



# Killearn. Courier

ISSUE 62

SUMMER 2025

£1







23 Aug	<b>Book sale</b> in aid of Strathcarron Hospice. Edmondstone Hall, Blanefield, 1pm–4pm.	16 Oct	<b>The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley</b> Lecture by Chris Newlands, ‘Catherine the Great – Autocrat and Patron of the Arts’. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am or over Zoom. See 18 Sept for contact info.
30 Aug	<b>Killlearn Horticultural Society</b> 158th Annual Show. Village Hall and Kirk Hall, 2pm–4.30pm. Restricted mobility visitors from 12.30pm. Scarecrow competition in car park, entries before 1.30pm. For further info, <a href="http://www.facebook.com/killlearnhorti">www.facebook.com/killlearnhorti</a> or <a href="http://www.killlearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk">www.killlearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk</a> .	21 Oct	<b>Strathendrick Stitchers</b> Kirk Hall, 10am–2pm. AGM at 10.30, followed by an introduction to the group project, ‘Pockets’. New members and visitors welcome. Contact <a href="mailto:strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com">strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com</a> .
	<b>Killlearn Country Market</b> Village Hall Garden Room and back green, 11am–4pm.	23 Oct	<b>Drymen &amp; District Local History Society</b> Talk by author Jamie Jauncey, ‘Don Roberto: Robert Bontine Cunninghame Grahame’. Drymen Village Hall, 7.30pm. Membership £10 a year. Visitors welcome, £3 a visit.
12 Sept	<b>Killlearn Malawi Group</b> Annual Gathering, Kirk Hall, 7.30pm	25 Oct	<b>Killlearn Country Market.</b> Village Hall 11am–4pm.
12–14 Sept	<b>Scotland Malawi Partnership</b> 20th Anniversary Travelling Photography Exhibition. Kirk Hall. <a href="http://www.facebook.com/KilllearnMalawiGroup">www.facebook.com/KilllearnMalawiGroup</a>	2 Nov	<b>KCFC bonfire and fireworks</b> The Glebe, 7pm. Display at 7.30pm.
16 Sept	<b>Strathendrick Stitchers</b> Kirk Hall, 10am–2pm. Liz Boulton will give a talk on ‘Embroidery for the Movies’. The sales table and library will be available. New members and visitors welcome. Contact <a href="mailto:strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com">strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com</a> .	7 Nov	<b>Strathendrick Film Society</b> <i>Thelma</i> (PG13). Balforn High School Theatre, 7.30pm. £5 entry or membership £20/£15 concessions.
17 Sept	<b>Killlearn Community Council</b> Meeting. Garden Room, Village Hall and live stream over Zoom, 8pm. For link to join live stream, email <a href="mailto:contactus@killlearncc.org.uk">contactus@killlearncc.org.uk</a> .	9 Nov	<b>Killlearn Kirk</b> Remembrance Service, 10am followed by Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial at 10.45am.
18 Sept	<b>The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley</b> Lecture by Tim Stimson, ‘The Enchanted Woods – The Lost World of Rupert Bear’. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am or over Zoom. Visit <a href="http://theartsocietystirling.org.uk">theartsocietystirling.org.uk</a> or contact <a href="mailto:artssocsfvmembership@gmail.com">artssocsfvmembership@gmail.com</a> .	18 Nov	<b>Strathendrick Stitchers</b> Kirk Hall, 10am–2pm. Christmas workshops, including the Christmas Sales table. Library available. New members and visitors welcome. Contact <a href="mailto:strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com">strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com</a> .
25 Sept	<b>Drymen &amp; District Local History Society</b> Talk by John Archer of Hopscotch Films, ‘Making documentary films in Scotland’. Drymen Village Hall, 7.30pm. Membership £10 a year. Visitors welcome, £3 a visit. <a href="http://www.drymen-history.org.uk">www.drymen-history.org.uk</a>	19 Nov	<b>Killlearn Community Council</b> Meeting. Garden Room, Village Hall and live stream over Zoom, 8pm. See 17 Sept for contact info.
3 Oct	<b>Strathendrick Film Society</b> <i>Conclave</i> (PO). Balforn High School Theatre, 7.30pm. £5 entry or membership £20/£15 concessions.	20 Nov	<b>The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley</b> Lecture by Colin Shindler, ‘Sixty Years On – Life in Britain as seen in 1960 films’. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am or over Zoom. Contact details at 18 Sept.
5 Oct	<b>Killlearn Kirk</b> Harvest Thanksgiving service, 10am. Gifts of tinned and dried food accepted to be donated to Start Up Stirling.	27 Nov	<b>Drymen &amp; District Local History Society</b> Talk by Murray Pittock, ‘Scotland: a global history’. Drymen Village Hall, 7.30pm. Membership £10 a year. Visitors welcome, £3 a visit. <a href="http://www.drymen-history.org.uk">www.drymen-history.org.uk</a>
15 Oct	<b>Killlearn Community Council</b> Meeting. Garden Room, Village Hall and live stream over Zoom, 8pm. See 17 Sept for contact info.	If you have any dates for the winter issue of the Noticeboard (mid November to mid March), please contact Heather McArthur (07985 082678; <a href="mailto:heather.mcarthur1@outlook.com">heather.mcarthur1@outlook.com</a> ).	

## Killearn Village Hall Classes and Clubs

### MONDAY

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

### TUESDAY

**Badminton:** Main Hall, 9.15am–10.15am.

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

**Little Buds Music Class:** Garden Room, 10.15am–12.45pm. Contact Clare ([claremondaymusic@gmail.com](mailto:claremondaymusic@gmail.com)).

**Townbreak Stirling:** Garden Room, 2pm–4pm. Contact Lesley Milne ([www.townbreak.org/contact](http://www.townbreak.org/contact)).

**DIY circuits:** Main Hall, 6.30pm–7.30pm. (Outdoors) Everyone welcome to join in. Contact Fiona ([fiona.rennie@btinternet.com](mailto:fiona.rennie@btinternet.com)) or Nick (07860 700928).

**Killearn Bridge Club:** Club night in the Garden Room, 6.45pm. New members welcome. Contact Gavin Hunter ([gavin.hunter1@gmail.com](mailto:gavin.hunter1@gmail.com)).

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

### WEDNESDAY

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

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

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

### THURSDAY

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

**Lynda Turner School of Dancing:** Main Hall, 4pm–4.45pm. Pre-school dance class. Contact Lynda (770390; [geolyn2000@hotmail.com](mailto:geolyn2000@hotmail.com)).

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

**Traditional Music Session:** Monthly, Garden Room, 7.30pm–9.30pm. All instruments, abilities, singers, players welcome. Info available from Jackie (01360 550576).

### FRIDAY

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

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

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

### SATURDAY

**Killearn Country Market:** Monthly. See posters for details or contact Megan ([dunmoredesigns@gmail.com](mailto:dunmoredesigns@gmail.com)).

## Editorial

Hello and welcome to our 62nd issue.

When we started the *Courier* all those years ago, none of us expected we would last this long. Our thoughts ran along the lines that we could possibly keep going for maybe two or three years and then peter out.

However, over our ‘bedding in’ period, we realised that, far from being a sleepy wee village with a lackadaisical community, Killearn was anything but! Having started off producing a 16-page issue, we became aware that the community spirit deserved more and we now regularly have 44 pages.

Over time, we increased our group numbers, recruited several local people to deliver the *Courier* to all households in the parish and discovered that many local business (and some outwith the *Courier* ‘area’) wanted to advertise with us. It was thanks to them, and it still is, that we can continue publishing.

Some years ago, Killearn appeared in *The Sunday Times* ‘Best places to live in Scotland’ list, and many of us would agree. The village has such a lot going for it. It is not just well placed for those who commute. Think of all the activities the Village Hall hosts. If you have an idea for an activity not already catered for in the Village Hall, now’s your chance. Get in touch with them or KCFC, and you will be given excellent advice and assistance.

If you think you would like to be part of the various organisations in the community, just contact them – dead simple! You would be most welcome.

This is the bottom line: without your involvement, Killearn could easily become a dormitory village where all we do is commute to work, come home, close the door and sit in our houses hoping someone else will look after all the things that brought us here in the first place. Let’s ensure that – like the *Courier* – Killearn doesn’t lose its ‘get up and go’. Indeed, you have a chance to contribute to the future of your village via the Local Place Plan right now.

In this world there are always changes, and that includes the *Courier*. One of our founder members, Brenda Pell, has retired and we have gained two Cubs. You can read all about it in this issue which is full of articles from our usual suspects as well as contributions about the various activities which have taken place since our last issue.

Enjoy this issue and have a great summer.

*lan*

### Cover

Our cover image of orchids in a Killearn garden is one of a selection from the Wild about Killearn photography workshops. You can see more photos from the workshops featured in our centre page article on p24.



## News in brief

Thanks to good support from members and visitors, Strathendrick Film Society had a successful 2024/25 season and are able to offer a full programme of seven films for the 2025/26 season starting in October with *Conclave* followed by *Thelma* in November. See our website ([strathfilmsoc.org.uk](http://strathfilmsoc.org.uk)) for full details.

The Simpson family have stepped back from their long association with Town & Country Designs café, gifts and larder. Jo Booth, formerly the manager, has taken over the business, renaming it Coffee & Crumb.

How to fill that week between Christmas and New Year? What about Winterlight at the Albert Halls in Stirling? Would five nights of trad and folk acts, with headliners Skerryvore, Mànrán plus the Kinnaris Quintet, and Elephant Sessions fit the bill? Jump in there fast – tickets on sale now! More info here: [stirlingevents.org/festival/winterlight/](http://stirlingevents.org/festival/winterlight/). (PS: Of course there's a ceilidh.)

Open Studios Stirlingshire ran a successful week long exhibition trail in June. Over 50 artists, crafters and makers in 37 venues opened their working studios or held group exhibitions throughout the area, including Art4You.

Loch Katrine's historic steamship, Sir Walter Scott celebrates her 125th anniversary and is honoured by National Historic Ships with the Flagship of the Year 2025 award in recognition of excellence in maritime conservation. The steamship continues to operate regular passenger cruises on Loch Katrine and is remarkable in that she is still powered by her original triple-expansion steam engine after 125 years. Killearn has a long association with Loch Katrine with the Glasgow water supply piped from the loch through our village and onwards to Milngavie reservoir.

Lumo, part of First Group, will run four trains a day between Stirling and London Euston from mid-2026. The new Lumo service will also call at Larbert, Greenfaulds (serving Cumbernauld), Whifflet (serving Coatbridge), Motherwell and Lockerbie, as well as Carlisle, Preston, Crewe, Nuneaton and Milton Keynes Central before arriving in London.

Get your dancing shoes ready for the Grand Ceilidh in the Village Hall on Friday, 28 November in celebration of St Andrew's Day. From 7.30pm until 11.30pm, the hall will be alive to the stirring sounds of the Tàrnach Ceilidh Band, which will lead us through all the favourite Scottish dances. The cost of entrance is £20, available from committee members of the Killearn Malawi Group.

## Plant Sale a Winner



The Horticultural Society had a very successful Plant Sale in May, raising £1,010 for its funds.

Chair of the Society Paul Searle said, 'These fundraisers help the Horti put on events like the Annual Show every August and mean we can also support local voluntary or charitable organisations. For instance, we paid the Village Hall hire fee for the team selling coffee and cakes at the Plant Sale, and they raised £248 for Killearn Primary School.'

'We gave the leftover plants to the Dance & Sing for Parkinson's event the following day which they sold for a total of £73. And earlier this year the Horti made a £200 donation to the Seed Library in the Village Hall and also contributed £100 to the Wild About Killearn weekend in April.'

If you would like to help at with the Horti's events, get in touch by email at [info.kchs@btinternet.com](mailto:info.kchs@btinternet.com).



## Kindling for the Cubs

Ewan McEwen spent much of the winter making kindling, which he then sold at the Horti's Plant Sale in May. He sold 19 bags with the aim of donating 20 per cent of the money to the Killearn Cubs. The remainder is put towards Ewan's repair costs for his miniature tractor, which he will display at the Annual Show on 30 August. The Cubs meet on Wednesday evenings in the Village Hall.



Ewan presenting Cub leader Morven Shearlaw with £24



## Changes Afoot for the Horti Show



Killearn's Horticultural Society is changing the way it distributes the Schedule for its annual show in August. Free copies are being delivered door-to-door across Killearn, and tickets will be sold on the day for entrance to the Show.

Chair of the Society Paul Searle said, 'On the day of the Show, each household will be sold a £3 ticket in the form of a "wearable sticker" which will allow visitors and entrants to gain access to the halls and Kirk. If you wish to make a donation larger than £3, thank you!'

Based around the Kirk and the Village and Church halls, the Show on Saturday, 30 August is a family-friendly event and everyone is welcome – not just to attend on the day, but also to enter the Show competition itself. The Schedule has all the details of how to enter – whether it's craftwork, art, photography, cut flowers, vegetables, fruit, pot plants, wines and cordials, floral art, preserves or baking.

Paul added, 'The Show is about people really, and so we're very keen for youngsters to get involved and we have been working with Killearn Nursery to ensure the Youth Section is up to date. We've introduced some new classes, including a "model made with clay or other modelling material", a "story book of text and pictures" and some new baking items. We've got a new trophy for the "Item made from Lego" class, although the lucky winner will need to construct their prize and return it boxed up next year, as it is made from Lego itself!'

'So if you are a parent or carer, guardian or grandparent, do encourage your youngster to enter. There's a downloadable A4 sheet of the Youth Section of the competition on our website.'

For those folks who can't wait to get a Schedule through their letterboxes, all 12 sections of the Schedule are also on the website.

Ahead of the Show, the Horti's online competition for 'My Garden' will open in late July, where folks can upload their best photos. The results will be announced at the Show.

