses (Balfron Bus Depot)
Allander Aggregates
Kelvin Timber

And thanks as well to CS Landscape Services and SDR Contracts for collecting all the pallets – do support these local businesses and mention the fireworks!

KCFC are aware of the issues that fireworks can cause and conclude that a single, well-publicised event hugely reduces the widespread and unpredictable ignition of fireworks throughout the village. The display is run very efficiently by 21CC, a professional fireworks display provider, and RS100 who provide the PA system.

As this year is the 200th anniversary of the building of the Village Hall, we encourage additional donations to be made to support our celebration of this important event.

If you would like to volunteer to help with any of our fundraising activities or for firework display duties, please contact Graeme Fraser (convenor@kcfc.co.uk).

GRAEME FRASER & CALUM McLEAN



Advent Windows



The Advent Elves of Killearn are pleased to report that more than £3,200 was raised for Shelter Scotland by the Advent Window Trail last Christmas.

Each evening during December, different decorated windows throughout Killearn were lit up, creating a trail – completed on Christmas Eve – totalling 41 windows. Despite only six of the ‘unveilings’ being rain-free, many people braved the weather to take part in each evening’s ‘big reveal’.

The elves who organised the trail were delighted to have so many ‘window openers’ and want to thank all the individuals, families, organisations and businesses that helped to light up Killearn on the gloomy December evenings.

Support for Shelter Scotland has remained strong from the time the first trail started during the pandemic, when the only way people were able to meet was to stand outside each other’s homes.

The elves realised that not everyone had a home to call their own. So the decision to support Shelter Scotland seemed natural, when on any given day there are more than 10,000 children across Scotland in temporary accommodation and more than 109,000 households stuck on waiting lists for a social home.

All comments on the online donation page were very supportive. One contributor wrote: ‘Advent windows really much appreciated in Killearn, such a lot of thought and work goes into this to brighten up evening walks at this dark time of year.’



Someone else wrote: ‘Such a lovely community event – and reminds us all to be thankful that we have cosy homes and to help others who are not so fortunate. Everyone deserves to have a place they can call home. Merry Christmas Killearn!’

Another contributor wrote: ‘Amazing Advent window displays all around Killearn. Great effort for an unfortunately really important charity. Give some love at Christmas.’

One touching comment was from someone far away, obviously following the unveilings on Facebook: ‘Love following along from another country and watching the beautiful Christmas spirit in Killearn! Definitely makes you homesick!’

Around half of the donations were made online with the rest from bucket collections made each night. By the time Gift Aid is included, the £3,214.40 donated is around £800 more than was raised last year and twice the amount of two years ago – so many thanks to everyone who donated.

We’ll see you next year!

All 41 windows can be seen on Killearn for All’s Facebook page.

KILLEARN ADVENT WINDOWS ELVES
GLENDA, IAN, KATHLEEN, LINDSAY & PAUL

Scott Macintosh: Over and Above

One of the many privileges of being part of the *Courier* team has been working with so many people who offer help and find solutions when the need arises. Scott Macintosh, who helped us with our printing, is one of these individuals. He has now decided to step back.

Early in our 21-year publishing history, we used printers connected to Stirling Council, but our experiences with them were not entirely satisfactory. Then Scott, as Sheddon Macintosh, stepped up. During the ensuing years, he has been unfailingly attentive to the requirements of the *Courier*. Rarely have there been crossed wires regarding either transferring copy to Scott or delivering the finished product to the team.

Scott personally delivered the heavy boxes three times a year, and in all weathers, often climbing the stairs at the Village Hall up to the committee room, so that they would be waiting for the team on a Friday morning in March, August or November, ready for distribution.

Over the years, printing has undergone something of a revolution. In that time, we have moved from a mostly black-and-white magazine to exclusively colour. Even the weight and quality of the paper the *Courier* is printed on has been a matter of ongoing discussion. The fact that the magazine has consistently been printed to such a high standard is in no small part due to our association with Scott and the care that he has taken.

Everyone at the *Courier* would like to take this opportunity to thank Scott and wish him all the best for the future.

NB

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- Prescribing for all eye infections



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newly refurbished

Welcome to Killearn's Co-op



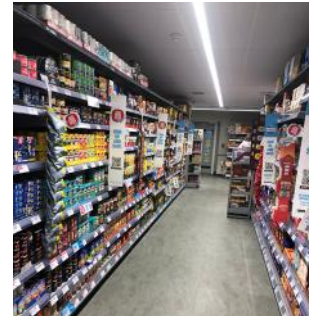
On Friday 27 February, Killearn Co-op reopened after an extensive top-to-toe renovation and refit. Children from Killearn Nursery performed the opening ceremony, cutting the tape with their special cardboard scissors.



New lighting and flooring enhance the space and a revamped layout allow a greater range of goods to be offered across the store.

As well as staffed checkouts, two new self-service checkouts will provide additional capacity at busy times or for those who prefer to 'scan, pay and go'.

Enjoy your new store Killearn!




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The Weather Channel Statistics

Yearly Summary for Killearn (2025)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Highest Temp	10.7	11.7	17	25.7	26.7	28.1	31.6	29.5	22	16.1	14.1	13.3
Lowest Temp	-6.2	-1.6	-3	0.6	1.1	5.1	7.4	8.3	2.2	1.7	-7.8	-3.9
Mean Temp	2.9	4.4	7.1	9.8	12.7	14	16.1	15.8	11.8	10.1	6	6.2
Days Below Freezing	11	4	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	2
Highest Wind Gust	92	23	31	22	26	27	20	35	22	64	40	39
Monthly Rain	94.7	168.7	82.3	98	93.7	140.7	133.1	123.4	95.8	47	186.9	151.3
Most Rain in 24hrs	26.7	39.4	39.6	32.8	24.6	20.1	37.8	27.4	20.5	17.3	37.1	29.2
Days without Rain	11	6	19	18	20	7	15	16	6	8	13	9
Cumulative Rainfall	94.7	263.4	345.7	443.7	537.4	678.1	811.2	934.6	1030.4	1077.4	1264.3	1415.6

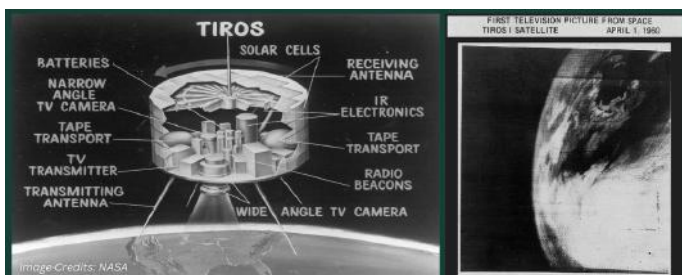
Temperature in °C, rainfall in mm, and wind speed in miles per hour

Any report on Killearn's weather year 2025 must include the sunshine and warmth of our spring and summer. The fine weather ended abruptly with the arrival of storm Erin which brought an area of low pressure with strong winds and much needed rain. This was followed by an early frost on 30 October. Friday 14 November, a bright sunny day, saw Ben Lomond covered in snow.

There were numerous downpours of heavy rain during the year, which may become the norm as our planet continues to warm.

An interesting autumnal observation was that our trees were full of berries. The branches were weighed down with fruit, seeds and nuts. Naturalists call this a Mast-Year, a special event that only happens once every five years. It is nature's way, after a very dry spring and summer which put trees under stress, of providing a food source for wildlife and a greater opportunity for seeds to germinate. It also provides new trees when some may have perished.

Our weather forecasters rely a great deal on meteorological satellites to gather relevant data. The first, Tiros, was launched in 1960. It became an eye in the sky that provided data on clouds, temperature and moisture. Although Tiros only had a 10-week lifespan, it sent back to Earth 23,000 photos of which 19,000 were useful for weather analysis.



Using the photographs, meteorologists were able to

observe the paths of developing storms and jet streams for the first time. It was an electrical power failure on 15 June 1960 that prevented further useful TV pictures from Tiros.

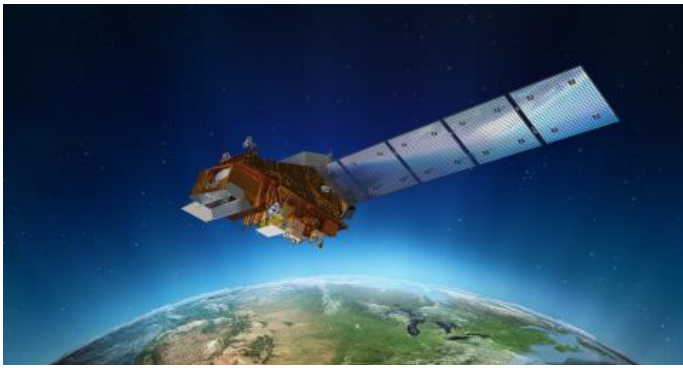
There are now two main types of weather satellites that meteorologists use: geostationary and polar orbiting.

Geostationary satellites orbit the earth at 35,800kms, remaining fixed over the equator. As they rotate at the same rate as the earth, they provide an unbroken series of images of the same region. The European EUMETSTAT-operated system is handily positioned over the Greenwich meridian and is ideal for tracking our weather systems.

A Spot MTG-SI European Satellite (pictured below) was launched on 1 July 2025 and is part of Europe's fleet of geostationary satellites. These satellites can send images as frequently as every minute.



Polar orbiting satellites (pictured right top) fly much closer to the earth (around 850km above the surface) and pass over both poles several times daily. These satellites orbit the earth every 100 minutes, scanning wide swathes of the atmosphere and capturing high resolution shots as the earth rotates beneath them. They carry numerous instruments such as radiometers that provide images and sounders that can be used to determine profiles of



temperature and humidity. This enables meteorologists to identify rain-bearing clouds, the temperature of the surface of the sea and the amounts of sea ice. They apply these data to determine the formation and paths of hurricanes, atmospheric pollution and volcanic ash.

Satellite images provide a wealth of data for meteorologists and climate scientists which gets better as the technology improves with each generation of satellites.

This Sentinel-2 Satellite picture (right) is of Belem in Brazil on 12 August 2025. It shows the sharp contrast



between natural vegetation shown in green and urban areas in pink. Belem is on the edge of the Amazon rainforest and was chosen to host the 30th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP30). The choice of location is both symbolic and strategic because of the Amazon rainforest's crucial role in regulating our climate.

TOM RENFREW

South West Stirling Climate Action Network



South West Stirling Climate Action Network (SWScan) was established in January 2025 (SCO53948) to bring together communities across southwest Stirlingshire. It aims to amplify local climate and sustainability efforts. As well as individual members, our membership includes community councils and development trusts across Strathblane, Killearn, Fintry, Drymen, Balfroon, Buchlyvie, Kippen and Strathard.

