

Killearn. Courier

ISSUE 51

WINTER 2021

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Noticeboard

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| 14 Nov | Killearn Kirk Remembrance Service. War Memorial, 10.45am followed by a service in the church. | 12 Dec | Killearn Kirk Christmas Gift Service, 10.30am. Gifts will be donated to Salvation Army who will distribute to those in need. |
| 16 Nov | Strathendrick Stitchers Corners with a Christmas theme. Kirk Hall, 10am–2pm. Bring lunch plus own crockery and cutlery to comply with Covid guidance. New members and visitors welcome. Contact Susan Rhind (strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com). | 14 Dec | Killearn Kirk Guild Christmas lunch followed by carols with Helen Barclay. Fintry Sports Club, 1pm. |
| 17 Nov | Killearn Community Council either face-to-face or over Zoom. Contact Fiona (fiona.rennie@btinternet.com ; 07799 625993). | 15 Dec | Killearn Community Council either face-to-face or over Zoom. Contact Fiona (fiona.rennie@btinternet.com ; 07799 625993). |
| 18 Nov | Killearn Thursday Club for the Third Age Weekly social with afternoon tea. Kirk Hall, 2pm–4pm, thereafter every Thursday. All welcome. For information or to arrange transport, contact Maureen (07909 872994) or Brenda (550328). The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley lecture by Tony Faber, ‘Indians, Buffalo and Storms: The American West in 19th-Century Art’. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am. www.theartsocietystirling.org.uk | 16 Dec | The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley lecture by Ian Gledhill, ‘The Magic of Pantomime’. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am. www.theartsocietystirling.org.uk |
| 23 Nov | Killearn Kirk Guild meeting. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm. Fun and Frolics with Yasmin. | 24 Dec | Killearn Kirk Christmas Eve service, 11pm. Carol singing followed by watchnight service at 11.30pm. |
| 25 Nov | Drymen & District Local History Society illustrated talk by James Kennedy, Loch Ard Heritage Group, ‘The Navvies at Loch Chon’. Drymen Village Hall, 7.45pm. Admission £2; annual membership £7, payable at the door. Check if meeting is in person or by Zoom at www.drymen-history.org.uk . | 25 Dec | Killearn Kirk Family Christmas Day service, 10.30am. |
| 26-27 Nov | FADs Christmas Revue – festive singing, dancing and short drama and comedy performances. Menzies Hall, Fintry, 7.30pm. More information and tickets at tickets@fintrydrama.org.uk . | 27–27 Dec | Killearn Health Centre closed. For help or advice contact NHS 24 on 111. |
| 1 Dec | Killearn Horticultural Society opening of the first Advent window, see social media for map or contact killearn.advent.windows@gmail.com . | 3–4 Jan | Killearn Health Centre closed. |
| 3-4 Dec | FADs Christmas Revue – festive singing, dancing and short drama and comedy performances. Menzies Hall, Fintry, 7.30pm. More information and tickets at tickets@fintrydrama.org.uk . | 11 Jan | Killearn Kirk Guild meeting. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm. A travel talk with Ann and John Roy. Bring and Buy table. |
| 5 Dec | Killearn Kirk Communion Service, 10.30am. | 18 Jan | Strathendrick Stitchers ‘Inspired by Nature’, a talk with work corners ongoing throughout the day. Kirk Hall, 10am–2pm. Bring lunch plus own crockery and cutlery to comply with Covid guidance. New members and visitors welcome. Contact Susan Rhind (strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com). |
| 7 Dec | Strathendrick Stitchers Christmas lunch, Kirk Hall, 11.45am–2pm. | 19 Jan | Killearn Community Council either face-to-face or over Zoom. Contact Fiona (fiona.rennie@btinternet.com ; 07799 625993). |
| 11 Dec | Killearn Kirk Guild Christmas Coffee Morning, Kirk Hall, 10am–12noon. Baking stall and sales table. | 20 Jan | The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley lecture by Nigel Bates, ‘It’s not just Tchaikovsky’. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am. www.theartsocietystirling.org.uk |
| 12 Dec | Strathendrick Singers Christmas Concert. Killearn Kirk, 7pm. The Singers will be joined by the students of the Music School of Douglas Academy and will feature works by Charpentier and Amesen, and carols both old and new. Tickets at the door or from choir members. Contact Amy Anderson (secretary@strathendricksingers.org.uk). | 25 Jan | Killearn Kirk Guild meeting. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm. Our second project: the Vine Trust. |
| | | 27 Jan | Drymen & District Local History Society talk by Janet Beveridge on Kilmaronock Old Kirk. Drymen Village Hall, 7.45pm. Admission £2; annual membership £7, payable at the door. Check if meeting is in person or by Zoom at www.drymen-history.org.uk . |
| | | 8 Feb | Killearn Kirk Guild meeting. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm. ‘Save money and cut energy costs’ with Sara. |
| | | 15 Feb | Strathendrick Stitchers ‘Introduction to Sashiko’ workshop. Kirk Hall, 10am–2pm. Bring lunch plus own crockery and cutlery to comply with Covid guidance. New members and visitors welcome. Contact Susan Rhind (strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com). |
| | | 16 Feb | Killearn Community Council either face-to-face or over Zoom. Contact Fiona (fiona.rennie@btinternet.com ; 07799 625993). |