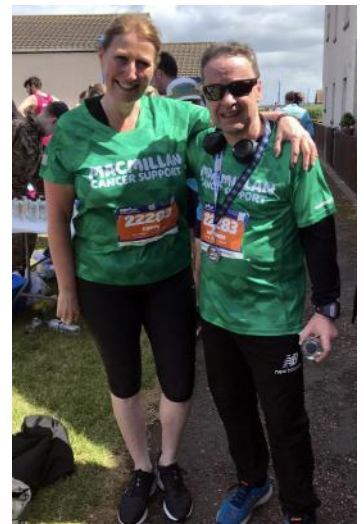
Email: [info.kchs@btinternet.com](mailto:info.kchs@btinternet.com)  
[www.killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk](http://www.killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk)  
Facebook [killearnhorti](https://www.facebook.com/killearnhorti)

## McConachie–Norval



Morgan McConachie and Craig Norval were married at the Fintry Sports Centre on 24 May 2025. The bride, an insurance claims handler, is from Knightswood, Glasgow, and the groom, who works in landscaping, grew up and was educated in Killearn. They are making their home in Knightswood.

## Run, Doctors, Run



Congratulations to Drs Simms, Schmutz, Glynn and Mayaya for completing the 2025 EMF Hairy Haggis team relay on Sunday, 25 May for MacMillan Cancer Support.

We are all very proud of them and what they have achieved, raising close to £4,000 for this great cause.

We would also like to thank everyone who took the time to donate.

KELLY McDONALD  
HEALTH CENTRE  
PRACTICE MANAGER



Dr Simms is pictured in each photo above with (clockwise) Dr Glynn, Dr Schmutz and Dr Mayaya



## So Long, Farewell, Auf Wiedersehen, Adieu

Over the last 21 years, the Courier Group has grown to become a pretty solid crew. Cubs have come and gone, of course, and people move away, but it's fair to say that a 62-issue uninterrupted run is an impressive record for a local news magazine.

But change stops for nobody, not even the *Courier*, and we are sad to announce that

Brenda Pell, a stalwart of the group, has called it a day, downed her pencil and filed away her old copies.

Brenda is known to everyone as the former head of Killearn Primary School, of course, but she was also one of the founding mothers of the *Courier*. How did that come about?

Well, the original impetus came from the creation of the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park, and their championing of development trusts in the surrounding villages, leading to the creation of our own KCFC. The late Christine Bowie had the idea of developing the Community Council newsletter, then manfully run single-handedly by Peter Wilks, into something more, and she



and Brenda, who was chair of the community council at the time, put their heads together over coffee, as you do. Someone dropped Ian Dickie's name into the mix as a potential editor, and very quickly it was a gang of four. They then started to approach people who could be helpful, and the *Courier* was born.

At the beginning, Brenda did a bit of everything, from writing articles to keeping the community up to date on council matters to making sure subscription copies went out (and the subs came in!), that delivery people received their issues for distribution, and extra copies were sent where they needed to go. Often these extras were for families who had suffered a bereavement. It certainly helped that Brenda knew almost everyone in the village either from church or school, but it was her thoughtful and compassionate approach when it came to dealing with these sad events that meant the *Courier* was trusted to publish the fascinating life stories of our fellow villagers.

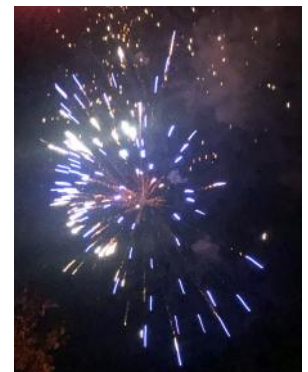
Seemingly all good things must end, and she has passed that particular baton to Heather McArthur, while the rest of us have scooped up the other fatigues. Our annual Courier Jolly was the perfect opportunity to show our appreciation to Brenda for all she has done to make the *Courier*, well, the *Courier*. We will miss her a lot, but she retires with our best wishes. It's reassuring to know that she's happy to be consulted. And if she has an idea for an article...

THE COURIER GROUP

## Killearn Community Fireworks Display

The organisers of this year's KCFC Annual Family Charity Bonfire and Fireworks Extravaganza look forward to welcoming you to the village on **Sunday, 2 November**.

Join us at The Glebe (the field behind the Village Hall) for an evening of spectacular fireworks, a roaring bonfire and a fantastic community atmosphere.



**Location: The Glebe, G63 9NL**

**Gates open at 7pm**

**Fireworks display begins at 7.30pm**

**Entry by cash donation – all proceeds support local charities**

This much-loved event is entirely funded by your donations on the night, so please dig deep and give generously to support local causes.

More info: [www.facebook.com/KillearnFireworks](https://www.facebook.com/KillearnFireworks).

Wrap up warmly, bring your friends and family, and help light up the night for a great cause!

EUAN SHAW, FIREWORKS GROUP CO-LEAD

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## A Double Celebration at the Co-op



Killlearn Co-op pulled out the stops on Friday, 27 June to celebrate Anne Goodwin's 30th year working at the Killlearn shop and also her retirement.

Now, Anne professed that she wanted nothing at all to do with anything that smacked of a party for her send off, and those of us who have come to know and appreciate her unique wit and repartee were inclined to believe her. But come the time, there was no escaping. The number

of regulars lurking at the front of the shop holding envelopes and decorated bags might have been a give-away that something was afoot, and when team leader Stuart Duffy wheeled out a cake, complete with a miniature 'Anne', and a box of specially decorated cupcakes, all doubt was removed.

In fulsome terms, Stuart commended Anne for her years of service and presented her with her Co-op 30-year-service pin. He hit just the right note, and there was a lot of banter between the two, including Stuart wondering if Anne might just put off her retirement for another few years. The answer was a most definite 'No!'.

It's fair to say that the Co-op isn't going to be quite the same without Anne, and here's hoping her retirement is everything she'd like it to be.



NB



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# YOUR LOCAL INDEPENDENT BIKE SHOP IS 10 YEARS OLD!



We're celebrating a decade of supporting cycling adventures - here are some of our Google reviews.

“Great knowledge and advice from Keith and team. Incredibly lucky to have a store like this locally.”  
(PH)

“Popped in today for a look around and the guys were super helpful! Well stocked with everything you could need for mountain biking a few nice road bikes too.”  
(Adam)

“These bikes will let us explore all the amazing paths and tracks around Loch Lomond and the Trossachs, making easy work of the hills! Thanks guys!”  
(Paul)

“Just bought my 2nd bike from Country Cycles and the experience and care taken by the team got me to exactly the right bike. Always friendly and always knowledgeable and the shop has a great range of bikes and accessories. I also got second to none post purchase servicing. What's not to like!”  
(Alastair)

Thank you to everyone locally who has supported us over the last decade! Keith, Fraser and the Country Cycles team.



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01360 550 372 | [info@country-cycles.com](mailto:info@country-cycles.com) | [country-cycles.com](http://country-cycles.com)  
Oakwood Garden Centre, Killearn, G63 9PT  
Open: Mon-Sat 9am-5pm | Sun 12pm-5pm



Google  
★★★★★ 4.9



Writing weather reports for the *Killlearn Courier* at a time when our climate is changing faster than ever, with record-breaking temperatures, melting glaciers at both poles and more extreme weather events can be somewhat gloomy, and I may be seen as the purveyor of bad news. In this edition I will act on my wife’s advice and be more positive.

Killlearn residents had two weeks of sunny weather with little rain from 30 March to 12 April and a second spell of sunny dry weather from 29 April to 2 May.

My barometer stayed at 31.1, normally marked on a barometer scale as very dry. These spells helped gardeners get a good start to the planting season and gave newborn lambs a good start to the early part of their life when they are vulnerable to very cold weather.

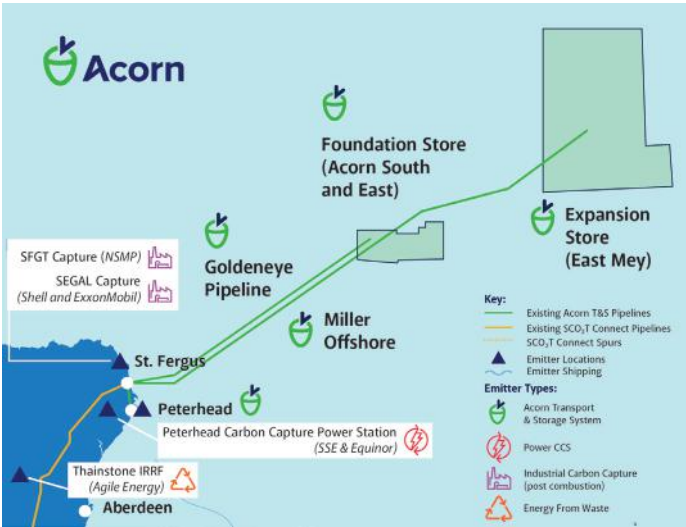
It seems that governments worldwide are finding it difficult to persuade people to help reduce their carbon footprint, so they are switching to some positive methods of doing so. If it is difficult to prevent the production of carbon dioxide, then it is a good strategy to capture it before it escapes and makes its way into the atmosphere. Hence the growth of two systems: Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) and Carbon Capture Utilisation and Storage (CCUS).

Carbon capture is a three-step process, involving capturing the CO<sub>2</sub> after separating it from the other gases produced in industrial processes, compounding it and then transporting the gas by pipelines, road transport or ships. It is then injected into rock formations at least one kilometre underground for permanent storage. Possible sites for storage include saline aquifers and depleted oil and gas reservoirs.

The UK is presently embarking on three major programmes involving CCS. Two are in England. The first is the Northern Endurance Partnership, also known as the East Coast Cluster, which is developing the onshore and offshore infrastructure needed to transport carbon capture projects across Teesside and the Humber to

secure storage under the North Sea. The second, Hynet North West, is embarking on a similar programme that involves CCS, but in a different way, utilising some of the processes to create energy (CCUS).

The Acorn Project ([theacornproject.uk](http://theacornproject.uk)) in NE Scotland would mimic the other projects, and is a joint venture involving Storegga, Shell UK, Harbour Energy and North Sea Midstream Partners. The UK government has recently committed £200 million to this project in the latest spending review.



Major international conferences have also been announced on CCS and CCUS in Hamburg and in Amsterdam, both in October 2025. Meanwhile in the United States, Carbon Capture Technology Expo 2025 was held in June in Houston, Texas, with 500 exhibitors and 250 speakers. The 10,000 attendees represented worldwide engineering companies, technology and manufacturing processors, the oil and gas sector, chemical companies as well as various research groups, including NGOs and government representatives.

Expect to read about the progress of CSS and CSUS in future months.

TOM RENFREW

Half-Yearly Summary for Killlearn (2025)						
	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June
Highest Temp	10.7	11.7	17.0	25.7	26.7	28.1
Lowest Temp	-6.2	-1.6	-3	0.6	1.1	5.1
Mean Temp	2.9	4.4	7.1	9.8	12.7	14
Days Below Freezing	11	4	7	0	0	0
Highest Wind Gust	92	23	31	22	26	27
Monthly Rain	94.7	168.7	82.3	98	93.7	140.7
Most Rain in 24 hrs	26.7	39.4	39.6	32.8	24.6	20.1
Days without Rain	11	6	19	18	20	7
Cumulative Rainfall	94.7	263.4	345.7	443.7	537.4	678.1

Temperature in °C, rainfall in mm, and wind speed in miles per hour  
February and March figures from Drymen while Killlearn Weather Centre is being upgraded.



## Spring Tea Party

Killearn Village Hall was the venue for another Spring Tea Party at the end of May, with more than 100 folk from across the village participating.

The event has become an annual fixture in the village following the first held in 2022 for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and one the following year for the King's Coronation.



Planning for this year's party was started by the volunteer team who run the 'warm and friendly space' events in the winter in the Village Hall. They were joined by a fantastic team of volunteers and cake bakers, including a team of nine youngsters from one of the village's daytime childcare services, Killearn Kids Hub.

Some great prizes were donated by local businesses for the prize draw, which raised more than £600 for the Village Hall funds.

Meanwhile, the Co-op is helping fund the 'warm and friendly space' which runs on Sunday afternoons during



the winter. Folk can drop in for a cuppa and a chat, or to play cards, pool, table tennis or dominoes. Some read the Sunday papers, others just use it as a chance to meet up with village friends. Co-op shoppers in the village are asked to search for the 'Local Community Fund' on the Co-op app or website and click to choose 'Killearn Village Hall' as their chosen cause. The more members who choose it, the more funding is available.

All the photos taken at the Spring Tea Party are available to view on the Village Hall website: [killearnvillagehall.co.uk/photos-tea-party-2025](http://killearnvillagehall.co.uk/photos-tea-party-2025).

## STEM on Track at Balforn High School

On Saturday, 14 June, myself and 12 other students from Balforn High School went down to Northampton for the STEM On Track national finals to race the go-kart we had spent the previous year building. This was organised by the school and a pupil who at the time was S6 and has now left high school.

We got the kart as a kit with all the necessary tools and parts to complete the build. This was supplied by Espire Education, who organised the whole event and do so every year. Although the event has been running since 2021, this is Balforn's first time entering. We were also the only Scottish school in the competition.

We completed the build a few weeks before the event, so we had a couple of weeks to test the go-kart and make sure everything was running smoothly. We did this by driving the kart around the car park of the school. This told us everything we needed to know about the kart and the way it handled.

At the event there was a STEM festival full of various companies and universities. At the festival there was also an Alpine F1 car.

The structure of the day was this: scrutineering for one hour (this is where they check to make sure the kart is safe and inside the regulations), then qualifying laps for 15 minutes in which we were only allowed one driver to qualify. We qualified 4th of 20 teams.



Then there was the race. It was an hour-long race where you are trying to complete as many laps as possible in the designated time. After the race start, we fell to 10th, but throughout the race we climbed back up to 7th. However three minutes to the end, our rear left wheel came off and we had to retire the kart while falling back down to 10th.