Our approach is to avoid supplanting existing community organisations. Rather, it is to provide a shared resource of local knowledge and subject matter skills upon which existing entities can draw to address climate change matters.

Much of last year was spent working with our members to create a climate action Local Place Plan (LPP) for the area. The plan has been validated, and we now need to work with our members and with Stirling Council to bring our five LPP proposals to life.

Proposal 1 – Energy

Support energy retrofit and localised renewable energy development.

Proposal 2 – Resilience

Support emergency community resilience in the face of climate impact events such as flooding and power cuts.

Proposal 3 – Active Travel

Work with existing community paths groups to create strategic Active Travel link paths between Balfroon High School and neighbouring villages.

Proposal 4 – Orchards

Identify and support fruit orchards and community growing spaces.

Proposal 5 – Nature Networks

Identify, designate, protect and enhance all proposed Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCS) as principal nodes in an enhanced Nature Network.

We would love to expand our membership and get your help in shaping a more sustainable future. Membership is free and open to anyone living or working in southwest Stirlingshire. Join SWScan to connect, collaborate and champion community-led green initiatives.

Visit our website (SWScan.org) to find out more and sign up to become a member. Also you will find a link to book a place at our annual general meeting on Saturday 28 March from 10am to 12.30pm in the Garden Room, Killearn Village Hall.

FRANK DEAS

Horti 2026

With spring on the way, the Horti committee has been poking about in the greenhouse and has potted up its ideas for the year ahead.

First things first. We need your plants and cuttings for our Plant Sale and Coffee Morning on Saturday 16 May. Please start growing some for us when spring starts and bring them along on 16 May for us to sell.

The money we raise supports local voluntary and charitable organisations. Last year, we paid the Village Hall hire fee for the Primary School's fundraising team who were selling coffee and cakes at our plant sale. We gave the leftover plants to the Dance & Sing for Parkinson's event the following day for them to sell and made a sizeable donation to the Seed Library.

We helped support the Killearn Wild Weekend last April, and after each annual show we sell the cut flowers in aid of Strathcarron Hospice and take surplus produce to a local foodbank.

Talking of the show, our 160th Annual Show is on Saturday 29 August. Although our society was established 176 years ago, there were some years during the two wars when the show wasn't held and two years during the pandemic when the show went 'virtual'.

Last year we had a fantastic turnout and were very pleased at the large number of entrants, especially in the youth section – in which one third of the 906 entries were from those under 18 years of age.



You don't need to register for the show, just bring your exhibits either on Friday evening or Saturday from 7.30am. Look for the yellow signs on the day, stating where to place entries. Copies of the schedule with all entry classes will be distributed free in Killearn, starting at our plant sale in May. Come and pick up a copy!

The Horti is particularly keen to ensure that this year too there are lots of entrants in the youth section, which is split into the nursery, primary and secondary school age groups. If you are a parent, carer, guardian or grandparent, do encourage your youngster to enter one or more of the youth classes.

In late spring, secret judges will once again be perusing every front garden in Killearn that is visible from the road for the Spring Garden competition.

They will do it all again in late July for the Summer Garden competition. No action is required to enter, and results of both competitions will be announced at the Annual Show and then on our website.



Lastly, are you part of a local business? The Annual Show's schedule of classes booklet is an excellent opportunity for local businesses to advertise themselves, so if you are interested in placing an advert, get in touch via our email (info.kchs@btinternet.com).

The schedule has a three-month shelf-life and is distributed door-to-door in Killearn, as well as to show contributors in the surrounding villages.

So, thank you for your support and see you soon.

PAUL SEARLE

Horti Coach Trip 2026

Killearn Horticultural Society are in the process of planning the destination and date for this year's coach trip. If you would like to register your interest, please email the Horti (info.kchs@btinternet.com) and they will contact you after Easter with more information.

Keep an eye on the dedicated web page:
tinyurl.com/kchstrip.

Open Gardens Day

This summer, gardens across Killearn will be open to the public as part of the Scottish Garden Scheme (SGS).

Following the success of the open garden day in 2023 when eight gardens in Killearn were opened, including the Pepper Pot in Station Road (pictured right), Killearn Horticultural Society has again teamed up with the SGS to organise another opening this July.

At least six gardens, large and small, will be open to the public on Sunday 26 July, from midday until 5pm.

Homemade teas will be served and a plant sale will take place at the starting point of Killearn Village Hall, where a map of the open gardens will be for sale.

If you have a garden in Killearn that you're willing to open on 26 July, please do get in touch via our email (info.kchs@btinternet.com).

PAUL SEARLE



Killearn Nursery Award

Killearn Nursery has won an award for its work as part of an intergenerational reading programme. The Excellence Award winners were announced last September at the Scottish Intergenerational Conference in Inverness, hosted by Generations Working Together (GWT).

Margaret Campbell is the nursery's Principal Early Childhood Educator. She says: 'The nursery is well known for being a welcoming place, and we often have older villagers popping in to say hello because our intergenerational work is a large part of the children's week. The idea is that young and old connect and develop strong relationships through shared activities, while creating lasting memories. We have reading sessions, a "knitting natter" group and play visits from the "grand buddies" – the name we give to the older volunteers.'

GWT supports the development and integration of intergenerational work across Scotland. Its Valuing Generational Diversity and Inclusion award was won by Killearn Nursery for its 'community connections' project which inspires learning activities involving local residents and the nursery's three- and four-year-olds.

If anyone is interested in sharing their skills as part of the intergenerational project, do get in touch. Or come along to Killearn Nursery's intergenerational coffee morning, to be held during Global Intergenerational Week on 24 April at 10.30am. All will be welcome to find out more and offer to take part.

Enquiries for places can be made by phone (01360 550319) or email (killearnnu@stirling.gov.uk).

PAUL SEARLE



Pictured above l to r: Volunteer reader Paul Searle, Margaret Campbell, Principal Early Childhood Educator and Debbie Pirie, Senior Early Childhood Educator

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Two comedies this spring in Fintry

The Book Club of Little Witterington

The first of a trio of 'Little Witterington' plays by Joan Greening, this one-act comedy introduces us to the regular ladies of the book club. All friends since school, they are wary of letting a newcomer to the village join their club. But there's more to Paula than meets the eye, and she may even have what it takes to get around the appallingly snobbish Belle.

Directed by Tony Flisch.

Performances: Thursday 26 to Saturday 28 March,
7.30pm in the Menzies Hall, Fintry.

Tickets: £10, which includes pakora
and a glass of wine!

And then...

Fintry's Fairmer Wants a Wife!

Alan Cochrane's full-length Scottish comedy, which was a box-office hit during the 2000 Edinburgh Fringe.

It's 1822 and all of Scotland is awash with anticipation of the impending state visit by King George IV, none more so than the Laird of Hawthornden, Sir Robert Drummond. Widowed for many years and endowed with a roving eye and hands to match, he decides that he desperately needs a wife if he is to be invited to the many royal balls and banquets.



A conniving widow quickly ensnares Sir Robert, while her grasping brother sets his sights on the laird's young daughter. However, the daughter has already fallen in love with a penniless artist who, unbeknownst to her, is in fact the very suitor her father has been secretly arranging for her to marry. The maidservant overhears this and reports back to her young mistress, who then plays her errant lover and father at their own game. Meanwhile, the laird's sister and housekeeper hatch their own plan to win the laird away from the widow.

Throw into this chaos a German baroness who is not all she seems and some awful weather, and you've got yourself a hilarious romp, filled with twists and turns. Directed by Gavin Paterson.

Performances: Thursday 30 April to Saturday 2 May,
7.30pm in the Menzies Hall, Fintry.

Tickets: £12

For the latest information and to buy tickets for both productions, please visit our website at fintrydrama.org.uk.

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Killearn Primary Kick Off 2026!



P7 shared their learning about World War II



Some performers from the Christmas Show

The run up to Christmas was busy but full of fun, and the New Year is now well under way. Here's a quick summary of what we have been up to!

P7 have been learning many things. For their topics they have been learning about democracy throughout August to December. Through this term they have been learning about the Second World War and the impact it had on our country (see photo top). For PE they have enjoyed handball with Active Stirling, fitness to build their core strength and cross-country training for a cross-country event. They also worked extremely hard to complete National Standardised Assessments.

P6 have been doing a lot through December and January, from Christmas carolling to World War 1 story making. They added comedic value to their part in the Christmas show, singing a nativity interpretation of 'Scrooge' from *A Muppet Christmas Carol*. They created stories for their buddies and read these to them. Near the end of term, they had a movie day as a treat!

P5 have been up to many things from writing freezing North Pole descriptions to carrying out wet tsunami experiments. They enjoyed Christmas Kahoots, nativity practice and Christmas art in the run-up to Christmas.

The P4s have done a ton of fun activities, from advent windows to Christmas show prep, even watching movies and money work.

The class of P3/4 has been using paper to look like stained glass. They also made some delicious tomato pin wheels and read the *Grinch Who Stole Christmas*. They were also learning about Robert the Bruce and what he did in his time. They made camouflage art for their nature topic, and they also made their own tartan. They were learning about the Battle of Bannockburn as well.

P2 have been learning how to calculate 2D and 3D shapes, plus place value to 100 in maths. They also enjoyed doing the '12 Days of Christmas' interpretation, making candy cane advent windows and having end-of-term movie treats. They have even been writing stories about snowmen.

During their Christmas show preparations in December, P1 were incredibly busy balancing rehearsals with their classroom projects. The children practised 'Away in a Manger' and collaborated with the nursery for their festive performances, while also finding time to explore the scientific properties of solids, liquids and gases. In addition to their musical efforts, they have sharpened their literacy and numeracy skills through the Three Little Pigs, drama, sentence building and additional practice. The P1s have been active on the Eco Committee, conducting interviews and managing litter to keep their school clean. This hardworking class has even been introduced to data handling.

PRESS GANG – CHARLIE, EMILY, FLORA & KEIRA

Ceilidh Fun and Building Update



The St Andrews Ceilidh was held on 28 November last year. It was organised by the Killearn Malawi Group and proved to be a lively evening of dancing enjoyed by over 70 people in the Village Hall. The success was down to the dynamic playing of the ceilidh band, Tarnach, now well known in the village, and to the calling of the dances. Together, these encouraged many people to get up and have a go. Plates of a variety of cheeses and crackers nourished the dancers. The raffle was a great success, with many exciting prizes on offer from generous donors, both corporate and individual.

We are delighted that the amount raised was almost £1,000, which goes towards our major building project in Malawi – a girls' boarding hostel at Nkhonde Secondary School.

The news from Nkhonde is exciting. KMG sent out funds so that over the autumn, leading up to the rains, the local PTA were able to contract a local builder to start on the foundations using bricks provided by the community. This first building phase has now been completed and it is looking good. The building plan is government approved and has been used at other schools. It includes 14 rooms with space for two bunks giving 56 places. There are also rooms for sanitation and showers. Building will recommence once the rainy season ends in February.

We have, over many years, sent donated knitwear and other goods to northern Malawi using containers organised by the Bananabox Trust. Following the recent tragic death of the trust's founder Alan Laverock, a good



Foundations of the Girls' Hostel at Nkhonde Secondary School

friend of KMG, these deliveries are now in abeyance until other arrangements are made. Please do not send any other items at this time. We would like to thank all those who have donated items over the years.

We continue to support a group of women who have been widowed, as well as needy school students in a remote corner of northern Malawi. Support is through Chrissie Nyirongo, and now through her daughter Rachael Banda.



Women supported by Chrissie's Meals, a project we support.

By the time this issue reaches you, the KMG jumble sale will have come and gone, and we are delighted to report that it raised the amazing sum of £2,500 to fund our activities, all of which help to improve the lives of the people of the warm heart of Africa.

KMG: a small charity making a big Impact!

KEN ALLEN

Killearn Beer Festival

Hi folks, yes, it's the time of the year again when we start preparations for this year's Killearn Beer Festival (number 12). The festival will take place as per usual at the Old Mill, Killearn, this year on Saturday 7 June and opening at 2pm to accommodate the increases in recent attendances.

As with previous occasions, the festival is targeted not just at beer aficionados but is also one for the wider community with all family members welcome.

In addition to enjoying the occasion itself, it's an opportunity to raise money for a variety of local causes:



to date over £5,000 has been distributed to local causes these past 11 years.

As always, there will be a wide range of styles to cater for all tastes while serving favourites from past events. This year specifically there will

be a selection from some up-and-coming craft breweries around the central belt.

For more details nearer the event, please follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

MARK WHITE



KCC started our new season in September 2025 with some changes. One of our co-opted members, Susie Henderson, had moved out of the village. We thank her for being part of our team and wish her well in her new home.

We were delighted that Calum McLean, our other co-opted member, accepted a full membership position on the committee. We are very glad to retain him, and it also enabled us to offer two more co-opted positions.

We were fortunate to fill those in December last year and are happy to welcome Tasha Houchin and Emily Semple to the committee.

Tasha has previously been our hard-working planning associate, and we are glad to know that she will continue in this role. Emily joins us from her previous position of minute secretary, and as the parent of a little one, she brings a fresh new perspective to the joys of village life.

That does of course leave us with one further post to fill: the minute secretary is a paid position, for 10 months each year. If anyone would like to consider this interesting proposition or knows of someone who might consider, there will be details on KCC website or from any of the committee.

Planning matters continue to occupy us, particularly around the loss of trees, and the potential for building projects to prove detrimental to biodiversity. We have gathered together the concerns expressed to us, and several of the KCC committee will meet with Sharon Marklow, Service Manager for planning and building standards, in February to discuss these. We will report back to the KCC meeting as soon as we can.

The changing status of Blackwood Care Home (previously Abbeyfield) has also caused a great deal of anxiety and anger. The residents' families were informed in autumn 2025 that closure of the facility was planned

and that continuing care for their relatives would require a change of accommodation.

The threat of losing this service is obviously deeply felt by the families but also by the wider community. Strathendrick Care Home, in Balfron, closed during the past few years, with houses now being built on that site. The care home promised to Killearn, as part of the development of the old hospital site, was lost following a change to the overall footprint of that site. It seems unjustifiable for the one remaining local facility to be lost also.

Stirling Council are engaged in discussion with Blackwood, but there has been no information available from this so far. KCC will continue to push for clarification and to represent the strength of village feeling.

The donations from Cala to a variety of village organisations have now been received. This was part of their Community Pledge, following their redevelopment of the old hospital site. KCC benefited from a contribution towards the cost of the Christmas lights, and we are most grateful to Cala for this. We share the yearly cost of the lights with Killearn Trust, KCFC and Killearn Beer Festival, and we are fortunate to have such support.

We are also fortunate to have such an active and engaged community, and we look forward to welcoming you to any of our meetings. There is an option to attend in person at the Garden Room of the Village Hall, or by a zoom link (email ContactUs@KillearnCC.org.uk for the link). The meetings are on the third Wednesday every month, from September to June, at 8pm.

LIZ JONES
KCC



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Killearn Village Hall

Working with the community to celebrate 200 years of the village hall...

Here we are in 2026 – and it's 200 years since the building that is now Killearn Village Hall was built. Of course it hasn't always been a village hall, and part of our mission this year is to help share stories from the history of the hall and the community linked to it – to help more of us understand some of the heritage around the village and to appreciate the legacy, not just of the hall, but of other areas of the village too.

Some of you will have walked round the Killearn Heritage Trail (killearnheritage.org.uk). A brief history of the Village Hall is featured on Board 2 of the trail and we're hoping to work with the Heritage Trail team to relaunch the trail during the year – to refresh the boards and to remind people of some of the lovely wee stories that each of the boards brings to life.

We're also working with community groups that host events at the hall and hoping to support them in



their annual endeavours, as we celebrate the 200th anniversary, by linking in with the community that brings the hall to life.

It's early days – but our plans so far are outlined in the

poster below. Work continues to apply for funding and to bring more people to the table to help us share the hall's history, to recognise and celebrate the journey so far and to plan for the future. Here's to 200 years and 200 more! We'll keep you posted and we'll no doubt be back with more information – but please come and chat if you'd like to help or would like to suggest an event.

We're always happy to hear from you and see you. As a village hall and a community facility – it's what we stand for – we bring local people together, enabling people to meet and connect through activities, events, exercise etc. So, come and join us – and if you need space for something, come and ask about our spaces (killearnvillagehall.co.uk/book).

FIONA RENNIE

Killearn Village Hall **200 years**
2026 ..
Celebrating 200 years at the heart of the community
1826-2026
Killearn Village Hall

Mar-26 Let's Dance
May-26 Warm Space Tea Party
Jun-26 Cheering on the Killearn 10k
Summer-26 Colourful Killearn Flower tubs
Summer-26 Killearn Courier - a centre page spread
Aug-26 History week - relaunch of Killearn Heritage Trail and exhibition
Aug-26 Killearn Cottagers Horticultural Society Annual Show
Sept-26 The Anniversary Party
Nov-26 The Annual Killearn Fireworks Event
Dec-26 Village Hall/Primary School Advent window

and landscaping works to provide a whole new community space looking out to Loch Lomond and the hills

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Killlearn Paths – a Year of Progress and Plans for 2026

With spring just around the corner, it's a good time to reflect on the past year for Killlearn's Paths group. The Paths Committee is entirely volunteer-led, and new help is always welcome. You don't need specialist skills or a large time commitment to make a difference.

Ways to get involved include:

- taking part in occasional maintenance works, path-clearing or litter-picking days
- joining the committee and helping to set priorities
- acting as a 'path champion' by reporting issues on routes you use regularly
- sharing local knowledge about paths, access issues or historical routes.

If you enjoy walking, care about the local environment or simply want to support the village, your contribution would be greatly valued. How about becoming a member of Killlearn Community Futures (KCFC)?

What we do...

The group aims to support the local community by providing accessible and enjoyable routes through and around the village while preserving Killlearn's environment and remaining considerate of residents and landowners. The team of volunteers maintains selected paths around the village and is also active in lobbying and planning for new path development. A group of volunteers is pictured above right laying a new path in Kirkhouse wood with the help of machinery provided by local company MacColl & Stokes Landscaping Ltd. The photo bottom right shows further enhancement of another section through the addition of wood chippings, again provided by a local company and laid by volunteers.

Our achievements in 2025...

Last year, the paths committee and its merry band of volunteers have been involved in a range of practical and behind-the-scenes work. This has included significant and quite complex works, addressing drainage issues on eroded muddy sections, repairing paths, monitoring/ notifying invasive plant species, lobbying Stirling Council and working with other local paths groups to improve networks between villages.

Several well-used routes around the village and surrounding countryside have benefited from routine maintenance, helping to keep them open and usable throughout the year despite increasingly challenging weather conditions.

Killlearn Paths Group has also engaged closely with Stirling Council, local landowners and access officers to discuss concerns, support repairs and maintain access.



In addition, we have continued to listen to feedback from local walkers, identifying pinch points and recurring issues and ensuring these are raised with the appropriate bodies.

Planning, monitoring and quiet persistence have all played a role in keeping Killlearn's paths accessible.

Plans and priorities for 2026...

Looking ahead to 2026, the Paths Group expects another busy year. Our key priorities include:

- continuing regular maintenance and monitoring of existing paths
- litter-picking days
- supporting improvements to address erosion on popular routes
- exploring opportunities to improve signage and paths information
- working with partners when paths cross farmland or development areas
- encouraging community awareness of local paths and responsible access
- control of invasive plant species such as Himalayan Balsam with landowner consent.

As always, our focus will be on practical, achievable improvements that benefit the Killearn community and the many visitors to the village and its surroundings while also respecting and consulting landowners.

Call to action...

Killearn's paths are one of the community's great strengths – but they depend on local involvement to remain safe, welcoming and accessible. If you would like to get involved with the Paths Committee or simply want to find out more, please contact KCFC or look out for notices on community noticeboards and online channels. With continued community support, we can ensure Killearn's paths remain a resource to be enjoyed by everyone, now and in the years ahead.

Freedom! But not at any price...

The land we use for walking, in and around Killearn and indeed across Scotland, is very special because of our unique Access Laws – and the freedom these provide.

These places are enjoyed every day by walkers, runners, cyclists, dog owners and families – and Scotland's access laws protect that freedom. But those rights rely on responsible behaviour from everyone.

The Law of Access to Land in Scotland means access works best when people understand that they are sharing space. In practice, this means things such as:

- keeping dogs under close control near livestock and clearing up your dog poop (toxocariasis leads to blindness)
- sticking to paths wherever possible to protect plants, hedgehogs and wildlife underfoot and where crops are growing
- closing gates and taking litter home.

It also means respecting the privacy of homes and the realities of working farms around the village.

When access is taken responsibly, local landowners are more likely to accommodate paths, local routes stay open, and Killearn remains welcoming rather than contentious. However, when access isn't taken responsibly, frustration grows – and everyone risks losing out.

Killearn's countryside is a privilege, not a playground. By following the Scottish Outdoor Access Code and thinking about how our actions affect others, we can protect our freedoms.

Scottish Outdoor access:

[outdooraccess-scotland.scot](https://www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot)

The Law of Access to Land in Scotland:
[scotways.com/product/law-guide-2018](https://www.scotways.com/product/law-guide-2018)

And finally... a big shoutout to the local businesses, MacColl & Stokes Landscaping and Archie Wilson Tree Surgeons, who supplied materials and equipment – we couldn't do what we do without you!