Overall it was an extremely eventful day and we are thinking of doing it again next year.

A big thanks to Adam, Miss Nadeem and Mr Young for organising the whole trip!

ROBERT HANCOCK



# Killearn Village Hall Celebrates a Big Birthday!

Next year, Killearn Village Hall will be marking its 200th birthday, and we're starting to think about how we might recognise this landmark and engage the community in the celebrations.

The hall was built in 1826 as the parish church. When the new church was completed in 1882, it then became the parish halls. In 1931, the parish started to use the former Free Church building (where the pharmacy is now located) as a church hall, and the parish halls became what we now know as the Village Hall.

We've been taking the opportunity to apply for funding from a variety of sources to recognise this impressive milestone. The idea is to landscape, develop and enhance the ground at the west of the hall, taking advantage of the views out onto the Glebe, thereby giving more locals and visitors the chance to take part in events at the hall while enjoying the stunning views out west towards Loch Lomond and the Trossachs. We could easily imagine the possibilities for transforming the outside space at the hall into more of a landmark, a usable place with a view, somewhere to sit, meet friends, celebrate...

We used AI to help create an image of how some investment in landscaping might change the environment around the hall and make the area more welcoming. Of course, we will certainly need to do more thinking around the plans, and we may or may not get the funding, but we've made a start and we want to listen to your ideas too.

More immediately, we'd also like to have some form of fundraising and celebration event for the actual 200th birthday, and again we're looking for ideas.

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 for this auspicious occasion. We're always happy to hear from you.

As a Village Hall and a community facility enabling people to meet people and connect through activities, events, exercise, bringing local people together – well, it's what we stand for.

Come and join us. And if you need space for something, come and ask about our spaces!

[www.killearnvillagehall.co.uk/book](http://www.killearnvillagehall.co.uk/book)

FIONA RENNIE



The west view of the hall as it looks today



An AI image of how the view might look with some investment in landscaping

## ALEXANDER STEWART MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament for  
Mid Scotland and Fife Region



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# The Press Gang Does Bus Trips

Each class attended a class trip linked to their topic. How? This was generously paid for by bus sponsors (listed at the end of this article) through the School and Nursery Fundraising Group.



## P1

P1 had lots of fun on their Stirling Castle trip where they discovered lots of interesting dungeons and artifacts. They loved dressing up. Harry and Maggie became king and queen for the day! Everyone was amazed, even Mrs Lepper, when they discovered that if the queen or king required the lavatory (when attending a banquet) his or her majesty would lift up their seat to reveal a toilet and they would just go there (how disgusting)! P1 enjoyed the eye-catching views by looking over the castle walls. They discovered arrow slits, huge cannons, shining swords and even had an amusing tour guide!

## P2 and 3

P2 and P3 had lots of fun during their experience at the Riverside Museum! They sang lots of songs on their journey there, tested their brains with a quiz, and even made old-fashioned peg dolls. They also went through all the intriguing exhibitions including a tram, Elton John boots, an underground station, an old baby shop, a garage and a pub. To end the exciting trip they visited an old sweet shop!

## P4

P4 visited the Kelvingrove Museum, where they saw the Ancient Egyptian display. They completed a jigsaw relating to Egypt and even got to wrap mummies (not real ones, of course!). They saw a sarcophagus and viewed a number of intriguing animals. These consisted of elephants, giraffes, hippos, a Nile croc and a dung beetle! They spotted hieroglyphics and also discovered an unusual but interesting cat breed (*Felis Lybica*).



## P5

Primary 5 had a wacky but wonderful time visiting Hopetoun House, where they all had a role and got to dress up (even parent helpers were forced to as well!). Ruth and Freya were the scullery maids – they were considered the lowest members of the household and had to sleep under



the table! Everyone was shocked when they found out that the nanny would sit on an uncomfortable chair when holding the infant just so she would not fall asleep! Gemma got to (was forced to) hold the guzunder (aka the chamber pot). P5 also got to see all the bells of the house. The lord or lady would ring the bell, connected to a bell in the kitchen, and the servants would follow his/her every command!

## P6

P6 visited Ardroy Outdoor Education Centre for five days. They experienced numerous fun tasks that required skilful teamwork, perseverance and communication. They climbed 'Jacob's Ladder', canoed on Loch Goil, abseiled down a 10-foot cliff, explored waterfalls, swam in the water and did lots of adventurous woodland walks! They did a set of night-time activities including the labyrinth, which is a huge maze (of dark tunnels) that you career through and find your way out; the night line where you hold onto a line blindfolded and your partner guides you to the destination; orienteering and litter picking. P6 rolled down a towering hill and rode (tried to) the 'mud monster', a massive pile of bumpy mud waves where you have to try not to fall!



## P7

P7 had a fantastic time going to not just one, but two intriguing museums: St Mungo's Museum of Religious Life and Art and the Riverside (transport and technology) Museum. At St Mungo's they saw a big statue of Shiva. They also wandered around the exhibits and sketched an artifact that brought interest to them. They focused on sectarianism throughout the streets of Glasgow and understood the rivalry between Celtic and Rangers. They have previously finished their class book, *Divided City*. P7 were fascinated as they explored the Riverside Museum and learned all about RMS Queen Mary and the history of shipbuilding in Glasgow linked to their work on the Highland Clearances. They spotted the Glasgow coat of arms (as mentioned in *Divided City*) and saw the oldest house in the city.

We hope you were intrigued to learn all about the class trips, and are planning your next museum visit!

The school and all the pupils would like to thank Gilkes Energy, Tag Digital, Gartclach Farm Luxury Holiday Homes, plus two private donors. Without this kind support, the school trips would not have happened. If you would like to sponsor a bus trip for next school year, please get in touch with the Fundraising Group at [kpn.fundraisinggroup@gmail.com](mailto:kpn.fundraisinggroup@gmail.com).

THE PRESS GANG: SAORLAITH DAVIDSON, NANDINI GILLIES, SAUL SCANLON AND FREYA WOOD



## Interesting Beers! Cheers! Another Successful Year



Despite forecasts for rain that would have had Noah panicking, amazingly the weather held for the whole day for a glorious 12th Killearn Beer Festival.

Given the festival is targeted not just at beer fans, but to the wider community, it was grand to see such a great turnout from locals and families, with the 450 glasses selling out midway through the afternoon, resulting in record takings. As always, profits will be distributed to local charities, events and causes, and to date over £5,000 has been donated.

Although we included beers from some past favourites such as Cross Border Brewing and Shilling Brewing Co., it is our policy to sample as many new beers and

styles as possible. So this year's selection included those from Newbarns, Two Towns Down, Winton Brewery, Outlandish and Closet Brewing, as well as ciders from Thistly Cross and Cairn O'Mhor.

As with last year, having so many volunteers helped reduced the overall burden and made for an enjoyable and fun time. So a big thanks to everyone who gave of their time, as well as to Courtney and her team allowing us to host the event at the Old Mill.

So finally, thanks again for your help, encouragement and attendance, and we look forward to seeing you again on Saturday, 6 June 2026.

MARK WHITE

## It's Never Too Early for Christmas

The Advent Elves are starting to plan Killearn's Advent Window Trail and need your help.

Each evening during December, decorated and illuminated Advent windows will be revealed throughout Killearn, with the aim of raising money for Shelter Scotland.

The Elves are looking for residents and businesses across Killearn who can decorate their visible-from-the-street window for this popular village tradition.

Whether you're a regular or want to join in for the first time, the Elves welcome everyone who is interested.

One Elf commented, 'We'd like to know by mid-October so we can plan the Trail. Although some people say they can't match the artistic talent, our attitude is that it's not a competition and the Elves are just happy that folk want to take part. We can advise on ideas and have lots of tips and tricks to help newbies.'

For more information, please get in touch with the Elves at [killearn.advent.windows@gmail.com](mailto:killearn.advent.windows@gmail.com).





We have had a well-attended year, with a healthy amount of audience participation, which is great to see. We will continue to run our hybrid model for the foreseeable future as there is a consistent demand for online viewing, the numbers for which are not far short of the number of residents attending in person.

Planning continued to generate the greatest debate, and there is clearly a high level of concern regarding some of the decisions made by Stirling Council planning department. In order to address this, and to allow greater understanding of the planning process, Sharon Marklow, head of Planning and Enforcement for Stirling Council, joined us for our January meeting. She was very generous with her time, and answered many questions. It did provide much greater clarity around the decision-making and enforcement processes, but clearly frustrations remain, and effectively representing the view of the village in planning matters remains one of our greatest challenges.

On a similar vein, in conjunction with our friends in KCFC and Killearn Trust, we continue to pull together the results of the two surveys carried out this year to inform Killearn's Local Place Plan report. We had good engagement with the survey questions and are also fortunate to have a great bank of knowledge and expertise in the village to contribute to the report (see opposite).

Tree protection, in terms of the village streetscape, and also wildlife habitat, is a consistent concern, and will be well represented in the report. Another significant concern will be balancing the requirement for greater housing diversity alongside maintenance of the village character and much valued green space. We will have a draft report to share later in the summer, before the Stirling Council deadline for submission, at the end of October.

The new housing development at the old hospital site is now filling up with new residents. The village has benefitted from the work in two main ways. One is the completion of a safe pavement for pedestrian access from the bottom of Station Road to the existing pavement above Lampson; this work was carried out by Stirling Council, but financed by CALA, and was much overdue.

We will also benefit from CALA's community pledge,

which will provide donations to Strathendrick Rugby Club, Killearn Tennis Club, Killearn Village Hall, Colourful Killearn, the Killearn Christmas lights, and the primary school. There will also be a Rob Mulholland sculpture created for the entrance of the development, with design involvement from Balforn High School students.

Rural Stirling Housing Association are progressing well with the new housing at the bottom of Lampson Road. Residents are expected to move in by late summer.

The loss of part of the large oak tree in the park caused anxiety over the winter. It was initially unclear how safe the remaining tree was and how best to manage its health, as well as dealing with the large branches which dropped. In addition, it destroyed the flying fox.

There has been resolution, however. The tree health is not as bad as once feared, with some limited reduction work needed, but the tree can remain. The wood is being milled and prepared locally, the plan being to create a park bench, the funding for which has been agreed, the site still to be determined. The flying fox is to be replaced, and the fencing around the small playpark will also be repaired, which should improve the quality of a much valued play area.

In other news, the 20mph speed limit in the village, initially a pilot project, will now be permanent and the temporary signs will be replaced by the definitive traffic signs.

KCC was approached to consider adoption of the phone box on the Main Street, and we are in the process of doing so, but without applying for any change of use. The box is safe, but would need considerable work to be fit for any other purpose. It is currently used as a floral display, and adds greatly to the view around the Wellgreen.

We have had a busy year, and as ever, our thanks go to the whole committee, and to Emily, our admin secretary, for all their support, as well as to our three councillors, Gerry McGarvey, Rosemary Fraser and Paul Henke, for all their engagement and input.

We are also thankful to have such an engaged and enthusiastic village, and will continue to do our best to resolve the issues you bring.

ELIZABETH JONES

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# Local Place Plan Update

KCC, KCFC and Killearn Trust have been working on a Local Place Plan (LPP) for Killearn for many months now, and we have received extremely welcome engagement and collaboration from the residents of Killearn.

The impetus for this is that Stirling Council are about to update their Local Development Plan (LDP), which will set out their policies regarding land use for at least the next five years.

Our involvement is to produce a place plan for Killearn. Stirling Council must take local place plans into account when making decisions, although there is never a guarantee that the LPP and LDP will align entirely.

We have carried out two surveys, the most recent one focusing on the main issues from the first, which gave us five key areas demonstrating significant strength of feeling: natural spaces, play and recreation, housing and community, character of the village/conservation area, and facilities and services.

There are very clear themes emerging from the responses.

The green and open space which characterises the village is enormously valued, partly for its aesthetics and as a wildlife habitat, but also as an opportunity for people to get out and about and as a place to meet.

For all these reasons, the preservation of green space

and of trees in the village is clearly seen as a priority. Likewise, the physical appearance of the village, particularly within the conservation area, is seen as greatly contributing to our identity, and there is a strong wish to conserve this, and to ensure that any further building does not detract from what we have.

While there is certainly a feeling that the village has had its share of housing development in recent years, there is also a call for greater housing diversity. The option of smaller properties for young families and for downsizing in later life has come through as an outstanding requirement. This would also go some way to ensuring the village can remain a productive and caring community.

These themes, along with many others, are being brought together in a draft document, which we would hope to share with the village over the summer, before the final submission to Stirling Council at the end of October.

There should be plenty of opportunities to read it online, and we will ensure that we publicise it as soon as it is available.

Comments on the draft document will be very welcome, and will allow us to represent the village as accurately as possible in our final submission.

ELIZABETH JONES  
KCC CHAIR



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## Killearn Village Remembered on Maclay Scottish Tartan Day



On 6 April 2025, Maclay Scottish Tartan Day was celebrated with pomp and pageantry at the Alfred B. Maclay Gardens State Park in Tallahassee, Florida. It was a beautiful sunny afternoon with a breeze rippling off the lake, blowing all the way up to the historic Maclay House standing atop its magnificent sweeping lawn. All seats were taken while other spectators gathered under the canopy of majestic live oaks festooned in gently swaying



garlands of silver Spanish moss. The crowd waited in hushed anticipation. Suddenly appearing from behind the Maclay House came the Tallahassee Pipes, grandly kilted and electrifying the air with the heart-stirring excitement of bagpipes and drums, followed by the stately and solemn St. Andrew's Society of Tallahassee, proudly flying the ancient vibrant colours of their clan tartan flags.

The park manager, the mayor of Tallahassee and other distinguished speakers addressed the gathering, and a traditional Tartan Day ceremony was performed by the president of the St. Andrew's Society. Maclay family members, pictured above in the walled garden, participated in the unveiling of the Stewart of Appin tartan flag and banner, followed by those family members earnestly taking the Tartan Pledge.

Before the gardens became a Florida state park, the lush property was owned by Alfred and Louise Fleischmann Maclay who began their masterpiece in 1923 and named it Killearn Gardens after the Maclay family's beloved ancestral village. In 1964, developers bought the land across the road and called it 'Killearn Estates', presumably to entice buyers with the hope that their lots might someday have similar aesthetic appeal. However, every street in the subdivision is named after a town or city in Ireland! Incensed by the misuse of the beloved village name, Mrs. Maclay had the original masterpiece redesignated as the Alfred B. Maclay Gardens in memory of her husband, who passed in 1944.

What was the connection? Alfred Barmore Maclay's great-grandfather, Rev. Archibald Maclay, DD, was born in Killearn in 1776. He completed his education at the University of Edinburgh, and in 1802 was ordained as a Baptist minister. That same year he married Glasgow girl Mary Brown in Kirkcaldy and pastored his first church there. Rev. Maclay possessed the extraordinary ability to connect and communicate effectively in a very engaging manner. He was erudite and persuasive in written words as well. He was greatly loved and revered

by all who knew him because of his compassion for others, generous kindness and staunch commitment to his faith.

Archibald and his family emigrated to America in 1805 and settled in New York City, where he was pastor of the Mulberry Street Baptist Church for many years. He was later chosen to be the advocate of the American and Foreign Bible Society.

Archibald and Mary were saddened to leave their many dear friends and family, and their deep attachment to Scotland, and particularly to Killearn, never left their hearts. Like a cherished family heirloom, the name







'Killearn' was passed down from generation to generation and was especially treasured by great-grandson Alfred B. Maclay who gave the name 'Killearn' to estates and properties, show horses, show dogs, and to his and Louise's crown jewel creation, Killearn Gardens.

Kristin Maclay Brunett, great-granddaughter of Alfred and Louise Maclay, who attended Kilgraston School in Perth shared memories of her parents visiting her often and taking time to travel the Scottish countryside exploring their roots. They visited Killearn, '...a quiet, beautiful village', said Kristin. She recalled, 'We loved driving the streets thinking about how our family would have travelled those same places hundreds of years ago.'



Cordelia Killearn Brunett and Cole Bowers



'Taking in that history had such a positive impact on me, that when my daughter was born in 2020, we gave her the middle name "Killearn" to keep that connection to the village. We're looking forward to taking our kids there one day, to give them the same experience I had!'

Alfred B. Maclay Gardens State Park was named by Tripadvisor in 2023 as the #1 Botanical Gardens in the United States. All of us at the park warmly welcome visitors from Killearn, where you will see the old weathered copper medallion inscribed Killearn Gardens, in honour of your beautiful, much loved and never-forgotten village.

NANCYMcCLURE

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## New Bridge Club Season Starts in September



Killearn Bridge Club's 2025–26 programme starts in early September. We play on Tuesday evenings in the Village Hall's Garden Room, and new members will be very welcome. For more information about membership and activities, please visit our website ([bridgewebs.com/killearn](http://bridgewebs.com/killearn)) and/or contact the president Gavin Hunter ([gavin.hunter1@gmail.com](mailto:gavin.hunter1@gmail.com); 07872 886196).

During 2024–25, we held club tournaments most Tuesday evenings from September to April. We played face-to-face at the start and end of the season, and online during the depths of winter. One tournament a month was designated 'club championship evening', with each pair's four best scores counting towards the overall result. After a closely fought contest, Eileen Lindsay and Marie Milne emerged as the champions.

In February, most of us met at the Buchanan Castle Golf Club for the annual individual tournament and club dinner. Individual tournaments involve players changing partners for every hand of bridge so that by the end of the tournament each player has partnered every other player. Janice Ballantyne became our individual champion, after a fun afternoon that was also a genuine test of bridge skill.

Another highlight was the match in March against Drymen Bridge Club where we competed for the Lorimer Shield. The two clubs take turns to host this annual event, each club fielding a six-pair team. Killearn hosted this year, so we played in the Village Hall. We were delighted that Killearn emerged as the winners, and the shield is now proudly displayed in the Village Hall.



One important innovation in 2024–25 was the classes we ran for beginners on Wednesday afternoons between October and March. The final class coincided with the Scotland-wide Hugh Kelsey tournament that the Scottish Bridge Union organises for beginners, so we ran a heat. We were thrilled that Nicole and Russell Deacon came 12th in Scotland, and two other pairs from our class finished in the top half.

While the classes for beginners have now finished, we've been running twice-monthly 'learner tournaments' throughout the summer. Regular club members and beginners come along and play bridge together in a relaxed and supportive environment. The idea is to introduce the structure of duplicate bridge to the beginners, while also helping them to fine-tune the skills they've learned in the classes.

It is, of course, unusual for readers of the *Courier* to find reports about Killearn Bridge Club in features like this one. Traditionally, reports have been embedded in the Zorro column, so it is with some sadness that we must bring the news that, after over eight years of writing for the *Courier*, Zorro is retiring. Zorro is, in fact, Doug Ashworth, one of the club's long-standing and pivotal members, and we're certain that it won't just be Doug's fellow club members who wish to thank him for the column. Many other *Courier* readers will feel exactly the same.

CH

## Ballet, Tap, Jazz and Modern Stage Taught to children from 2½ years

Classes are held in the Killearn Village Hall and in the Edmonstone Hall, Blanefield.

**The new session will start in the w/c 18 August 2025.**

Registration is on Tuesday 19 August in the Edmonstone Hall, 3:00pm to 5:00pm, or send me an email or text message.

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## An Album Fit for a Queen

In 2024, I was approached by the Scottish Women's Institutes' HQ, asking me to design and stitch a photo album for Queen Camilla. Although I was flattered, my first reaction questioned my ability to design and stitch such a prestigious piece of work. Were my skills proficient enough? Was I capable? Was I up to the task? Was I...? The list of questions was endless.

But having been a student of the Royal School of Needlework, graduating with Merit in my Certificate and having almost completed my Diploma, I said 'yes' to the request and the honour that was bestowed upon me.

My first consideration was how to approach the project. I decided on an A4 photo album and chose the SWI tartan as a backing for the embroidery: the back cover would be embroidered with the SWI logo and the front should have the Queen's initials and insignia in goldwork, which I would pad so they would stand proud of the cover. The crown, I decided, would also be



in padded goldwork with beads to replicate the ruby, emerald, sapphire and pearls of the actual thing, and producing a 3D effect.

I chose long and short stitch for the rim of the crown, together with stitches in grey to mimic the ermine on the rim of the crown.

It took me a month to compete and then, for safety, I hand delivered the album to HQ in Edinburgh.

Unfortunately, SWI HQ did not, as I had first thought, present the album to the Queen when she was in residence at Balmoral. Instead it was posted to Clarence House.

HQ received a letter of thanks, dated 10 December 2024, not only expressing her thanks, but also acknowledging my work, 'designed and created for me – I am most touched (not to mention impressed by her skills)'.

The RSN also acknowledged my efforts in their newsletter.

I am both proud and honoured to have been chosen.

LIZ HAY

### Do you need an affordable home?

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

We currently have over **680** rented houses and flats.

Around **40** of these become available for rent each year.

At present we have properties in the following communities:

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## Proposed Finnich Toll New Town, population of 35,000 expected!

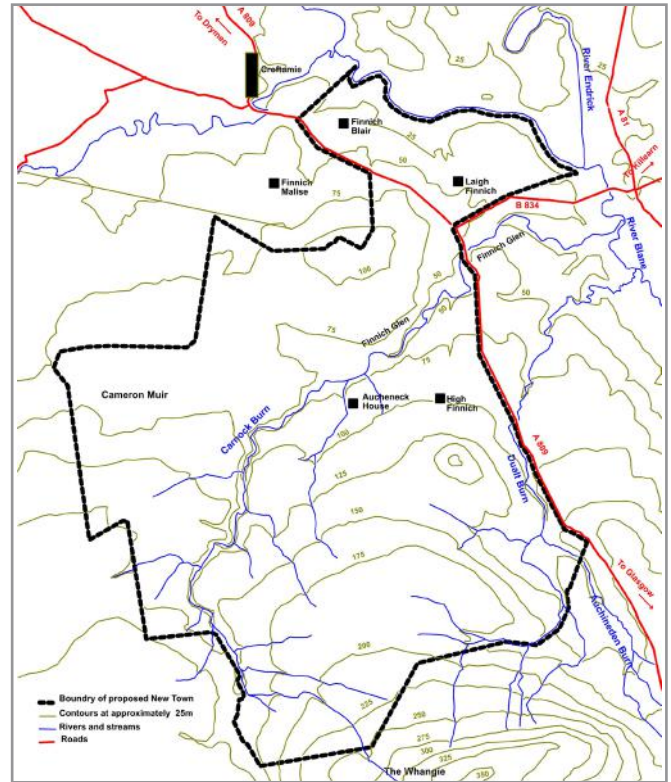
After World War II, major reconstruction of the UK infrastructure was needed, including many new houses. Part of the solution was the development of New Towns, self-contained developments on green field sites. The New Towns Act of 1946 established the formation of Development Corporations in Scotland enabling the designation of New Towns at East Kilbride (1947), Glenrothes (1948) and Cumbernauld (1955). Livingstone and Irvine followed later. In 1958, a group of building and engineering contractors proposed a privately-funded new town, independent of the government developments, around Finnich Glen.

The site encompassed about 3,000 acres on the farms of Finnich Blair, Laigh Finnich, Craighat, High Finnich and Aucheneck. This area is mainly to the west of the A809 from about 1km north of Queen's View to Finnich Toll, with an extension bordered by the B834, the River Endrick from Blane Smithy to Croftamie, and the A809 back towards Finnich Toll.

The development was to be a self-contained town with housing, schools, shops, cinemas, hotels and commercial buildings. Also anticipated were 2,500 state subsidised houses for overspill, mainly from Glasgow. In addition, 6,000 houses, for between two and six residents, were to be sold to private owners. Prices would start at £1,700 with others in the £2,000–£3,000 range, and a smaller number of higher specification homes at £4,000 or more. Though the site is hilly, the developers considered about half the site would be developable, with some larger prestige houses built on steeper gradients. On completion a total population of 30,000 to 35,000 was envisaged, which is approximately the size of Falkirk.

In addition to the housing, industrial development was envisaged to give employment. The developers said that it would not be possible to indicate the nature and extent of the industry which would be required but 'it would seem reasonable to assume that since parliament have seen fit to influence the movement and transfer of industry into state sponsored new towns, they would be equally active in securing industry for private enterprise new towns.' Other facilities would include seven junior schools, three senior schools, public and private open spaces, sand shops and entertainment enterprises, though no details of any of these facilities were provided.

An application for planning permission in principle was put to Stirling Council. They referred it to the Secretary of State for Scotland due to the size of the development. During a parliamentary debate it was revealed that two local authorities, probably Stirlingshire and Dunbartonshire, together with numerous individuals and groups, had submitted objections to the development. The Secretary of State said he would not decide on the application until after a public enquiry. He required the promoters to provide more detailed information, which was to be made available to all interested parties, in advance of the inquiry. There is no evidence that this additional information was ever produced, and the development



Map courtesy of Peter Smith

appears to have been abandoned around 1960. The additional infrastructure needed in the surrounding area, such as improved roads, was probably a major factor.

Many reading this will have driven out from Glasgow along the Stockiemuir Road and admired the view which opens up after the Queen's View. The new town would have occupied most of the land to the left of the road from a little after Queen's View to Finnich Toll and on to Croftamie. Thankfully this speculative development did not come to fruition. AKA

# JOHN CURRIE

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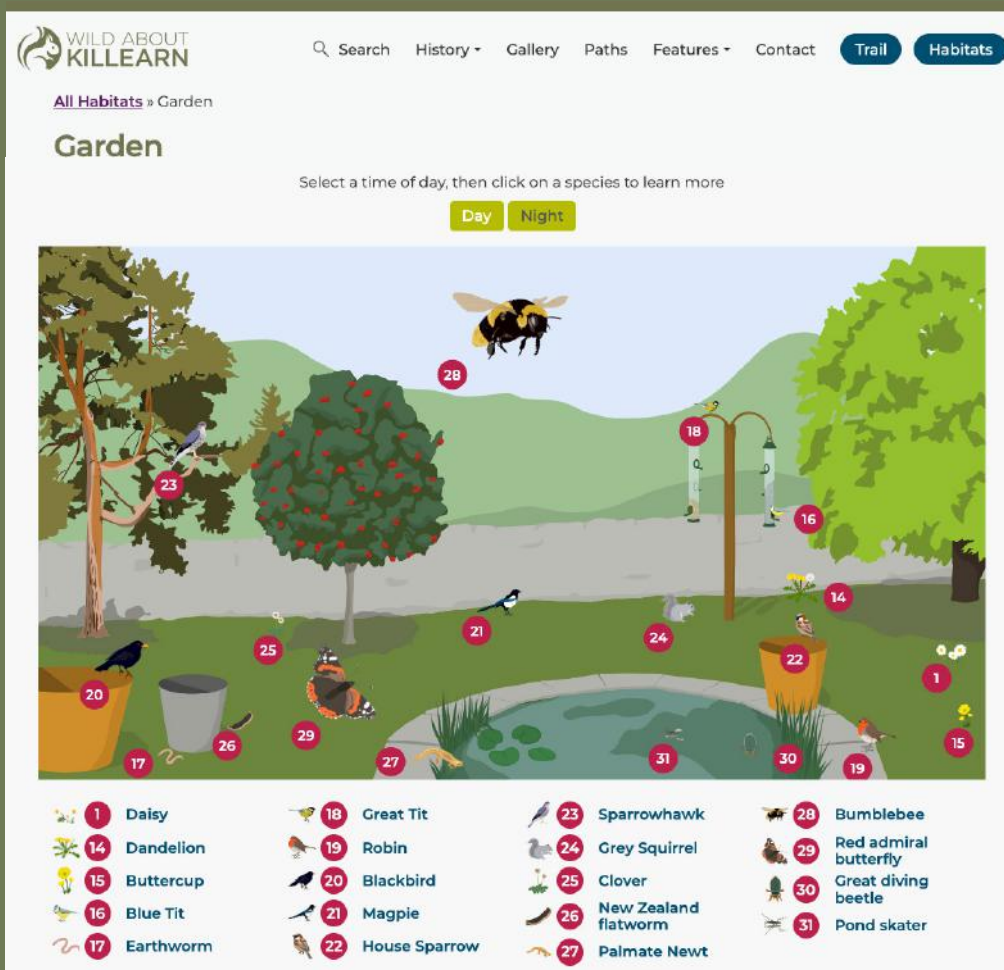
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# ‘Wild about Killearn’ Goes Live



Two years' work by people from Killearn has produced a fascinating new section of the Killearn Heritage Trail website exploring and investigating our local wildlife.