Connect with us...

To find out more or to volunteer, visit
[kcfc.co.uk/paths-group](https://www.kcfc.co.uk/paths-group)



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Wines for Spring

Spring is when everything starts to wake up and that often means our palates too. As the days stretch and the first warmth returns, heavy winter reds start to feel out of place. Suddenly we crave wines that are lighter, fresher and a bit more adventurous. Supermarkets and independents alike are leaning into that mood, especially with ‘discovery’ ranges designed to allow you to drink outside your comfort zone with confidence.

Crisp, bright whites are still the unofficial soundtrack of spring, but they are evolving. Instead of defaulting to the same sauvignon blanc every time, you’ll increasingly see alternatives on shelves: zesty, saline whites from coastal Spain, alpine styles with a cool, stony edge or citrus-driven blends from southern France. These bring energy and lift, working beautifully with spring greens, simple fish dishes or just a plate of olives and crisps.

Rosé is no longer waiting for summer. Spring is prime time for styles that sit between feather-light and full-bodied: pale to mid-pink wines with wild strawberry, blood orange and a touch of savoury spice.

You’ll see more supermarkets treating rosé as a serious, food-friendly option rather than a novelty, while independent merchants often stock characterful bottles from less obvious places – think Portugal, Greece or even home-grown English pinks.

Light, chillable reds are another spring pleasure. When you still want red fruit and a bit of structure,

but without the heaviness, look for juicy, low-tannin styles that can take half an hour in the fridge. You’ll often find these tucked into the ‘adventurous’ or ‘found’ corners of premium supermarket ranges: grapes you might not recognise, regions you’ve never visited.

Threaded through all of this is a new spirit of exploration, and this is where those discovery ranges come in. Many supermarkets now carve out space for unusual grapes and lesser-known regions under dedicated labels: essentially, a signpost, saying ‘Here’s something different, but we’ve curated it for you.’ They facilitate curiosity without risk.

Independent wine shops, by contrast, remain the champions of the truly niche, supporting the one-off parcel, the tiny grower and the style that doesn’t fit a supermarket brief.

So this spring, instead of automatically reaching for the familiar, use these signposts as an invitation. In the supermarket, wander over to the ‘adventurous’ corner and pick a grape you’ve never heard of; in an independent, ask for a light, chillable red or a textured white that feels like spring in a glass.

You don’t need encyclopaedic knowledge, just a little willingness to explore – the shelves have already done most of the hard work for you.

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‘Step Into Art’ Exhibition

In mid-February, art4you Scotland Art School opened its doors once again, welcoming art lovers to ‘Step Into Art’ and support Strathcarron Hospice. The charity exhibition proved a huge success, raising an outstanding £8,620.69, with every penny going directly to the hospice.

Ewen Duncan, founder of art4you Scotland Art School, said: ‘We were delighted to hold another charity exhibition. This was our 14th exhibition and we chose Strathcarron Hospice to raise much-needed funds – a charity close to the hearts of many local people.’

Students at art4you Scotland generously donated a wide range of original artwork, including paintings, prints, ceramics, watercolours, drawings and written pieces. The works were inspired by a variety of artists, styles and themes, and 100% of every artwork sale was donated to the charity, helping to achieve the impressive total.

Claudia Duncan, co-founder, added: ‘One of the favourites during the exhibition was “The Shoes”, painted in oil on small canvases. A shoe is a fantastic symbol of the variances in life – each shoe experiences many steps and tells the story of an



individual. Many of them have now found new homes and so the story continues.’

Claire Kennedy, Corporate Fundraiser at Strathcarron Hospice, said: ‘We are delighted with the great result. The timing of the exhibition was perfect as we are celebrating Strathcarron Hospice’s 45th anniversary this year. It was a wonderful way of inspiring people to take action and share our story.’

On the opening night, Mandy Malcomson, Lead Nurse of the Live Your Life Team at Strathcarron Hospice (pictured left) shared the powerful real-life story of a family currently being supported by the hospice – a touching and emotional reminder of the vital work they do.

Strathcarron Hospice supports people and their families across Forth Valley, Cumbernauld and Kilsyth who are living with life-limiting conditions.



DR BIKE IS COMING TO KILLEARN

Could your bike benefit from a check-up? If so, pop along on Easter Monday 6 April to Killearn Village Hall Garden Room from 10am. There is no need to book... just come early to avoid disappointment.

We’ll have a mechanic on hand to do checks and minor adjustments. Bring any bike – children’s, road, hybrid, gravel, mountain.

This service is provided by Recyke-a-bike, the Stirling-based charity which promotes cycling for low carbon transport, better health/wellbeing and to stop bikes ending up in landfill. See recyke-a-bike.co.uk.

There’s no charge, but a small donation will be very much appreciated.

DONATE A BIKE

Do you have a bike that you no longer use? If so, please consider donating it to Recyke-a-bike... the charity will ensure it is re-loved. To date, 131 bikes have been donated via Cycling Killearn. Let’s see how many more we can achieve in 2026!

Drop bikes off on 6 April (10am–3pm) outside the Garden Room at the Village Hall.

Event organised by Cycling Killearn (see website right). Follow us on Instagram; join our Facebook group [@cyclingkillearn](https://www.facebook.com/cyclingkillearn).

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Reduce

Reuse

Recycle

We are all conscious of the need to minimise our use of the world’s valuable resources: materials, energy and environment. For most of us the best ways of doing this are to reduce our consumption where possible, to bring pressure to bear on suppliers over things like packaging and single-use

plastics (do supermarket vegetables really need to be in plastic bags or shrink-wrapped?) and to RECYCLE as much as possible.

Here we remind readers how best to reduce waste, where to recycle what cannot be recovered and what happens to materials that we throw away.

Part I: What goes where? – kerbside collections

In Stirlingshire we are fortunate to have fairly comprehensive recycling schemes – most operated by Stirling Council – but these schemes vary hugely across Scotland and the UK. In the spring 2022 edition of the *Courier*, we carried an article on local recycling (<https://tinyurl.com/yrrusphy>).

Here we update the facilities available locally (the Council’s website is a little out of date) and remind you of what goes where. Contaminated refuse may endanger recycling operatives, damage machinery or go to landfill or for incineration, so it is really important to avoid putting things in the wrong bins!

In 2024, Stirling’s recycling rate was 53.2%



BROWN bins: garden and food waste – collected every two weeks (an annual fee is payable for garden waste). Stirling’s food and garden waste goes to Earnside Energy in Perthshire. In 2024, 8,355 tonnes of brown bin material were collected from the kerbside for recycling.

DO NOT use brown bins for building materials (timber, bricks, rubble), soil, ash or pet waste.

BLUE bins: cans, plastic bottles and clean recyclable cartons and containers – collected every four weeks. Clean food and liquid cartons, such as Tetrapaks (see below), and empty aerosols may go in your blue bin. Blue bin material goes to Wyllie Recycling in Perthshire. In 2024, 2,048 tonnes of blue bin material were collected from the kerbside for recycling.

DO NOT use blue bins for soft plastics, crisp packets or hard plastics such as toys.

GREEN bins: paper and cardboard – collected every four weeks. Stirling paper and cardboard goes to SMURFIT Westrock in Glasgow. In 2024, 3,001 tonnes of green bin material were collected from the kerbside for recycling.

DO NOT use green bins for padded envelopes, hardback books and disposable cups.

PURPLE bins: glass bottles and jars – collected every eight weeks. Stirling glass goes to URM in Yorkshire for recycling. In 2024, 1,971 tonnes of mixed glass material were collected from the kerbside for recycling.

DO NOT use purple bins for light bulbs, broken glass and window panes.

GREY bins: other domestic refuse – collected every four weeks. Other domestic refuse should go to a Household Waste Recycling Centre (see Part II opposite) or in the grey bin. See right for items which should go to a Household Waste Recycling Centre. In 2024, 12,592 tonnes of domestic non-recyclable waste were collected from the kerbside.

DO NOT use grey bins for electrical items, batteries, toxic materials, paints and bulky items.

Tetrapak Recycling

The UK uses 60,000 tonnes of cartons for liquids each year. They are composite containers made up of 75% wood fibre (for structure and packing), 21% polymers (to prevent leakage) and 4% aluminium (to preserve the contents from light and oxygen).

They go to a specialist facility where they are pulped in water to separate the fibre from the plastic and aluminium layers. The fibre is recycled to make paper, tissue and cardboard products; the plastic and aluminium elements are used to create plastic-aluminium pellets and similar composite materials.

Part II: Household Waste Recycling Centre

Making sure we use the right bins and taking advantage of local recycling opportunities help to reduce our environmental impact, however sometimes a big clear out can generate more waste than our bins can hold. This is when the Household Waste Recycling Centre in Balfron can help. Located in Dunkeld Court (behind the Co-op), it can handle a range of items and help boost our recycling rates.

Separate skips facilitate improved recycling for wood, scrap metal, clean textiles and clothing. Some items that cannot be recycled can still be sorted and used for energy recovery. These include carpets, underlay, rugs and roofing felt. For other items, while there is no recovery option, the recycling centre provides a managed solution for safe disposal. These items include light bulbs, fluorescent tubes and vapes.

Full information on what can and can't be taken to the recycling centre can be found on Stirling Council's website ([tinyurl.com/2s6rt35f](https://www.stirling.gov.uk/tinyurl.com/2s6rt35f)). There is an online form to book your slot – Monday to Friday, 5pm to 7.40pm and Saturday, 10am to 1.30pm. Slots can also be booked over the phone.

Key Points to Note

Major garden makeovers are often a reason for trips to the centre. However, while it can take all your hedge cuttings, grass mowing and leaves, it is really important to ensure that no food waste is mixed in with the garden waste. Also, if you want to get rid of a bicycle, the best solution is to take it to Killearn Village Hall on Monday 6 April where Cycling Killearn can ensure your bike is 'recycled'. See the Cycling Killearn article on page 21 for details and timings.

Major makeover for the Balfron Centre

The centre is scheduled to get a major refurbishment early in 2027. While the Council is still consulting on the final layout, it is anticipated that the new centre will provide a safer environment for both council staff and members of the public. A revised layout will allow the replacing of full skips with empty ones to be accomplished within the site rather than having to use the adjacent roads for manoeuvring.



As the new site is open air, it will allow the deployment of roll packer machinery to compress the material in the skips reducing the frequency of skip replacement and the associated number of heavy vehicle journeys.

The new site will also allow for more skips. This potentially increases the range of recycling to include items currently only recycled at Polmaise such as hard plastics or mattresses. The Council is also keen to work with community groups to see if the furniture recycling process operated by Transition Stirling at Polmaise might be extended to southwest Stirlingshire.