The Habitat section of the Killearn History Trail website is divided into five categories, all found in or around Killearn: gardens, moorland, farmland, woodland and waterside.

Each scene has two options such as day and night or spring and autumn. The key species from each habitat – either because they are common locally or because they are of special interest – are illustrated with beautiful SVGs (scalable vector graphics) produced by web developer, Martin Winter.

Facts, figures and fun details for a total of 150 different species are described on the site.

The content was researched and prepared by members of the project team, principally Martin Culshaw, David McKay and Nick Hawkins, advised by Pat Monaghan, Neil Metcalfe, Nigel Pope and Jackie Savery.

Four of the five habitats are available now. Woodland will be released shortly.

Scan this QR code or visit the website above to explore the site and find out about the project.



## ‘WILD ABOUT





## T KILLEARN' OPEN WEEKEND KILLEARN PRIMARY SCHOOL HABITAT NATURE WALKS AND WILDLIFE WORK



The new website was launched at the 'Wild About Killearn' Open Day in the Village Hall at the end of April with beautiful exhibitions on wildlife themes from Art4you Scotland, Killearn Primary School, Strathendrick Stitchers, the Killearn Natural History Photography Group and Peter Smith. Animal face painting and puppet making proved particularly popular with youngsters and visits by the Woodland Trust and RSPB, with demonstrations of i-Naturalist, engaged visitors. The event was organised by Nick Hawkins, Mike Gray, Frank Deas, Ali McLean and the project team.



The Open Day was complemented by a guided woodland walk of Killearn Glen led by Archie Wilson when, to the delight of the assembled number, a gorgeous red squirrel made a rare appearance just metres from the group. The following evening, Nigel Pope and Jackie Savery introduced the premier of Maramedia's *Wildheart* television documentary,

the story of the 500-year history of a Scots pine. This was followed by an absorbing discussion on the making of the film and topical local wildlife issues with Nigel, Jackie and local experts Pat Monaghan, Neil Metcalf and Martin Culshaw.



Killearn Primary School has engaged enthusiastically with the wildlife project. Each class has chosen one of the five habitats to study in the classroom and at home, and to visit on a Nature Walk with one of the Wild About Killearn project team.

P1 visited Killearn Glen;  
P2 explored a local garden;



P3 and P4 investigated woodland;  
P5 yomped up to moorland above the Pipetrack; P6s surveyed farmland up Ibert Road and the P7s enjoyed an intriguing adventure to the Endrick down Drumtian Road.

P7 Class Teacher Mrs McLean said, 'We had a fabulous experience today at Drumtian Ford with Pat and Neil. Although most of the children have grown up here, they discovered a whole new world during their habitat visits. Thank you all!'

The P7 pupils also demonstrated the website to younger learners. 'You could have heard a pin drop when my class were exploring their waterside habitat on the website this morning,' Mrs McLean reported.

This is the second year of Habitat Nature walks in the Summer Term. The plan is that through the years each class will visit – and study – each habitat in turn.





## NATURAL HISTORY PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECT

Over the past year a group of local enthusiasts have used their mobile phones, compact cameras or SLRs to capture wonderful local scenes from nature. Led by local experts Chris Bell and Robert Dunn, the group have discussed composition, exposure, editing and presentation, while tackling photographic challenges in the Glebe and Killearn Glen.



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

The ethos of the ‘Wild About Killearn’ project is to encourage appreciation of our natural and built environment among all ages, so a series of engagement sessions have proved really popular.

Nigel Pope led his third annual ‘Dawn Chorus Bird Walk’ along part of the West Highland Way. Hardy folk met at 5.15am on a sunny late-spring morning and saw or heard two dozen different bird species.

Mike Gray led a delightful ‘Wildflower Walk’ around the village, visiting a range of sites with interesting blooms.

Martin Culshaw organised his third annual ‘Moth Trapping and Identification’ event. By mounting light traps overnight and identifying the types of moth the next morning, around

40 different species were attracted. These included two Pauper Pugs, an extremely rare species which had only been recorded twice before in Scotland prior to 2025 – and a first for Stirlingshire!



For information on future events please visit [killearnheritage.org.uk](http://killearnheritage.org.uk), follow the Killearn Heritage Trail Facebook page or email [heritage@kcfc.co.uk](mailto:heritage@kcfc.co.uk). ‘Wild About Killearn’ is a KCFC project supported by the *Killearn Courier*.





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## Sing, Sing, Sing

An evening in late March and distinctly jazzy singing could be heard emanating from Killearn Kirk. The Strathendrick Singers were once more in action. This time it was their Easter concert that comprised a varied programme of jazz-influenced modern composers.

Before the promised jazz element, the choir sang a short and moving prayer for Ukraine, a poignant reminder of our uncertain times. Soon the mood changed, however, with a performance of the *Birthday Madrigals* by John Rutter. A lover of madrigals, he wrote these in 1965 as a tribute to the blind jazz pianist George Shearing in celebration of his 75th birthday. These are a blend of the Renaissance madrigal style with jazz harmonies, setting texts by poets including Shakespeare. Pieces by George Shearing himself followed, with the choir's rendition of some of his *Songs and Sonnets from Shakespeare*. They originated in a 1964 jazz album entitled *Shakespeare and all that Jazz* by Shearing and Armstrong Gibbs released. Interpretations of timeless Shakespeare's sonnets in his signature pianistic style were featured incorporating his sophisticated harmonies.

The accompaniment for these pieces, with their complex jazz rhythms, was provided by a massively talented modern jazz quartet led by pianist Richard Michael BEM, Honorary Professor of Jazz Piano at St Andrews University and member of the Benedetti Foundation. Included in the quartet were his daughter Hilary Michael, a graduate of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, on both soprano and alto saxophones, together with Brazilian bassist Mario Caribe, and drummer and Guildhall graduate, Tom Gordon, all well known in the UK jazz scene. Not done with simply providing an impressive jazz-infused backing for the choir, that clearly captivated the audience, the quartet had their own moment in the spotlight prior to the interval. Beginning with their modern interpretation of 'On the Sunny Side of the Street', they worked their way through other old favourites including 'Take the A train' in their signature style. By the end of their exciting session the 'kirk was sure jumping', with many in the audience swaying and clapping in time to the beat. Speaking to Richard Michael, he explained that he just loves the opportunity to play 'live' music, especially for such an appreciative audience.



He clearly enjoyed it, as did his fellow quartet members.

After interval refreshments, the audience was treated to the major choral work of the evening, British composer Will Todd's complex *Mass in Blue*. This unique and dynamic piece is now established in the choral repertoire. In conversation with Mark Evans, the choir's Musical Director, he said that he had often wished to perform it, but the opportunity to take on board the Richard Michael Quartet, as partners for the Easter Concert, confirmed in his mind that the time was right. The piece is a setting of the Latin Mass that blends elements of traditional choral music

with jazz harmonies, swing rhythms and improvisational elements. Stephanie Stanway, another impressive graduate of the Conservatoire, provided a dazzling display of her vocal skills.

Speaking to some choir members, I got the impression that the evening was the result of many hours of rehearsal to master the challenge of jazz, gospel and blues influences that involved complex changes in rhythm and timing. Quite a departure from previous choir's concerts that included major works by renowned classical composers.

Credit for these performances must rest with the Strathendrick Singers and their strenuous efforts, but the inspired leadership from Mark Evans, coupled with the musical initiative of Richard Michael and his fellow musicians must be applauded – a night to remember. We look forward to future Easter concerts and future innovations as well at the traditional Christmas concerts.

Although the choir will be taking a well-earned rest over the summer, rehearsals will begin again on the first Monday evening in September with the challenge of learning new material. Speaking to Chair Philip Gaskell, I am assured that new choir members, especially altos, tenors and basses, will be more than welcome. This will ensure the choir flourishes towards its 50th year in 2027, drawing its membership mostly, but not exclusively, from the villages in Strathendrick. Rehearsals are in Balfour Church, 7.30–9.30pm with a break, so check out [strathendricksingers.org.uk](http://strathendricksingers.org.uk). Come along and 'Sing, Sing, Sing'!

ROY BURDON



## Orchids of Killearn

When the name 'orchid' is mentioned, most people will think of a delicate house plant with large colourful flowers. However, native Scottish wild orchids do exist and some of them grow locally. They tend to be short plants with small flowers which can range from green to pink or purple.



The most common orchid in our area is the broad-leaved helleborine (*Epipactis helleborine*), pictured left, which may be growing in your own garden. It is normally about a foot high with green to purple flowers. It is a woodland plant in many places, but has become very common in Central Scotland by adapting to grow in gardens, parks and any rough ground. The most important thing it needs is an appropriate partner fungi and it may gain nutrients from nearby trees via the

fungal network. It is pollinated by wasps.

This year we have discovered a rare variation called 'monotropides' in The Kingdom, pictured right. This lacks chlorophyll, which gives green colouration to plants, and is instead straw coloured with pinkish flowers. We will have to wait and see if it comes up again next summer.




There are two other relatively common orchids in Killearn. The Common Spotted Orchid (*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*), pictured left, grows on open grassland, road verges and on rough ground. It is small with spotted leaves and light pink flowers with darker pink lines. The most obvious distinguishing feature is a three-lobed lower lip. We are delighted to have an increasing colony of these in our own garden.




The Lesser Butterfly Orchid (*Platanthera bifolia*), pictured right, occurs occasionally in gardens and the fields around Killearn. It is a quite tall plant with a spike of almost white flowers making it easily spotted. This year several specimens have been recorded in the field between Drumtitan Road and the Buchanan Views development.

GILL SMITH



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## Devices and Desires

While being a bit of a luddite as regards computers and all things IT, I do admit to an interest in the Wordle puzzle that is bordering on addiction. It is not absolutely the first thing I think of on waking in the morning, but it's pretty close. Indeed, my tablet is booting up as I fill the kettle, and by the time I've got my medications assembled, I've got a couple of lines filled in. I do have the consolation of knowing that I am not alone. Only last week the dentist's receptionist approached me with her phone, only one line left on Wordle which she didn't want to squander, but had I done it yet and could I give her a hint? I was happy to oblige.

While admitting to doing the puzzles – usually five in all – I am not guilty of the kind of attachment to my devices that I see all around me. Some people, it seems to me, run the risk of having to be surgically removed from their phones. The other day I was one of four people in the doctor's waiting room, and the other three were on their phones. They could have been doing Wordle, of course, but I did feel they were more likely to be accessing social media in one form or another. And then there are the kids walking up our road for the school bus, their whole attention fixed on the bit of plastic in their hand, and possibly also in their ears. What is the point of living in the country if birdsong and blossom and mountain scenery pass you by entirely? And how do they avoid the street furniture?

The same could not be said of the runners in the 10K, could it? They might have had bits stuck in their ears, but they could not possibly maintain the pace they did while

holding a phone six inches in front of them. Could they? The same thing goes for the runners in the Killearn Mile, who pound regularly along our road as part of the route. It's always great to see them, and this year I'm ashamed to say I missed them. I must have had the radio on loud, because I didn't hear them either. But they are always very focused on the race, and are to be congratulated on their achievement.

I was reminded of the races while driving up Station Road on the Saturday afternoon, avoiding columns of parked cars. That was when I also remembered the beer festival, taking place in bright sunshine. I recall past years, huddling under gazebos in floor to ceiling plastic macs, while imbibing strawberry cider. I saw all the cars still lining Station Road on the Sunday, which showed a fine sense of responsibility among village beer drinkers, if slightly problematic for those of us negotiating our way to the church. Which makes one wonder how we are going to cope when the hundred plus cars down at Ballagan Woods come on stream. This must have happened with the building of every new estate, but it feels different this time, doesn't it. Perhaps by the time you read this, all will be resolved.

As I write this, it's coming up to lunch time, and I still have most of the puzzles to finish. Some of the ones I do are a bit niche, but can I recommend Quordle, the one with four grids on the screen at the same time. It sounds daunting, but it really isn't, and you do feel smart when you complete it.

JOYCE BEGG



## Thursday Club

A regular weekly social group is held on Thursday afternoons in the Church Halls from 2pm–4pm, consisting of an hour of games such as whist, Scrabble or dominoes, followed by afternoon tea. Transport can be provided by our volunteers for those who require it.

We arrange occasional outings outside the village, taking members for a break with friends. At a recent visit to Fintry, everyone enjoyed a delightful afternoon at Katy Rodgers, culminating on a rather hot day in May with yummy ice creams.

This year's session was closed with a drinks party at the end of May. Autumn sessions recommence on Thursday, 4 September.

If you are interested in joining the group just come along, or contact Maureen (01360 550743) or Pat (01360 550074).

Or perhaps you could volunteer with driving or hostessing – it only requires two hours once a month.