It is reassuring to see the Council investing in and making a commitment to the Balfron waste recycling centre. Bearing in mind that the centre will close for several months at the start of 2027, this year is the time to get your spring clear out or garden makeover done.

Part III: Did you know?

We are lucky in Killearn that community-minded enterprises (such as those below) help us collect and recycle other materials not dealt with by Stirling Council.

The Co-op – in common with most of the large supermarkets, the Co-op (Killearn and Balfron) has a bin for recycling **soft plastics** just inside the door.

Batteries can also be disposed of there.

Killearn Pharmacy – accepts empty **blister packs** and **inhalers**. These go to Terracycle, an international company with a glitzy website, and the Pharmacy pays over £200 for every box of our recycled packs.

Balfron Eyecare – accepts **spectacles**.

Killearn Nursery – accepts used **printer cartridges**.

Bicycles – if you have a bicycle that you no longer use, Cycling Killearn organise Recyke-a-bike and Dr Bike check-ups: the next being on Monday 6 April.

In 2018, food waste generated 2.65 million tonnes of CO₂: 3.8% of Scotland's total carbon footprint! So ideally, we should not buy more than we need, and we should be more enterprising about using 'leftovers'. Uncooked plant material – skins, peelings and decaying fruit and veg as well as teabags and coffee grains – can easily be composted at home, along with green (e.g. grass cuttings) and brown (e.g. leaves) material.

WASTE REDUCTION and FOOD WASTE remain key initiatives in Scotland's Circular Economy Roadmap to 2030 which aims to change resource use and consumption.

In 2025 sending biodegradable waste to landfill was banned. Despite such Scottish Waste and Recycling targets being set, there is still significant work required to meet these. Regardless of the noble ambitions – and the claims of commercial service providers – a significant amount of waste still goes into landfill, is transported large distances to incinerators (which produce energy but also pollutants) or is exported abroad.

So, it is much preferred for us to reduce our consumptions – or to **REUSE** and **RE-PURPOSE** rather than recycle or put in the refuse! Various charity shops will accept books, household items, clothes and furniture so we really should try and reuse as much as possible.

I will never again complain...

It is a truth universally acknowledged that, for country dwellers, life is simpler if you can drive a car. Historically, this was not always the case. When I was little, we lived in a village that was virtually self supporting. Most people lived locally. We had all the tradesmen, all the shop owners and assistants, teachers in the village school and Mr Martin the miller with his very own mill. Most importantly, we were surrounded by farmers who supplied all of our vegetables. It was a highly efficient unit, and hardly any of the residents required their own car. Those who did have to travel to work caught one of the many buses or indeed the train. How things have changed.

Our family never had a car. My father was one of those who caught the bus to travel three or four miles. So there was a strange allure about the combustion engine for children like us which never left us. The idea of being in control of one's own personal transport was deeply attractive. It still is. Presumably this must be one of the reasons why so many of us commute daily, one per vehicle. Some form a carpool, but lots don't. It's just too easy to hop into the car and go.

It is many years, maybe even a decade, since I have driven in the city, but when I was invited recently for lunch with a friend in Busby, I thought little of it. I could make the journey. It didn't even occur to me not to try. After all, I had a map, didn't I? Although my car is not satnav enabled, I do have an unreliable Garmin that is supposed to attach to the windscreen. And I knew where I was going. I had been before, many moons ago. The roads on the south side of the river were broad and straight. What could possibly go wrong?

Here is the list of what did go wrong.

A) My destination was much farther than I remembered or worked out. I decided, for various valid reasons, to abjure the motorway, deciding instead to go via the Tunnel. This was when I realised that the broad straight roads on the south side had virtually no name plates. If you were on the wrong one, you were doomed. Enter the Garmin, lying on the passenger seat. I did get to Busby, 50 minutes later than expected.

B) Although I left Busby early enough, after a splendid visit, somewhere along the line I hit the rush hour. And again, I ran into the road name problem. At one point I went into a pub to check my whereabouts. Once I was on the north side of the river, I at least knew where I was going, but then I hit the roadworks.

C) The main cause of my travail was the sheer volume of traffic. Nobody drove badly, they were all very disciplined, but there were hordes of them. The roads were crammed to extinction. From the Space Station, we must have looked like columns of soldier ants. The people whose job requires them to do this on a daily basis have my deepest admiration. Adding up my two journeys, I was on the road for just short of five hours. I could have been in Manchester in that time.

I love my little car, which Ian at the Garage looks after meticulously, and I would struggle without it. But it was as I sat at the lights in three endless lanes of traffic at Anniesland Cross, that I knew I couldn't live in the city. Vive le village.

JOYCE BEGG



STRATHENDRICK
Classic & Sports Car Club



Our winter programme of club nights included a meal at Ross Priory, followed by a talk, and in December a challenging motoring-related quiz night. The programme covered vehicles at opposite ends of the spectrum. As well as hearing about the early history, owners and restoration of a 1926 Bentley, we also heard about the sport of drag racing and about 40 years of military experiences with armoured vehicles on active service, including the Iraq war. The winter programme concludes with the AGM in April, as has been the pattern over the last few years. This is closely followed by the start of our full list of summer events, the first of which is Drive-it-Day which this year is to Oban.

The summer programme again features monthly runs supplemented with involvement in events organised by other clubs and



1926 Bentley
3-litre Red Label
Photo: Tim Smith



Contrasting entries: 1934 Lagonda and 1980 Ferrari 308

organisations. Those proposed this year include the RSAC spring run in early April (last year starting from Nuffield Health in Milngavie); the Red Hackle Tour (starting from Perth in May); Drymen Show (also in May); and Doune hill climb in June. Into July we have the now annual Car-BQ and another pre-WWII tour; and in August trips on Loch Katrine and to Ayr are planned, with the additional opportunity to join the RSAC Three Lochs event taking in the Gairloch, Loch Long and Loch Lomond (again in August starting last year from Rhu).

For more information and to read the monthly club magazine, *Overdrive*, visit strathendrickcarclub.uk. New members are always welcome, with or without cars. Contact the club secretary at: SCandSCC.Sec@gap-group.co.uk.



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Celebration of Tartan

My name is Lif Bailey and I am a fourth year university student. I have been a local of Killearn for eight years. Initially, I studied Fashion Business at Glasgow City College for two years. After graduating from college, I got direct entry into Heriot-Watt University in Galashiels, where for the past two years I have been studying Fashion Branding and Promotion. For my final year, I was tasked with designing a specific project where the topic had a research gap.

I chose to research how tartan influences people, emotionally and stylistically. Tartan originated from clansmen designing each stripe and colour after their home's landscape. However, after the Jacobite uprising in 1745, tartan became illegal for the Scots to wear. The prohibition lasted for 50 years and even after that ancient traditions didn't recover. Our heritage was nearly lost. Now tartan has become modernised and commercialised, using the word 'plaid', which came from the Gaelic word plaide meaning blanket. Tartan's history should not be turned into a gimmick or humoured.

The title of my project is 'Tartan Through Time'. I believe tartan is wrongfully perceived and slightly under-appreciated globally. Ultimately, I would like to change this perception and show appreciation to our ancestors who have given so much to uphold our heritage. In my project, I have been interviewing the public and industry professionals. My knowledge and appreciation for tartan have increased immensely.

To celebrate tartan and the end of my university project, I am holding a ceilidh here in the Killearn Village Hall. At my ceilidh, everyone attending should wear their best tartan – it doesn't have to be traditional. The ceilidh will be held on Saturday 28 March 2026, from 7pm to 10pm. Tickets can be purchased by scanning the QR code (see right) or at the door when entering.

Scam Alert

There has been a rise recently in scam emails usually purporting to come from BT (or EE) or McAfee. The McAfee ones will be especially difficult to recognise if you do indeed use one of their products as they suggest your protection has expired. The BT/EE ones appear to alert you to a Change of Terms of Service, indicating that service might be stopped unless you review and accept new terms. A reminder may even be sent suggesting that a deadline for acceptance is imminent. These types of messages are generally called 'scareware' as they are intended to put you under pressure to comply. But they are SCAMS!

In both cases, checking the actual address the email comes from, and not just the name presented, should make it obvious that it's not a genuine message. Just mark it as spam if you have that option and delete the message.

WEAR YOUR BEST TARTAN CEILIDH

TICKET PRICE: £7 RAFFLE PRIZES

BYOB EVENT (BRING ID, ID WILL BE CHECKED AT THE DOOR)

SAVE THE DATE
28th of March
Starts 7pm until 10pm
Killearn Village hall

ALL PROCEEDS WILL GO TO THE SCOTTISH TARTANS AUTHORITY

THIS IS A CELEBRATION FOR THE ENDING OF MY FINAL YEAR PROJECT CALLED 'TARTAN THROUGH TIME'

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MY FINAL YEAR PROJECT OR IF YOU WANT TO BE A PART OF MY PROJECT, PLEASE CONTACT LB5002@HW.AC.UK

SCAN HERE TO BUY A TICKET

All proceeds will go to the Scottish Tartan Authority charity.

To compile my research and findings, I will be making a short documentary. If you are comfortable, I will be photographing and filming at the ceilidh. I would love any support for my project, so do please think about coming along.

LIF BAILEY

DON'T reply to it as that would only inform the sender that they have found a good email address and one that is in active use.

In addition, there are still regular cold calls from 'BT' or 'Microsoft' suggesting that you have an issue, which of course is news to you and quite false. These organisations will not cold call you. Typically, the scammers will try to win your trust before pushing you to make changes to your computer or other equipment. It's the usual underlying trick of using 'tech speak' to scare and persuade a victim that there's a problem and getting them to do something to their devices. A genuine service provider will never do that unless you have already initiated investigation of an issue, so the safest response is simply to hang up.

DOUG ASHWORTH

Why we need to tackle invasive species

We are fortunate to live in a beautiful area, surrounded by hills, woodlands and wildlife. But we must not take this for granted. The combined emergencies of rapid climate change and biodiversity loss mean that the need to protect our local environment is more pressing than ever. One major threat that we face is the effect of invasive non-native species (INNS).

Natural environments consist of interacting and inter-dependent organisms, ranging from soil microbes up to large predators, that collectively form an ecosystem. The actual species vary with locality, depending on physical features such as location, soil type, climate, elevation, light levels etc.

Natural ecosystems are made up of so-called ‘native’ species that have co-existed together in a relatively stable community over thousands of years. However, most ecosystems across the world have now been disrupted, and the major cause of this disruption in recent times is our own species. We have over-exploited many species and taken over their habitats, driving down numbers and causing extinctions (either in the local area or globally).

Scotland’s wildlife has not fared well, with one in nine species now at risk of national extinctionⁱ. The ‘Biodiversity Intactness Index’, a global measure of the level of disruption to ecosystems, is lower in Scotland than in most other countriesⁱⁱ.

One of the main negative effects humans have on ecosystems comes from the way we move species around the globe, rapidly transporting them across natural barriers, either deliberately (for instance for planting them in gardens) or accidentally. Many of these transplanted ‘non-native’ species quickly die out or are prevented from spreading by having very specific habitat requirements. But if natural environments suit the new arrival, and its potential reproductive rate is high in the absence of the natural ‘enemies’ that keep it in check in its ‘home’ ecosystem, then it can increase very rapidly. Hence the phenomenon of the invasive non-native species (INNS).

Species that are classified as INNS can outcompete native species for resources (such as light, space, nutrients, breeding sites etc), bring in new diseases and physically damage habitats. This drives down the numbers and diversity of native species.

Not all non-native species become invasive – indeed some take the place of species we have lost, settling successfully into our ecosystems and becoming ‘naturalised’. An example is the sycamore tree, which was originally from central and eastern Europe but is now often considered a valuable addition to our broadleaf woodlands, being very tolerant of pollution and high winds and supporting a high diversity of invertebrates.

But some non-native arrivals become a serious problem. INNS are one of the major drivers of biodiversity loss, and it is an offence to release them into the wild in Scotlandⁱⁱⁱ. Despite this, they are to be found in our terrestrial, freshwater and marine areas, damaging our nature, well-being and economy^{iv}.



Lendskaip, CC0, via Wikimedia Commons



Jethro Busby, CC0, via Wikimedia Commons

In the Killearn area we have some of the most serious of the UK’s INNS, such as Himalayan balsam (pictured above top), giant hogweed, Japanese knotweed, New Zealand flatworms, rhododendrons and Sitka spruce.

But some, like the North American grey squirrel (pictured above), are being brought under control such that our native red squirrel population is recovering^v.

Other INNS are increasing. We found a harlequin ladybird in our kitchen the other night, a non-native species that is spreading in Scotland and may outcompete our native ladybirds^{vi}.



You can report sightings of INNS to the Scottish Government^{vii}. In the next issue of the *Courier* we will focus on some of these very problematic species and what might be done locally to curb their expansion.

PAT MONAGHAN & NEIL METCALFE

Links in the text:

i tinyurl.com/invxx1

ii tinyurl.com/yw7frduh

iii tinyurl.com/yfd5e3ux

iv tinyurl.com/e54exj39

v tinyurl.com/55drc8vs

vi tinyurl.com/ympykduu

vii tinyurl.com/muuru5k9

Balfron Bowling Club



Are you keen to find a new hobby or perhaps to re-start one that you have not followed for some time? Balfron Bowling Club (BBC) re-opens in mid-April and runs until mid-September with a varied range of activities. We are a very friendly club with members who live throughout the Strathendrick area, including a healthy proportion from Killearn.

We encourage membership from all age groups and all levels of ability and run friendly events, club competitions and team competitions against other local clubs. In addition to the bowling activities, we hold a range of

social events throughout the year where we come together to enjoy friendship, food and drink. We have our own bar that provides a wide range of drinks at affordable prices.

Why not give it a go? We offer heavily discounted prices for new members and are also able to offer free coaching for beginners.

If you are interested see balfronbowlingclub.co.uk.

You may contact Ian Cameron (07785 242445) or Craig Montgomerie (07947 677511) directly.

Follow us facebook.com/groups/balfronbowlingclub.

IAN CAMERON

KILLEARN KILLEARN VILLAGE HALL

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Saturday 28th March 2026

7pm in Balfron Church

Tickets £4/£2
available on the door

Killlearn Bridge Club



Room. Play begins at 7pm but by arriving early (around 6.45pm), members can help set up the tables and prepare boards, ready for a 7pm start. This also allows for some general chit chat as well as talking bridge! We usually finish by 10.15pm.

This session, we have several new members, who have come from the classes run in the previous session. They are all very welcome and a great addition to our membership. Thanks go to the members who were able to make time and prepare lessons for all those who came to the regular Wednesday afternoon classes last session. A club needs willing volunteers, and our club is blessed with more than one or two!

Killlearn Bridge Club began its new season with its AGM on Tuesday 2 September 2025. There was a change of secretary, but Doug Ashworth continues to act in an advisory position, with all his expertise in running online tournaments and keeping the website up to date. The committee and club are grateful to Doug for his major contribution, over many years, to the club's success.

We meet every Tuesday from early September until the end of April. During the months of November to February, we alternate between playing online and playing face to face in the Village Hall's Garden Room. At other times, play is purely face to face in the Garden



We should be happy to repeat the classes in the future, so do get in touch (via our website) if you are interested. For now, the focus has been on revising, consolidating and extending material covered in last session's classes. Christine Howe has been running seminars that cover issues in bidding, declarer play and defence, and these have been appreciated and well-attended by new and experienced members alike. Thanks go to Christine for making time to run the seminars.

We will have held our annual individual championship competition in early February, after lunch at Buchanan Castle Golf Club. Last year's winner was Janice Ballantyne. On 20 March, we will have six pairs to make up our team for the Lorimer Shield – an annual event against Drymen Bridge Club, which this year Drymen will host. Killlearn won last year, and the shield is proudly displayed in the Village Hall. In 2024-25 top dog was Graeme Knox and the club's championship pair was Eileen Lindsey and Marie Milne.

Looking further ahead, we will have our 50th birthday in September 2026 and the committee will be thinking up ways to celebrate this. Any members reading this should put forward ideas before the next AGM.

Do think about joining us if you enjoy playing bridge. It is good for the brain and can be fun too.

MARIE MILNE

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From The Archives – Curling on Well Green

In 1932, the first Killearn Trust was set up with the initial aim of protecting the area of land we now know as Well Green. While the aim was to preserve the open space for the use of Killearn residents, over time some developments have reduced the original area. One proposed development, that did not materialise, was the construction of an artificial outdoor curling rink.

Artificial curling rinks require only a few inches of water, so they freeze more easily and allow more curling than the more usual natural, or semi-natural, outdoor ponds with much deeper water. Strathendrick Curling Club first proposed an artificial rink in 1908 and approached Colonel Blackburn of Killearn House for a suitable site. He told the club that they should fund the cost of building the pond and he would not provide land near the Wheatsheaf Inn, presumably because he feared inebriated curlers! This attempt did not proceed further.

The proposal was resurrected in 1933 and a letter in the archives, dated 30 September 1933, intimates that the Killearn Trust was prepared to give the Curling Club use of part of the Well Green for a curling rink and clubhouse. The offer was to allow the use of the land at no charge with the Trust retaining ownership. At the club's AGM of 1933, it was resolved to set up an Artificial Pond Committee to ascertain the probable cost of building a rink and report back to a Special General Meeting of the club.

The committee requested tenders for a two-rink pond from contractors who had experience of such work. Five tenders were obtained which were discussed at a meeting on 7 May 1934. Tenders were received for ponds with tarmac or asphalt finishes. Mr Wm.N. Chapman, Road Surveyor of the County of Lanark, who had a private artificial curling pond at his house, attended a meeting to give expert advice. His pond had originally been finished with tarmac which had been found to be unsatisfactory, partly because of the difficulty in obtaining a level surface and partly because of the damage the gritty material caused to the bottoms of curling stones. Mr Chapman explained in detail how he had re-laid the surface with asphalt which had given unqualified satisfaction. As a result of his experience, the committee opted for asphalt. The lowest such tender was £255 from Maxwell Hart and Co. with the additional cost of providing water, building a clubhouse and providing electric lighting estimated to be £62 10s.

The report was submitted to a Special General Meeting on 1 June 1934 when consideration was deferred until the next AGM. At this meeting, in September 1934, consideration was again deferred to the following AGM in September 1935, but the minutes of that meeting make no reference to the artificial rink. It is most likely that the cost of the project resulted in its failure.

PETER SMITH



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Fifty Years On – Strathendrick Goes from Strength to Strength

As the annual thrills and torments of the Six Nations rugby internationals come to a close, Strathendrick Rugby Club has been enjoying a momentous Golden Jubilee year. As reported in the winter edition of the *Courier*, September saw an immensely successful family festival. This was crowned, later in the autumn, by the boys' Midi Teams winning the Inspiresport West Schools Conference. The Conference is worked out across all the age groups: S1, S2, U15, U16 and U18 and Balfon-Strathendrick finished top!

Both the men's 1st and 2nd XV's are doing well in their respective leagues. The women's Touch Rugby squad enjoys sessions every Monday evening – either at Balfon Campus or at Fintry – and the women's Contact squad plays matches combining with other clubs such as Aberfeldy.

On the social front, the club's 50th anniversary dinner dance was a very special occasion, attracting players and



supporters from across the generations. As many as 250 guests assembled at Fintry Sports Club to enjoy great food, great craic and good music from Real Easy. A memorable night.

As the season draws to a close, the Mini's Charity Tournament is an annual highlight: this year on Sunday 25 April. Do come and watch hundreds of youngsters have fun, in the sun (?). In a new

development, on 17 May, Strathendrick will be hosting a girls' Rugby Festival – one of the biggest in the country. Junior sides will also be touring – in the UK and to Sweden.

The club's Annual Awards, President's Day and Family Festival will also be in May. Visit the club's website or social media for details strathendrickrfc.com. And if you're visiting Drymen Show at the end of May, do say 'hello' to the cheery characters from SRFC marshalling the car park and taking your gate money.

Fifty years on, and bigger and busier than ever! NH

A festive Easter Garden Party poster. At the top, several colorful Easter eggs (blue, yellow, pink, green) are hanging from strings. Below them is a decorative floral border. The main text reads: "THE OLD MILL" in a simple font, followed by "EASTER GARDEN PARTY" in large, bold, pink letters. Below that, "SUNDAY 5TH APRIL 12-6PM" is written in a bold, black font. At the bottom, two rabbits are sitting in baskets filled with Easter eggs, surrounded by green grass and yellow flowers. The background features a faint image of a mill.

THE OLD MILL

EASTER GARDEN PARTY

SUNDAY 5TH APRIL 12-6PM

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GARDEN- FOOD & DRINK

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Killearn Football Club News

We're looking forward to the start of the Forth & Endrick season in April and training is well under way.

It's been great to welcome some younger players to the squad, as we aim to find a successful balance between youthful energy and experience for this year's campaign!

We're also keen to attract more players as we need a strong squad to cover the challenges of the season. If you're interested, and over 15 years of age, please get in touch with our coach Scott Norvall (07403 464878). We would be delighted to get you involved.

We continue to run our successful 59 club, based on the lottery bonus ball, that raises funds from our players and supporters. It helps to ensure we have a sustainable future for the club in the village community. We do have a few numbers available and at only £1 a week, it's a great way to support the club. If you would like more details, please check our Facebook page or contact Colin Banks (07447 498341) or James Beaton (07733 405386).