## Mixed News for Killearn Active Travel Paths

Following a decade of work and community liaison to try to develop a better active path (cycling, wheeling, walking) infrastructure for Killearn, and 10 months on from our application for stages 3–4 (Detailed Design) of the Sustrans Places for Everyone fund for two active paths – one from Killearn down to Cala homes development/Oakwood; the other from Balfron to Killearn – we are now in a position to update you.

The Places for Everyone funding has now been moved from Sustrans and sits in Transport Scotland's Active Travel Infrastructure Fund (ATIF). Going forward, it will be up to Stirling Council to deem our paths suitable for further progression as part of their Active Travel Plan. This takes the possibility of applying for this funding for the next stage out of the hands of the community.

Here is the feedback regarding our two active paths from Sustrans/Transport Scotland:

### **Killearn Active Travel Path: Station Road to Oakwood**

Sustrans told us that our application for stages 3–4 would have been recommended to Transport Scotland for funding via the ATIF had it been led by a Local Authority or Regional Transport Partnership. We have been told that we need to keep in contact with Stirling Council who may choose to apply for funding for the delivery of our project. The Council's Sustainable Development Manager, David Hopper, supports this path and he says it will be considered when the Council looks at its rural paths priorities next year.

We are very reliant on support from Stirling Council to access ATIF money, and will continue our liaison with David Hopper and his team. We are also still continuing discussions with landowners. We have been told that funding for projects is still subject to finalisation of the Scottish Budget, and the availability of funds for Transport Scotland.

### **Active Travel Path: Killearn to Balfron**

This application was unfortunately deemed unsuccessful by Sustrans Stages 3–4 funding, as at the last moment we could not gain full support from David Hopper and his team at Stirling Council for our application. The reason that we were given was that 'Killearn Community Futures Company were unable to agree with Stirling Council that the Killearn to Balfron path was part of SC's prioritisation for delivery through construction.' This was very disappointing for our team, as most of the land is under private ownership and we have support from landowners.

However, we were told that we can still 'go ahead and apply for ATIF for funding through our Local Authority, Regional Transport Partnership or (where appropriate) your National Park Authority, should this still be sought.'

The positives are that, although this is not an immediate priority for Stirling Council, a link from Killearn to Balfron is included in the King's Highway Active Travel Path. We will continue to liaise with David Hopper and his team about this.

Meanwhile, the Killearn Paths Group now has good contact with the other rural paths groups in Balfron, Buchlyvie, Blanefield/Strathblane, Drymen, Gargunnoch and Kippen, and we will continue to meet as a group to create a good network of active travel paths in the area.

### **How can you help?**

Our paths group will be looking at other avenues of funding. Please follow us on [killearnactivetravel.blog](https://killearnactivetravel.blog) and our various social channels. This may seem like a setback and that things are painfully slow. However, we remain positive and will likely be asking for your support in the future. Please do get involved and keep up to date – these two projects started as grassroots projects and we would very much like them to continue.

CAROLINE CRITCHLEY

## If you go down to the woods today...

... the KCFC Paths Group will have a surprise for you.

As part of the group's ongoing commitment to improving the quality of paths around the village, the first remedial work for some years has been completed by hard-working volunteers, laying 'chuckies' over particularly wet and muddy tracks through Kirkhouse Woods.

KCFC Paths Group recognised that a number of local paths had become damaged and eroded through frequent use. This path conservation work will ensure that access will continue, but that damage through use will be limited. The upgraded path will help reduce habitat



disturbance and allow eroded areas to be repopulated naturally with native flowers, grasses and mosses.

Sincere thanks to the volunteers for their hard work and to the landowners for their cooperation and support.



The project would not have been completed without the kind support of Scott MacColl of MacColl and Stokes Landscaping Ltd., for which the paths group is very grateful.

JAN THOMPSON





## Start the FADS Panto Season with Cinderella

After a hiatus last year to make way for a snazzy production of *The Snow Queen*, our traditional panto is back!

Prince Charming is on the hunt for a wife – a gentle, honest girl who will love him for himself, not because he's royal. By chance, he meets Cinderella in the woods and falls head over heels in love... but she has no idea who he is, and runs off without telling him her name.

Meanwhile, the Baron, Cinderella's father, has just returned from honeymoon with his second wife. She's an icy piece of work and comes with extra baggage in the form of two minging daughters. She only married the Baron because she thought he was wealthy, but it turns out he isn't and now she's mad. The love-struck Prince organises a Royal Ball and invites all the ladies in the kingdom to attend so that he can find his Princess, while the dastardly Evil Stepmother sees her chance to get rich by marrying off one of her idiot daughters.

With Buttons and a Fairy Godmother firmly on Cinderella's side, and Dandini, the Prince's right-hand man, covering his back, surely our hero and heroine will triumph...? Come along to the Menzies Hall and find out!

**The panto runs over two weekends:**

27–29 November and 4–6 December, 7.30 pm.

There will be a 2pm matinee on both Saturdays.

**Tickets: Adults £12; under-18s £6.**

Subscribe to our website to be notified when tickets are on sale! [www.fintrydrama.org.uk/subscribe](http://www.fintrydrama.org.uk/subscribe)

SARAH WALKER



/FintryADS



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## Join the Future

If you are reading this article then you are almost certainly a resident of our village, or have been one in the past, and so may have heard of Killearn Community Futures Company (KCFC). But what is KCFC's purpose?

KCFC's aim is to enhance the lives of people in Killearn. It is a charity comprising separate groups carrying out community projects, such as cycling, heritage, conservation and the management of the Village Hall.

People are the backbone of how KCFC operates, and to function successfully it needs more supporters to donate financially and more volunteers to get involved.

Become a supporter for an annual fee of £10 and help finance our activities and projects directly. The more supporters (members) we have, the easier it for us to raise money from grants because funding bodies look to see how strong our local connections are.

Become a volunteer and join in, whether it's planning, getting physically involved, fundraising or publicity.

If you live or work in Killearn we encourage you to become a supporter or a volunteer — or both!

To volunteer, donate or become an annual member, scan the QR code or visit our website [kcfc.co.uk](http://kcfc.co.uk) or email [secretary@kcfc.co.uk](mailto:secretary@kcfc.co.uk).



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## Paths Group Needs You!

We are looking for a treasurer for this long-standing KCFC group. If you are interested please contact us.

We will also be looking for volunteers for path maintenance from time to time. If you like being outside and getting stuck in, then join one of our parties, equipment and safety gear are provided.

If you know of any path that needs maintenance, vegetation needing cutting back, drainage, pot holes, damaged gates, etc., then please let us know. Thank you!

Email Jan Thompson ([jan.thompson@kcfc.co.uk](mailto:jan.thompson@kcfc.co.uk)).





## STRATHENDRICK Classic & Sports Car Club



With the worst of the winter weather being over in April, members had a short run from Ballat to Ross Priory for the club's AGM. Ten days later, for Drive-it-Day, 14 cars assembled at the Kirkhouse to cross the Forth at Kincardine, headed to Powmill then past Knockhill. From there the run took lots of back roads, eventually coming down a quaint, cobbled street to arrive in Culross. Lunch was enjoyed at the Red Lion followed by a walk round Culross, before heading to Denny, Carron Valley and Fintry Sports Centre, where everybody thoroughly enjoyed afternoon tea rounding the day off nicely.



a well-known local caravan. The month was finished off with Drymen Show, where there was a large selection of cars from our own and a couple of other classic car clubs.

In mid-June, there was a lunch run to Kenmore, followed by a Longest Day run across Scotland, from sunrise at the Forth bridges to sunset at Corsewall Lighthouse hotel by Stranraer, and a week later by an evening run.

July saw the Car-BQ including some mild driving exercises while the food was being cooked. At the end of the month we had a Picnic run, prior to the Scottish Pre-WWII Vehicle Tour at the start of August, setting off from the Wallace Monument.

For more information and to read the monthly club magazine, *Overdrive*, go to [strathendrickcarclub.uk](http://strathendrickcarclub.uk). New members are always welcome, with or without cars. Contact the club secretary at:

[SCandSCC.Sec@gap-group.co.uk](mailto:SCandSCC.Sec@gap-group.co.uk).

DOUG ASHWORTH



May saw the three-day run to Doxford Hall by Alnwick, including a visit to the refurbished Jim Clark Museum in Duns where members were given a private guided tour. A local run the next day went to Bamburgh where an exceptionally good fish lunch was enjoyed from

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## Be a Wise One: Gentle Yoga and QiGong

Local yoga and well-being teacher Caroline tells us about a new class in town!

Keep your body and mind healthy as you age. I am delighted to introduce Gentle Yoga and QiGong class to Killearn, on Monday mornings from 10–11am in the Kirk Hall.

The class is based around the Wise Ones system, a unique, flowing movement sequence that resets the body clock and helps with mobility, strength, balance and well-being. The class can be done partially or fully seated, and is aimed at those aged 65+, but is open to all ages and abilities.

We use both breath and movement to help recentre and find a moment of calm. We start with seated breathwork, take you through the gentle movements and end with a guided relaxation, also known as Yoga Nidra (Yogic sleep).

You've heard of Yoga, but what is QiGong (pronounced 'Chee Gong')? Like yoga, it's a traditional practice from China that is thousands of years old and which cultivates and balances energy, through very gentle, meditative movement.

So how does this class make you feel? Here's what



**'It allows me to communicate with my body and mind, is very relaxing and I'm improving my balance!' – Zoe**

some of the current class members have to say: Nicky explained: 'I really enjoy Caroline's sessions, they leave me feeling so relaxed. The people and the environment are an absolute joy.'

And Daye said: 'There are so many benefits in one hour – I can touch my toes again and get up from the floor easily, which I was not able to do before.'

Dr Sheena Fraser MBChB MCGGP

also says of the system: 'My patients have reported resolution of back pain, increased strength, better mobility and an improved sense of well-being from attending this class.'

It is ultimately a very gentle and meditative class for both body and mind. You should leave feeling refreshed and set up for the week ahead. It's a very accessible class for all ages and abilities, is partially seated, but can all be done on a chair. Participants are aged from 40s to 80s, but it is open to all. It's a fun and sociable environment for everyone, so do come along and join us!

If you have any questions or would like to join the class, please message me on 07563 362637.

I look forward to seeing you there!

CAROLINE CARRICK

## The Wine List: All Things Considered

This year has brought more focus on wine consumption than the previous three decades. What is driving the storm, and is it warranted?

Wine has long been a companion to meals and social gatherings across the continent, oft heralded as one of the cornerstones of the very healthy Mediterranean diet. However, the discourse surrounding its health implications has polarised, with reports oscillating between highlighting its benefits and potential risks. This article aims to provide a balanced view, considering both sides of the debate while drawing parallels with other everyday foods and drinks that also impact our health.

Moderate wine consumption, particularly red wine, is frequently associated with various health benefits. Studies suggest that wine can improve cardiovascular health due to its high content of antioxidants like resveratrol, which may help reduce inflammation and lower the risk of heart disease. Additionally, moderate wine intake has been linked to improved cognitive function and a lower risk of dementia in older adults. The social aspect of wine drinking also contributes to mental well-being, fostering connections and relaxation. Each of these link to moderation, and none of these studies have been

discredited despite the noise around the risks.

Despite these benefits, there are significant concerns regarding wine consumption. Excessive drinking can lead to a range of health issues, including liver disease, high blood pressure, and an increased risk of certain cancers. The caloric content of wine can also contribute to weight gain if consumed in large quantities. Furthermore, alcohol dependency is a serious risk that can affect individuals regardless of their socioeconomic status. But the key in all of this is moderation.

Interestingly, other everyday foods and drinks pose similar health risks, but do not receive the same level of scrutiny. Sugary drinks, processed meats, coffee, white anything – the list is long and comprehensive. Even seemingly healthy foods like fruit juices can be problematic due to their high sugar content, which can lead to metabolic issues.

The disparity in how these foods and drinks are reported can be attributed to various factors, and currently both political and cultural attitudes play a role.

Wine hasn't suddenly become bad for us, and the press coverage is, for me, a very live example of how we need to see beyond click-bait headlines.

ELAINE TAYL



## Another Brilliant Killearn 10k and Mile

Another year, another brilliant Killearn 10k and Mile! As we reflect on the 2025 event, one thing is clear: this is a community effort brought to life by the incredible support of local people, businesses, volunteers, and of course, the runners themselves.

Huge thanks to every runner, marshal, helper, committee member, supporter and sponsor. The energy on the day was brilliant, despite the very wet weather at the start of the 10k. Thanks to our sponsors – West Homes, The Old Mill Killearn, Killearn Pharmacy, Willow & Olive Branch and Royal & Plaid – we were delighted to have your support.

The Mile was once again led by Jackie Hawkins and welcomed almost 200 participants of all ages and abilities. We don't have winners' prizes for the kids as it's a fun run rather than a race, but there were some brilliant performances and so many smiling faces! Huge thanks to all of our little runners, their proud supervisors, the marshals and Chris at Active Stirling for their support. Chris and Jackie's warm-up got everyone going and kept spirits high from the off.



The 10k race highlighted the abundance of local running talent we have in Killearn and surrounding areas. We saw stand out performances from our overall winners, both locals. Inverclyde AC's Gregor Yates stormed home in 33:04, just 19 seconds off his own course record, while Scarlett McQuillan delivered a phenomenal 39:29 to break the women's course record, despite being new to 10k racing.

We also saw some brilliant age-group performances from our local running community. Central Athletics' Scott Hill (U20) made a strong debut in 38:06, while his dad, Mark Hill, took second in the V60 category and mum Hazel was also running – a real family affair. The Central Athletics U20s delivered brilliant first-time results: Arran Sutherland (40:09) and Lewis McGarry (42:44). I'm a local runner myself and was delighted to win the women's V50 in time of 43:54, a lovely bonus on a day that's always more about community than competition.

Bellahouston Road Runners turned out in style with a record 28 runners joining us this year, and a brilliant way to mark their 25th anniversary. We love their tradition of

hiring a bus and making a day of it with a trip to the Beer Festival afterwards. We also had a great turnout from Killearn FC, they'd been playing the night before, but still delivered some excellent times.

Special thanks to Ian Beattie, Killearn resident and UK Athletics Chair, for his involvement on the day, and for his continued support of the Killearn Run Training Group, which has grown into a regular fixture in the local running scene. Thanks also to Colin Banks for compèring the finish line with humour and encouragement, David McKay, who captured the day on camera and Entry Central and Perfect Timing, for seamless systems.

We're always looking for ways to make the event more sustainable, and this year was no exception, with wooden medals, fewer flyers and no plastic water bottles. A big thank you to the Balfron 10k team for lending us their water canisters. It was a great example of events working together to reduce environmental impact.

We'd like to thank the many who contributed behind the scenes making sure the event ran smoothly: Nick Hawkins, Ado Adolphus, Alastair Mair, Susan McLaren, Lesley Svensson, Judy McGeachie, Ros Searle, Alison Cairns, Carl and Kieran French, to name a few. Without you all, the event would not be possible.

A big thank you to Graham Nicolson, our local farmer along the route, whose support is essential to making this race happen. His wife Shona is a familiar face on the course and a loyal, ever-present runner.

Thanks to Stevie Fraser, Sandra Beattie, Carol Murray and Sylvia Werner, for keeping the route risk-assessed, marked and measured. We had brilliant support from the Guides and Scouts on the day, and Jill French and her army of marshals. Well, we couldn't run this without you. We've had so many comments about how encouraging the marshals were on the day. If you'd like to get involved next year, drop us a line at [marshalls@killearn10k.com](mailto:marshalls@killearn10k.com).

A big thank you to the local businesses who contributed prizes, time and resources: Co-op Killearn, Lomond Mountain Rescue, Tunnocks and Killearn Kids Hub. A special thanks to Anni Small and Caroline Carrick for providing the zen on the day and helping our runners stretch and recover with their pop-up yoga tent.

And finally, thanks to our community partners: Killearn Community Council, Police Scotland, Killearn Community Futures Co., Killearn for All and the *Killearn Courier* – your support is invaluable.

We're already looking ahead to 2026. Entries open on Thursday, 4 December – keep an eye on the Killearn 10k page for updates. Thanks for being a part of it, and we'll see you next year!

KILLEARN 10K COMMITTEE: KIRSTINE SIMPSON, KIRSTEEN ALLAN, JACKIE HAWKINS, JILL FRENCH, JILL RODITI, SUSAN MICHIE AND JUDE HOLT



## Killlearn Football Club News

The 2025 season is in full flow and we have welcomed a number of new players to the squad this year, showing that interest in playing for the village in the local Forth & Endrick competitions is still strong.

On the field we have been competitive and played some attractive football at times, adapting well to bedding in so many new players. Unfortunately, the results haven't followed as we would have wished, but maybe this was to be expected in a year of change and with us competing against a number of teams who have had strong settled teams for a few years now.

This hasn't dampened everyone's enthusiasm and a good run in the wider Scottish Welfare Cup has been a highlight, with us welcoming teams from Greenock to Aberlour along to Killlearn's 'Field of Dreams'.

As a community club, supporting local events is important to us, and once again we were delighted to take part in the Killlearn 10k, something the club has done since the run's inception. We are incredibly thankful for all in the village and beyond who supported our fundraising, with over £1,300 raised for St Margaret of Scotland Hospice, a charity delivering incredible work and which has also been a huge support to a number of members of Killlearn FC.

Next up is our annual golf outing – the 40th anniversary no less – and we look forward to visiting Killin Golf Club on 16 August for what is always a brilliant day.



An update of that one to come in the next *Courier*!


Finally, we would like to say a huge thank you to all our supporters who have attended our games, taken part in our 59 Club, as well as our sponsors The Old Mill Inn, Endrick Vets, ATC, S Mac Joinery and our newest partner, CS Landscape Services. Your support is very much appreciated by all at the club.

And to anyone who is interested in getting involved with Killlearn FC, whether as a player, supporter or sponsor, please feel free to contact us either via social media or just introduce yourself to anyone at the club. We are a friendly bunch and always welcoming.

Enjoy the rest of the summer.

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## Curling Sweep Up

The 2024/25 season finished with several enjoyable final club competitions.

The Mixed Spring League was a runaway win for Fiona Glass's team of Susan Morris, Andy McKinnell and Susan Ross/Maureen Blackmore. The team scored 11 points out of maximum of 12.

The Mixed Closing Bonspiel was won by John Macfarlane's team of Jane Weir, Mary MacDonald

and Mario Cannavina, who won 6 out of the 7 ends played. Afterwards, we adjourned to Springkerse View for a drink.

The Mixed Club held their Annual General Meeting in April at the Gargunnock

Inn. Gill Smith finished her term as President and was succeeded by Paul Mosley. Tony Flisch resigned as Secretary and Jane Weir was appointed. The Mixed Curler of the Year was Fiona Glass.

The Ladies Section have played two leagues since the last article. The Lomond Quaich league was won by Sally Macfarlane's team of Jinty Halley, Anne Lochhead and Helen McKinnell, who scored 5 points out of a possible 6. The Rowan Salver league was a win for Deborah Macken's team of Jinty Halley, Anne MacKay and Annette Rogers, who scored 7 out of 8 points, but were only 1 point clear of Katherine Kelsey's team.

The Ladies Pairs competition was won by Jane Weir and Helen McKinnell, who won 7 ends out of 9.

The Ladies Closing Bonspiel was played by six teams, pictured right. The winners were Sally Macfarlane's team of Jane Weir, Jean Leitch

and Helen McKinnell, who won 4 out of 5 ends and were 1 shot up better than Fiona Glass's team. Easter eggs were drawn for and won by Heather Burns, Anne Lochhead and Gill Smith. The Bonspiel was followed by lunch at the Gargunnock Inn and the Annual General Meeting. Curler of the Year was Katherine Kelsey.

In external fixtures, the Club again lost in the Low Road final of the Province Knockout to Buccaneers. Jane and Kim McLaren were in the Stirling team which won the Low Road of the national ladies competition for the Henderson Bishop Trophy.

The Winnock Shield, which is a bonspiel to raise money for charity, was run this year by Stirling Curling Group. It was won by a team including our own Fiona Glass. Over £1,000 was donated to Strathcarron Hospice.

The Mixed Section will be gaining an extra couple of players next season and would welcome more. The Ladies Section have gained six players for 2025/26 as Dollar Ladies Curling Club, who were our companions on Thursday mornings, have ceased playing. We welcome them and hope they will enjoy playing with us.

For more information about our curling activities, please visit [strathendrickcurling.org.uk](http://strathendrickcurling.org.uk). We are a very friendly club and are starting to run social events again. Our curling standards cater for all ranges of abilities, so if you are interested and want some exercise in a friendly atmosphere, contact Jane Weir (07900 555906) or Gill Smith (01360 550726).



Photo courtesy of Susan Ross



Mary MacDonald, John Macfarlane and Jane Weir are pictured above receiving the Closing Bonspiel Trophy from Paul Mosley



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# Wow! Some Season For Strathendrick



The 2024/25 season proved to be one of almost unparalleled success for Strathendrick Rugby Club.

Continuing their promising start to the season, the Men's 1st XV completed their league fixtures with 100 per cent winning record, scoring over 1,000 points in the process. Playing entertaining, fast-flowing rugby, with a largely young squad – guided by expert coach Eddie Roche – the boys really enjoyed their sport this year. They now face the sterner challenge of Arnold Clark West Region League Division 1.

The Men's 2nd XV also won their league (albeit when points are awarded when the opposition cry off) in fine style, rallied by Chris Jewell, Andy McTavish, Sandy Cuthbertson and Jason Dawes. However, they declined promotion (which they are allowed to do once) as the next league up was felt to be a step too far.

The seniors' season was finished off by a thrilling Over-35s fixture against Lenzie in May.

The Women have also enjoyed both contact rugby fixtures (complemented by players from Aberfeldy and Berwick) and weekly touch rugby (Mondays, 7pm for anyone who is interested).

The junior teams – both Minis and Midis – continue to go from strength to strength with great player numbers, coaching and parental support. Foreign touring is now becoming a regular highlight for the older age-groups.

Strathendrick U16 and U18 Girls travelled to Stockholm, Sweden for their end of season tour. A playing squad of 34 headed off to make memories and friendships (this is what rugby and tours are all about). They were hosted by teams they met in Gothenburg at last year's Viking Cup, and played against Uppsala and Stockholm Exiles (with sightseeing and fun times in between).

The Boys U16s returned from Sweden as proud champions of the Viking Cup, having won all five of their matches in an unforgettable weekend of rugby. More than just the silverware, the tour was about experiencing the game of rugby in its purest form – played hard but fair, with respect, camaraderie and great spirit from all sides.

For the boys, this was more than a competition – it was a life experience. They've made memories to last a lifetime, bonded as a squad, and represented their club and community with pride and maturity. Rugby has a brilliant way of creating these moments, and the Viking Cup delivered in spades.

Strathendrick Rugby Club – and its touring sides – is hugely grateful for all the support it receives, especially from sponsors, coaches and parents involved in fundraising.

[www.pitchero.com/clubs/strathendrickrfc/](http://www.pitchero.com/clubs/strathendrickrfc/)



Photos from top: 1st XV 2025 league winners; Over 35s Lenzie; Sweden girls; U16 Sweden boys





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***Celebrating 50 Years in Business – 1975–2025***



## Helen Jane Wilson (née Rahr) 1941–2025

Jane was born during the war in 1941. Her parents were Major Gilbert Rahr and Susan (née Murray-Jones), and her family lived in Kent, England on a beautiful farm near Tenterden. Growing up on a farm, she was surrounded by animals and her favourites were ponies (she was a very keen rider) and dogs (she always had whippets). Jane had five siblings, but sadly one of her brothers, Michael, died aged six months from cot death. Jane's mother struggled to come to terms with this tragedy, and as a result all the children were sent to boarding school at a young age, Jane and her sisters to a convent school.



After they finished school, their father arranged for the girls to do secretarial courses. Following this, Jane started working as a secretary in London. She was always a wonderful cook (taught by her mother) and one summer she was offered a job in Sardinia cooking for the Agnelli family. She went with a girlfriend and they had a wonderful time, treated as part of the family and having so much fun. From then on she worked as a secretary in London during the winters and a cook somewhere in Europe during the summers. She cooked for all sorts of fun, interesting people including the Aga Khan and Princess Alexandra.

Jane met her future husband, Johnny Wilson, in London. They dated for a long time until Johnny finally proposed in the South of France whilst staying with Princess Alexandra. They lived in London for a couple of years (with Jane's two whippets) before moving up to Scotland to live on Johnny's parents Carbeth Estate. They were given Heron's Court to stay in and they lived there happily until they each died.

In the early years, lots of Jane's friends would ask her to cook for dinner parties, knowing what a good cook she was. This started as a hobby, but it gradually turned into a thriving catering business. She converted one side of Heron's Court into a large kitchen and shop, and they sold frozen meals or dishes made to order. Some families came to depend on Country Kitchen to fill their freezers or cater for the masses coming to stay. Country Kitchen also catered for weddings and parties all over Stirlingshire and beyond. Jane was a wonderful organiser and came to be known as the person to go to if you were planning

a party. She stretched beyond just catering to organising marquees, venues, cater hire and flowers. Jane worked so hard, but she also very much enjoyed it, and she employed many people locally, including young people fresh out of school or university looking for holiday jobs. She was a fantastic employer and always paid her staff generously.

Beyond Country Kitchen, Jane had two children, Archie and Charlotte. She was a doting mother and later a grandmother to Oliver, Rafferty, Johnny and Francesca. Jane's other passion was her garden. She had a fantastic vegetable and fruit garden, and was always an eager participant in the Killearn Horticultural Show. She was thrilled to win the Sir George Wilson Rose Bowl one year.

Jane was devastated to lose her beloved husband Johnny in 2002, and did not enjoy living alone after he died. However, she was very happy that her son and his wife chose to live so close by, and she was surrounded by a wonderful community of friends she had made in Scotland over the years she lived here.

Jane will be greatly missed by her family and friends.

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## Anne Mackay 1930–2025

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Elizabeth Anne Hutchison had a blissfully happy early childhood in Bearsden, Glasgow with her three sisters, father Archie, who was a manager at Marshall's, and mother Virginia.

When the war began, Virginia and the girls were evacuated to Canada, sailing on a liner with 2,000 others, the majority of whom were children. Anne's boat made it through; the one following was torpedoed. After an idyllic stay, they returned with D-Day taking place as they sailed home. Many a Killearn Primary School child has enjoyed hearing about these wartime experiences.

Back home at Park School, Anne excelled and became Head Girl. After this, she chose to work with the Christian-inspired movement Moral Re-Armament, convinced that she and her generation could genuinely change the world by living in a God-inspired way. She helped host the first delegations of Germans and French to seek post-war reconciliation in Switzerland, alongside the leaders of many other nations, touring shows and plays, and forming a Scottish quartet with her sisters to dance in front of them.

One day she caught the eye of Dr George Lewis Mackay who had the absolute conviction that he should propose to her even though they had never really spoken. Anne's faith in his conviction was so strong that she accepted on the spot. Four months later, and almost 62 years to the day ago, they married in Glasgow Cathedral.

More MRA travels followed, Anne helping to run backstage operations with Lew the GP for the troops. Eventually they settled in London, where Moira and Neil were born. Anne continued to dedicate herself to others with constant involvement with MRA, serving as church elder, reviving and running Wimbledon's St Andrew's Society, and being secretary at Lew's hugely oversubscribed practice in Pimlico.

When Lew retired in 1988, they returned to their beloved Scotland, continuing their service through church, choirs, workshops and outreach work. Anne also looked after her own mother, having spent many years looking after Lew's.