It's going to be a big year for football in Scotland with the men's team taking part in the World Cup in the US. Here's hoping Killearn FC can be inspired by this and bring home some silverware this year.

To achieve this we need the continued backing of our supporters, so we look forward to seeing you all back at the field of dreams over the summer! Our thanks again go to the Old Mill Inn, ATC, SMac joinery and VSN Sport for their continued support of the club.

ALL AT KILLEARN FC

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Killearn	Killin	Kinlochard	Kippen	Lochearnhead
Strathblane	Strathyre	Stronachlachar	Tyndrum	

Further new build developments are being planned for Killearn, Balmaha and Tyndrum. 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

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Curling Second Stones

The Mixed Club has completed the first two leagues. The autumn league was won by Tony Flisch's team of Andy McKinnell, Gill Smith and Mario Cannavina who were two points clear of the next team. The winter league was short of players due to injuries and other commitments. Three games were played by two teams with whoever was available.

The Mixed Club Ladies vs Gents bonspiel was also short of players, particularly men. It was won seven ends to five by the team representing the Ladies. This was followed by drinks at Springkerse View.

The Mixed Club pairs competition was played as a bonspiel with four pairs. The winning pair was Tony Flisch (for the fourth year in a row) and Susan Ross with seven ends out of nine played.

The Ladies Peat league was won by Sally Macfarlane's team of Gill Smith, Anne MacKay and reserves by two points. Gill Smith's team of Gillian Kingslake, Anne Reid and Penny Evans won the Chris Gardner Trophy by winning all five games.

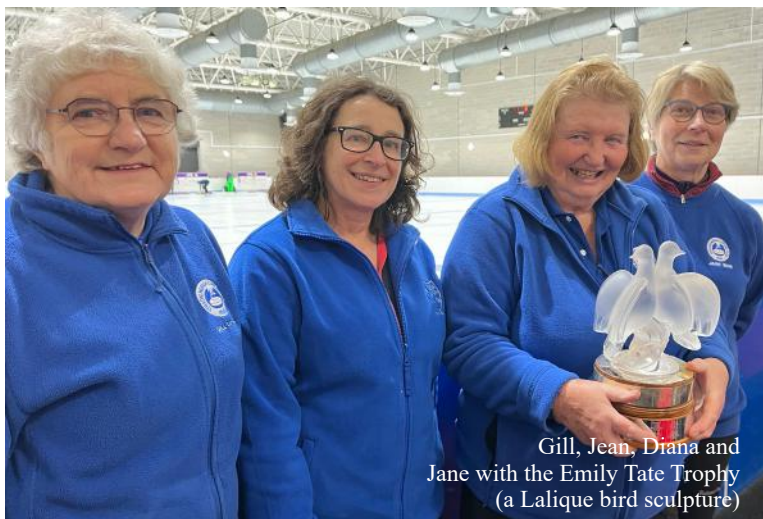
The Ladies Christmas bonspiel was contested by six teams and won by Gillian Kingslake's team of Katherine Kelsey, Jean Leitch and Norma Thornton, who coped best with some novel scoring methods. Gillian Kingslake also won the prize for the best Christmas outfit. The draws to the Christmas puddings were won by Anne MacKay (again), Helen McKinnell and Penny Evans. We then adjourned to the Lion and Unicorn for Christmas lunch.

The Ladies pairs bonspiel competition involved six pairs with the winners, Jean Wesley and Deborah Macken, winning all their six ends.

The club again came second of six clubs in the Province away day at Kinross. We then won the Province Medal bonspiel against five other clubs, winning 11 ends out of 16 played.

A team comprising Diana Cheyne, Gill Smith, Jean Wesley and Jane Weir (pictured below) won the Emily Tait competition run by Stirling Ladies branch. They won a total of nine ends from 12 played. Our own Katherine Kelsey was second with a Lenzie Ladies team.

One of the highlights in the autumn was the return of the Indoor Grand Match after a gap of 10 years. Our players visited Lockerbie, where the team of Gill Smith, Jane Weir, Moray Weir and Susan Ross (pictured right) beat a team from Neilston Curling Club by eight shots to five.



Gill, Jean, Diana and Jane with the Emily Tate Trophy (a Lalique bird sculpture)



Moray, Susan, Gill & Jane at Lockerbie for the Indoor Grand Match

We played for North of Scotland who lost overall to the South of Scotland by 1,287 to 1,356. Some 1,500 players took part at 12 rinks.

The various team members, scores and our programme of events are available on our website at strathendrickcurling.org.uk.

Both the Mixed Club and the Ladies Section play regularly during the season from end of September to late March. The Mixed play at 3pm on Tuesdays and the Ladies at 10am on Thursdays.

Contacts for the Club are Jane Weir (07900 555906) or Gill Smith (01360 550726). New members would be welcomed by both the Mixed Club and the Ladies Section.

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Killearn 10K: Another Sell-Out!

If you were quick off the mark, congratulations – the Killearn 10K sold out once again, and this year in less than three hours! We are incredibly grateful for the continued enthusiasm and support for this event. The energy and commitment of runners and the wider community are what make the Killearn 10K such a success year after year.

Taking place on Saturday 6 June, the race remains a firm favourite in the Scottish running calendar, attracting a brilliant mix of local runners alongside club competitors from across the country. It's always fantastic to welcome familiar faces who return year after year, as well as visitors coming to Killearn for the first time.

Thank you to our sponsors



We are delighted to welcome Cala as our headline sponsor this year. As many new residents continue to join our village, Cala's support feels particularly fitting, and we're very grateful for their involvement helping to make this year's race possible.

Our silver sponsors, West Homes and the Old Mill Killearn, continue their valued support of the event, and we're also delighted to have Killearn Pharmacy as our bronze sponsor. The ongoing commitment of our sponsors truly reflects the community spirit behind the Killearn 10K – the event simply wouldn't happen without the backing of local businesses.

Any local business interested in getting involved or supporting future races is invited to contact us at info@killearn10k.com.

Community at the heart of the Killearn 10K

The Killearn 10K is organised entirely by volunteers and remains, at its heart, a community event. Proceeds from the race continue to

support local groups and organisations, and the celebrations don't stop at the finish line. The Killearn Beer Festival at the Old Mill provides the perfect way to round off the day.

A huge thank you goes to our dedicated team of marshals, who keep runners safe, motivated and supported on race day. To our loyal marshals who return year after year, we'll be in touch shortly to organise cover – thank you once again for your continued support. If you'd like to get involved and help marshal this year's race, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact us at marshals@killearn10k.com.

One of the things runners comment on most is the atmosphere, and that comes directly from the local support on the day. We love to see plenty of people lining the route and gathering at the finish line in the park. Whether you're cheering on friends and family, familiar local faces or first-time visitors to the village, your encouragement makes a huge difference and adds to the fun. If you're able, please come along and help create a warm Killearn welcome at the finish line.

As well as the 10K, we are again working with Active Stirling to host the ever-popular Killearn Mile, which takes place before the main race. It's a brilliant family-friendly addition, with many runners using it as a warm-up alongside their children. Sign-up takes place in the park on race day. It's a popular event so mark it in your diaries!

See you on race day

To everyone who has secured a place, we wish you well with your training and look forward to welcoming you



The joys of the finish line!

in June. Please follow the Killearn 10K Facebook page for updates in the lead-up to race day.

After last year's wet conditions, we're hopeful that this year will bring kinder weather (dry, not too hot and no wind please!).

Whatever the forecast, it promises to be another fantastic community day in Killearn.

See you on race day!



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Killlearn Tennis Club Winter Round-Up

Killlearn Tennis Club has enjoyed a busy and sociable winter season, with plenty happening both on and off the courts. The club's first Halloween social tennis event was a great success, bringing members together for some fun, friendly competition and seasonal celebrations.



The festive period saw the return of the village's advent windows, and the club would like to thank everyone involved in creating our window, particularly coach Shaun for his artistic flare. Thanks also to those members who volunteered to help with the Christmas tree and lights, which were quite the spectacle and much admired by the local community. Our Christmas tree was kindly donated by Edenkil again this year, so extra special thanks must go



to Santa's elves, Dan and Findlay, for bringing the magic to the tennis club!

On the competitive side, the club's winter league teams have been making steady progress, with a number of matches already played and encouraging results recorded so far. Players have enjoyed testing themselves against strong opposition as the season continues.



Coaching has remained a key focus over the winter months, with Shaun's coaching sessions for adults and kids throughout the week, and live ball on Friday evenings. Both have proved popular and helped players of all levels sharpen their skills and stay active through the colder weather.

Looking ahead, preparations are already underway for the new season, with new memberships becoming available soon. If you are interested in joining us, information on the club and memberships is available at clubspark.lta.org.uk/KilllearnTennisClub.

Professional and affordable coaching is available all year round with Shaun Tulloch, whether individual or in group classes. Further information can be found at 10outoftennis.com.

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John Kinnear 1951 – 2026

John Kinnear passed away peacefully in Forth Valley Royal on 22 January 2026. He was born on 23 September 1951 at Craigton nursing home in St Andrews and was Jean and Alec Kinnear's only son. He spent his first few years in Buckhaven, but not long after he started at primary school, the family moved back to Killearn where he had a happy childhood.

John started an architecture college course after school and moved to an engineering job at Killearn hospital fixing theatre and lab equipment. It was there that he met Catherine who was working as a nurse. They also caught up at the Black Bull. She was to be the love of his life. They started dating and stayed together in a flat in Ibrox while John was retraining as a mechanical engineer. On 31 January 1971 they married at the registry office in Glasgow, and son Roy was born later that year.

Moving back to Killearn, the family grew with son Paul's arrival on Christmas Eve 1973. The family moved to Fintry for a few years before returning to Graham Road in Killearn.

Roy and Paul describe a happy home when they were growing up. John was a hands-on, practical dad. He'd play hide and seek and loved making and fixing things. There was always a car in the drive needing to be tinkered with.

Gardening was John's passion and he had a natural gift for it, instinctively sensing when something needed attention. More water, more light, more feeding. His garden was always beautiful.

John worked at Bowater in Milngavie and stayed with that company for 37 years. With Catherine still working as a nurse, the pair would spend their well-earned holidays on cruises round the Mediterranean or Caribbean or in Turkey. They loved Turkey and went multiple times.

John and Catherine were happily married for 49 years. He was lost when she passed away on Mother's Day in 2020.



He loved dogs and had many boxers over the years before getting his much-loved King Charles spaniel, Charlie.

He was a close, loving son to his mum Jean. He was also a proud papa of grandchildren, Gordon, Leah, Lewis, Alex, Heather Olivia and Josh, and great-grandchildren, Jack and Ella. He was always interested in what they were doing at home, school or at their work.