Anne had the common touch and mixed easily with anyone. Once, when serving trifle to French Premier Robert Schuman she declared 'Monsieur Schuman, the biggest raspberry goes to you!'. She knew opera singers Muriel Smith and Anne Buckles, and taught



Chancellor Adenauer the Gay Gordons. She even mixed with royalty. Once at a party at Windsor Castle, she stood on the toe of a young Prince Charles!

Anne was a 2025 Crossword fiend – the cryptic one. Up until a few months ago, she still made it a daily practice and her joy of winning the actual Parker Pen twice was unconfined! *The Weakest Link*, *Pointless*, *The Chase* and *Countryfile* have also lost a devoted viewer.

Anne was unflappable and you never saw her angry. Shortly after Lew's death and a double hip operation, she visited Neil in Peru, climbing up to Machu Picchu on her new hips!

She was also a faithful friend. She'd write Christmas cards to well over 500 people from around the world and received at least double that number.

Anne's life was completely defined and guided by her faith. She believed in the fundamental goodness of others, and that if you took the time to really listen to your conscience then God would have a plan.

Anne squeezed every drop out of her 94 years – she embraced living, but her complete faith in this life and the next meant she did not fear death. Her conviction was that she is now laughing, singing and dancing with her parents, her sisters, Lew and so many countless others whose lives she enriched so immeasurably.

NEIL MACKAY AND HMCA

## Louise Higgins 1956–2025

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Louise lived in Killearn for 11 years until 1998 before moving to Fintry along with husband David and children Claire and Peter. She was an active participant in village life, as a Brownie leader, regular face painter at school events and a member of Killearn Kirk. Louise was a great support to David in his role as Captain of the Boys' Brigade.

Louise was a compassionate nurse specialising in critical care nursing. Her career progressed to being a founder member and sister of the newly opened intensive care unit in Crosshouse Hospital. This was followed by promotion to night nursing officer in charge of the Western Infirmary, before becoming an inspirational university lecturer in critical care nursing.

She was an intelligent and articulate woman who loved a good conversation. Academia was a big part of her life, having gained a science degree followed by a Masters in nursing. Louise was working towards a PhD before taking early retirement on health grounds.

Sadly, poor health dominated too much of Louise's life, but she took pleasure in avidly reading, expanding her encyclopaedic knowledge of plants, and in oil painting, benefiting from art therapy sessions. An exhibition of her artwork was on display in Balfron Library throughout July.

Louise passed away quietly at home. She is greatly missed by family and friends.

THE HIGGINS FAMILY



## Rita Valentine 1946–2025

Rita was born in Glasgow and spent most of her childhood in Bearsden. On leaving school, she trained as a seamstress and worked in Frasers.

She met Brian Valentine in the mid-1960s. After their marriage they set up home in Cumbernauld, before Brian's work with Leyland DAF led them to relocate to Lancashire. There, Douglas was born in 1976 and Gordon in 1979. Rita built a wide circle of friends, especially among other young mums.

Brian's work eventually brought the family back to Scotland and they settled in Birch Rd, Killearn where Rita lived for the rest of her life. In 1983, Craig was born, completing their family of five. Rita was deeply involved in the village life of Killearn and for many years was a leader in the Anchor Boys and helped run the Sunday School. She also took part in various local groups, including the Young Wives and the Killearn Rural.

One of Rita's favourite pastimes was lawn bowls. She was a member of the outdoor clubs in Balfron and Aberfoyle, as well as the indoor club in Fintry. She also enjoyed many caravanning holidays across the UK and weekends at Trossachs Holiday Park with the family, and in later years in a static caravan with Craig and his family near Dunoon.

A constant and enduring love in Rita's life was her dogs. Although she started with a poodle and ended with a border terrier, the breed she had most often were Westies. Another passion was teddy bears and dolls – she had a borderline eBay addiction to vintage-style bears, particularly Steiff and Merrythought ones. She took great pleasure in knitting, crocheting and sewing various outfits for them, and giving them to the children in the family.

After having had three boys, Rita was delighted when granddaughters Rhona and Lucy came along, and



loved going to pick them up after nursery and school, and listening to their chatter as they walked down the road.

This caring, creative woman who loved her family and nature will be much missed.

HMCA

## Norman Matheson 1939–2025

Norman was born in Partick to parents Mary and Lachie. Mary's family helped to look after Norman when Lachie had to go off to the war, and since they were Gaelic speakers, this was Norman's first language as a small boy. It stayed with him all his life, and he could still sing songs in Gaelic right up till his final years.

He left school at 15 to become an apprentice draughtsman at Thermotank in Govan where his father was working, and this was a start of a long career in heating and ventilation systems.

One evening when he was 16, he met 15-year-old Irene, and so began a partnership which lasted the best part of 70 years. They were devoted to each other. Sadly Irene passed away in 2023.

Norman and Irene were delighted when Aileen was born in 1967 and Noreen in 1973, just after they moved to Allan Road in Killearn. Norman was a very caring father who worked hard to support his family and couldn't do enough for his girls. By then he had started his own business servicing heating systems and installing building ventilation. He worked all over, as far as the Falklands and Scandinavia. In 2000, he retired but



shortly afterwards he suffered a heart attack, fortunately from which he made a full recovery.

Norman loved music and a dram. Family was the most important thing to him, but he enjoyed the company of friends, too, and could throw a great party. He had a great sense of humour and was always cracking jokes or coming out with witty one-liners.

Norman was a proud grandfather to four grandchildren, Natalie, Stephen, Theo and Thomas, and great-grandfather to Harvey, who arrived in 2019. Alas Norman didn't meet Leila, who was born just a week after he died.

This loving, caring father, grandfather and great-grandfather will be much missed.

HMCA

**Jamie Pearson**  
Independent Funeral Directors

Fintry Manse, Kippen Road, Fintry

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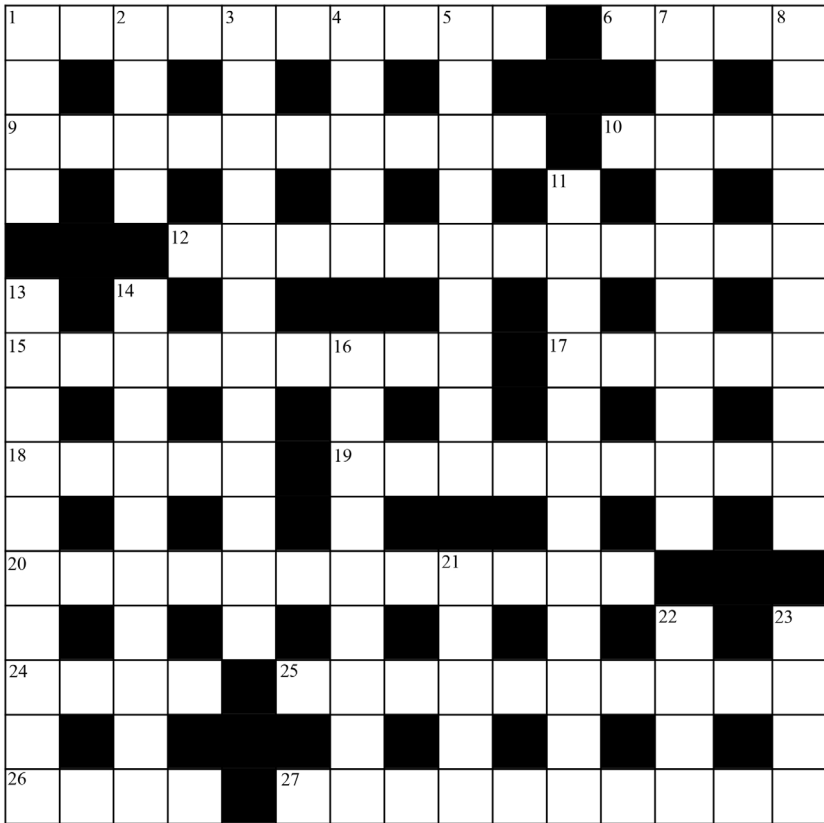
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Funeral Plans





## Cryptic Crossword *Set by Peewit*



### ACROSS

- 1 Can join embassy staff member with sailor left inside (10)
- 6 Church recess had cheap seat inside (4)
- 9 Toy dresser at sea with these ships (10)
- 10 One of the 12 laid around (4)
- 12 Stores outstanding spots around extra terrestrial (12)
- 15 One of the 12 canonised persons lose time before they consign to the grave (9)
- 17 One of the 12 where inside you can taste scones (5)
- 18 Instruct cheat badly (5)
- 19 Where old Oxford car on second one of the 12 (9)
- 20 Deem inexpert perhaps when trialed (12)
- 24 Server built on the radio (4)
- 25 Start of proceedings on initial acting area (5,5)
- 26 One of the 12 left the lid off (4)
- 27 Youngster finds a smell on the dole (10)

### DOWN

- 1 One of the 12 where inside you find zebras dancing (4)
- 2 Don't ask me to carry this inside (4)
- 3 Circus around MP here for a set of points on a globe (12)
- 4 Lazy me not left to find unleavened bread (5)
- 5 City leader, a peer who could find gold (4,5)
- 7 Old Prime Minister in New Zealand city (10)
- 8 Sis one time found a siren that did this (5,5)
- 11 Many attractive qualities site serpents together (12)
- 13 Molest hair when map shows line of constant temperature (10)
- 14 Sounds as if lady teacher made use of something that went wrong (10)
- 16 I'm nude mum when body unwrapped (9)
- 21 Adenoidal when US space agency left (5)
- 22 One of the 12 may have one of these for you to enjoy French coffee (4)
- 23 Peewit hopes that you will find the hidden irritation (4)

**Solution to the Spring crossword:** ACROSS: 1 Brighton; 5 capped; 8 urn; 9 buffer zone; 10 bankrupt; 11 odeons; 12 last; 14 milk bottle; 17 sealing wax; 20 drip; 23 ashpit; 24 islander; 25 economical; 26 eon; 27 indeed; 28 espresso.

DOWN: 1 bluebells; 2 innings; 3 Hobart; 4 offspring; 5 car bomb; 6 projected; 7 eternal; 13 telephone; 15 knapsacks; 16 esperanto; 18 eastern; 19 net-cord; 22 redress; 23 taller.

**Winner of our very last crossword competition: Ebeth Rennie, Killearn**

## Children's Wordsearch

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

Find 10 words in the word search grid that are road names in Killearn village. Eight of the words are: *Allan, Buchanan, Crosshead, Graham, Harpers, Kirkhouse, Lampson* and *Station*. I have left out two roads from the list, can you find out what they are?

Well done to the winner of our last wordsearch:

Oliver Jewell, Killearn

## End of an Era

There has been a prize crossword in every *Courier* since the very first edition in Spring 2005, even during lockdown. Thanks to our editor, the crossword prize has always been two tickets to the Theatre Royal in Glasgow, and we were always delighted to hear how much our winners enjoyed a show. Originally, the children's wordsearch prize was a £10 voucher to spend in Spar. When Spar closed, the Co-op took over for a few years, but latterly the *Courier* has provided the £10 cash prize.

Unfortunately, the number of entries for both competitions has been falling and, as we cannot compete with the prize money of *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire*, the editorial team have decided to make all our puzzles for fun rather than for the prize.

Peewit and the *Courier* thank all the competitors who have entered any of the 122 competitions in the past, and hope that they will continue enjoying the battle of wits for many editions to come.

Please continue to send me your comments and even occasionally your plaudits to [peewit@kcfc.co.uk](mailto:peewit@kcfc.co.uk).

*Peewit*



## Eager for Beavers

The release, lawful or otherwise, of previously naturally-occurring animals into our countryside generates considerable debate. As such, early 2025 saw the issue receiving sustained media attention when both Eurasian lynx and feral pigs were released without licence into the Highlands. But it's not just mammals – the unauthorised releasing of rare butterfly species in various parts of the country has rightly sparked outcry, while even the long established government-backed white-tailed eagle reintroduction scheme causes unease for some about its potential impact on livestock.

This spring, not far from Killearn, I was delighted to see my first Eurasian beaver in Scotland. For a few magical minutes, the individual pictured treated me to close views and a fascinating glimpse into its semi-aquatic lifestyle, swimming back and forth between its 'lodge' and the riverbank. As it glided slowly underneath my footbridge vantage point, I was surprised at just how long-bodied it was, that famously flattened tail forming a considerable proportion of its overall size.



to new sites continue.

As dam builders extraordinaire, beavers have a significant impact on their immediate environment by altering water levels and courses. This ecosystem engineering in turn improves woodland habitat and benefits a diverse range of plant and animal species. However, while the evidence-based benefits to wildlife of this carefully planned reintroduction are clear, the potential impact on crops from localised flooding continues to cause concern amongst some landowners. When non-lethal strategies to mitigate this are impractical and it can be demonstrated that the animals are causing 'serious damage to agriculture', it occasionally leads to special licences being granted to kill beavers which are otherwise now afforded full legal protection.

For me at least, the return of beavers to our countryside is to be welcomed and enjoyed. Hopefully, with time, equilibrium will be reached and their activities viewed from all perspectives as having a net environmental benefit. In the meantime, keep a look out for them in our area. I don't think it will be too long until they are here – if they are not here already!

MARTIN CULSHAW



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Anyone wishing to contribute to the winter edition of the *Courier* is reminded that it will be distributed from 15 November 2025.

Requests for advertisements should be sent to us by Friday, 26 September 2025.

Email Gwen Stewart ([advertising@kcfc.co.uk](mailto:advertising@kcfc.co.uk)).

Contributions and letters to the editor should be in the hands of the editorial team by 26 September 2025.

Please send them to:

Killearn Courier, Killearn Village Hall, Balfron Road, Killearn, G63 9NL or email [courier@kcfc.co.uk](mailto:courier@kcfc.co.uk).

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