John was a hard-working, caring man who loved his family dearly and will be greatly missed.

He is now reunited with his beloved wife Catherine – may they both rest together in peace.

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John Stewart 1946 – 2025

John Carrick Arthur Stewart was born and brought up in Glasgow, alongside older brother Campbell. He had a happy early childhood and spent many hours with cousins and other close family. Sadly, his mother died when he was only 13 years of age, and this had a profound impact on him.

On leaving school, he began technical training in ready-mix concrete with Russmix.

While working in East Kilbride for RMC, he met Sue and they were married in 1969. In 1971, John joined ARC as a management trainee in quarrying. The positions took the young couple to many beautiful parts of the UK, and their three children were born in different places: Louise in Cambridge in 1973, Campbell in Cornwall in 1975 and Lorna in the Lake District in 1979, after which the family moved to Dumfries and Galloway.

John and Sue divorced in the late 1980s, and a few years later John moved to Strathaven. He worked for Shanks and McEwan moving from quarrying to waste management, before moving to SEPA and becoming an environmental consultant.

A lifelong love of this area brought him to Blanefield in the early 2000s, and in 2008 he moved to Killlearn, which became the place he lived in for the longest period of his life.

He started his own environmental consultancy, carrying this on until December 2024.



John was a passionate Scot and a huge rugby fan. He travelled all over the six nations with friends and included a trip to New Zealand in 2011 to see the rugby world cup.

Another of John's loves was singing. As a boy he would sing with brother Campbell accompanying him on the piano, and all through his life, if you said a word, he would answer with a song.

Over the past 20 years, he has sung for the Glasgow Philharmonic Male Voice Choir, the Glasgow Phoenix Choir, the Edinburgh Gilbert and Sullivan Society, the Balfour Singers and the Springfield Cambridge Choir – not all at the same time of course. He was a fine tenor!

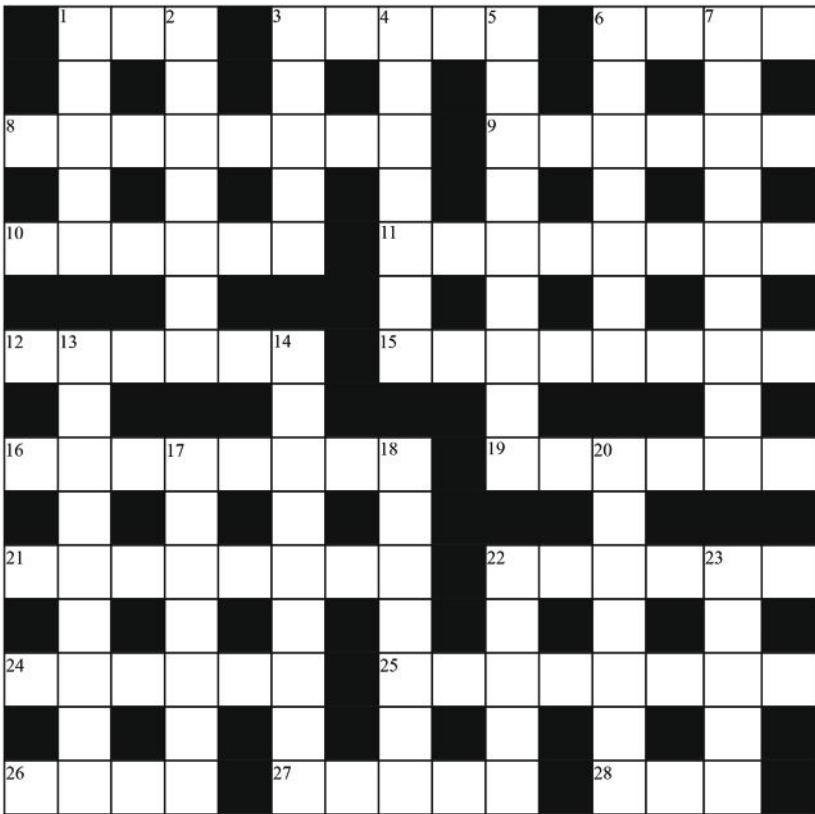
He was a proud grandad to his four grandchildren and leaves behind an extended family who will miss him hugely.

THE STEWART FAMILY & HMCA

A green-themed advertisement for BenView Garden Centre. At the top, there are social media icons for Facebook and Instagram, and the BenView logo. Below this are four images with text boxes: 'HANGING BASKET orders now being taken', 'New Season PLANTS & POTS indoor & out', 'PET SHOP food, toys, bedding & bird feed', and 'GIFTS for Spring & Easter'. At the bottom, there is contact information: '01360 850 525', 'benviewgardencentre@outlook.com', 'www.benviewgardencentre.co.uk', 'Ward Toll, Balfour Station, Glasgow, G63 0QZ', and a list of services: 'Cafe | Compost | Bulbs Food & Gifts House Plants | Plants Sundries Pet & Bird Care'.

A grey-themed advertisement for Jamie Pearson Independent Funeral Directors. The text reads: 'Jamie Pearson Independent Funeral Directors', 'Fintry Manse, Kippen Road, Fintry', '01360 860 345', and 'also at 2 Service Street, Lennoxton & 115 Cowgate, Kirkintilloch'. At the bottom, there are three logos: a triangle with a tree, a tree in a circle with 'Woodland Burial', and 'Golden Charter Funeral Plans' with a leaf icon.

Cryptic Crossword *Set by Peewit*



Solution to the winter crossword:

Across: 3 radio; 4,hag; 7 full-frame; 8 cracker; 11 Christmas; 14 scene; 15 ensue; 16, 20, 24 Happy New Year; 18 angel, 25 cheerio; 26 monk, 27 Stasi; 28 event
Down: 1 Warhol; 2 singer; 5 Dutch hoe; 6 smartass; 9 asides; 10 kitten; 12 Astaire; 13 redeems; 17 pack; 19 noon; 21 festive; 22 present; 23 inn.

The solutions to the puzzles are to be found at tinyurl.com/kcsol63.

ACROSS

- 1 Inca train hides a pet (3)
- 3 Bird puts on new regal headdress (5)
- 6 Instrument trimmed, first slide gone (4)
- 8 Sea creatures cruelly hold pins (8)
- 9 Entered – success around hospital department. (4,2)
- 10 Prisoner can spin material inside (6)
- 11 Funeral party in near mixup made me come to again (8)
- 12 Put on main thing – I’m an ass! (6)
- 15 Always a lot cycling such as this ordinary person (8)
- 16 Do I hear ‘begin to destroy this TV show’? (4,4)
- 19 Angry, die rat! You caused a rant (6)
- 21 Gershwin found in sitcom pose ready for anything (8)
- 22 Something begins to go bad riding on this (6)
- 24 Animal, a wild one inside African country (6)
- 25 Popeye’s girlfriend I hear dressing (5,3)
- 26 Indian Dish sent young man back to hospital (4)
- 27 Drug opening was an experience (5)
- 28 Deity backs setter (3)

DOWN

- 1 Funny man changes 3 across from right to left (5)
- 2 Up here for a taxi? (3,4)
- 3 Edge inside empty cottage to commit this? (5)
- 4 See, old boy, begin to assist (7)
- 5 Fresh herb at National Trust magazine seller (9)
- 6 Famished around a country (7)
- 7 Her inland arrangement was in this German region (9)
- 13 Mangles toe in large track, treated by this therapist (9)
- 14 Risky hero around this county (9)
- 17 Artist who was one of the angels. (7)
- 18 Singalong as you rake oak out (7)
- 20 Girl was communist party boss (7)
- 22 Fast flier (5)
- 23 Not telling the truth while flat out (5)

Children’s Wordsearch

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

The following words associated with spring are hidden in the word search grid: *April, blossom, bluebells, chicken, cleaning, daffodils, Easter, equinox, fever, lambs, season, showers*. Can you find all the words? They can be in any direction.

Sudoku

	2	5			3			
7		1					4	
	3			7				1
				8				2
2		3			6	7		
	1				4	5		
	5				2		7	
1							5	3
	6	7	5			4		

Fill in the blank squares so that upon completion, each row, each column and each block contains all of the numbers from 1 to 9.

Inverted Comma

Citizen science events such as January's RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch not only engage participants in enjoyable nature-focused challenges but also yield vast amounts of important data on the nation's fauna and flora. Butterfly Conservation's Big Butterfly Count, falling between 17 July and 9 August this year, is no exception so please take part if you can.



To those with even just a passing interest in local wildlife, some dramatic ups and downs in the abundance and distribution of our butterfly species have become all too apparent in recent years. Much of this is of course down to climate change, but it's never that simple. Many other interacting factors determine how each species fares over time, which is why these popular national surveys are so vital in helping to ascertain what conservation action should be targeted – and where.

One butterfly that arrived in our garden for the first time in August 2023 was the comma. Upside down on a buddleia stem, this ragged-winged rascal probed for nectar alongside its much commoner cousins – peacocks, red admirals and small tortoiseshells. At distance, it could in fact be dismissed as that last species, and in flight mistaken for a fritillary, but a closer look at one feeding or basking in the sunshine will reveal the characteristic scalloped outline to its wings. With patience, the pale 'comma' mark, from which it derives its name, can also be spied on the underside of each hind wing.

The comma previously occurred in parts of southeast

Scotland before suffering a major contraction in its range during the 19th century. By the early 20th century, its British distribution was limited to just a few localities in southern England and Wales where it sustained a precarious foothold. In more recent decades, however, it has experienced a dramatic northwards advance coupled with an increase in abundance throughout its newly-

expanded range. Climate change is undoubtedly at play here but the ability of comma caterpillars to adapt from previously more available hops to common nettle as their primary foodplant has probably also contributed to this extraordinary recovery. I remember finding my first Scottish example in the Borders in the early 2000s. Since then, the species has spread up through eastern counties again, across the central belt and as far north as Inverness.

Commas hibernate during winter (camouflaged as leaves) with adults re-emerging in early spring. Subsequent broods appear across the year depending on temperatures. Like other species, they can be found feeding on over-ripe blackberries in early autumn, so an uncultivated patch of garden full of bramble and nettles is a safe bet for attracting them!

Two other butterflies that are being increasingly recorded in southwest Stirlingshire are the speckled wood and the holly blue, the latter a species you would never have dreamed of seeing around here just a few years ago.

MARTIN CULSHAW

Killearn Courier
is published by Killearn
Community Futures Company



Anyone wishing to contribute to the summer edition of the *Courier* is reminded that it will be distributed from 14 August 2026.

Requests for advertisements should be sent to us by Friday, 26 June 2026.

Email Gwen Stewart (advertising@kcfc.co.uk).

Contributions and letters to the editor should be in the hands of the editorial team by 26 June 2026.

Please send them to:

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