Editorial

Well, here we are nearing the end of 2021 and what a year this has been; and that's saying something, since the year before was no better. Covid loomed large, and every one of us was affected in some way or another by its existence. The epidemic was not choosy about its victims and some of us suffered more than others. All of us had to adjust our usual routines so that we could pursue our lives with minimum disruption.

But it was amazing what emerged in our community. Local businesses changed their ways of working thus continuing to supply us with our daily needs. Residents seemed to band together looking out for each other. Much use was made of virtual media – relatives, friends and businesses stayed in touch and local organisations such as the Community Council held their monthly meetings using Zoom. And now, the Village Hall has opened up for business and KCFC is still alive and kicking. Thankfully, all the signs point to a return to what we classed as normal. Hopefully this trend will continue – fingers crossed!

We in the *Courier* have made every effort to keep our issues as 'normal' as we could. We were able to do this because our regular contributors stayed with us and continued to offer their very welcome articles.

The advertisers did not desert us either, despite that for many of them it certainly wasn't 'business as usual'. Our thanks go to them, and we should support them as they have supported us.

Our volunteer deliverers certainly did not let us down, but maintained delivery to your doors as usual. Sometimes, such deliveries meet with unwanted hurdles such as delivering to Fintry Road which is quite a task given the road is blocked because of a bridge failure. So our thanks go to them also.

Let's not forget the *Courier* team who have produced each issue to their usual high standards. Inside this issue, you'll find articles about hope for the future, an Olympic silver medallist, news about the Christmas post, and much, much more.

Anyway, this is what we call our Christmas issue, and I hope you enjoy it.

From all at the *Courier* have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous 2022.

Ian

Cover

The cover features a selection of photos from last year's Advent Windows Trail. Our thanks to Lindsay Kirk for providing the images.

Noticeboard continued

- 17 Feb **The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley** lecture by Lucrezia Walker, 'Rosalba Carriera'. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am. www.theartsocietystirling.org.uk
- 22 Feb **Killearn Kirk Guild** meeting. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm. 'Look Forward in Faith', speaker from Guild Office, Edinburgh.
- 24 Feb **Drymen & District Local History Society** illustrated talk by Carol Primrose, 'The Vale of Tears: Coal mining in Scotland and the Cadder pit disaster of 1913'. Drymen Village Hall, 7.45pm. Admission £2; annual membership £7, payable at the door. Check if meeting is in person or by Zoom at www.drymen-history.org.uk.
- 4 Mar **Killearn Horticultural Society** Whist Drive. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm. Entry £2 at the door including refreshments. Raffle.
- 8 Mar **Killearn Kirk Guild** meeting. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm. Home entertainment.
- Colourful Killearn** Spring meeting to decide summer planting schemes. Village Hall committee room, 8pm. All welcome. Contact mike@kcfc.co.uk.
- 15 Mar **Strathendrick Stitchers** Work Corners 'A Special Stitch' and 'Pincushion'. Kirk Hall, 10am–2pm. Bring lunch plus own crockery and cutlery to comply with Covid guidance. New members and visitors welcome. Contact Susan Rhind (strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com).
- 16 Mar **Killearn Community Council** either face-to-face or over Zoom. Contact Fiona (fiona.rennie@btinternet.com; 07799 625993).
- 17 Mar **The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley** lecture by Simon Seligman, 'Debo, Duchess of Devonshire'. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am. www.theartsocietystirling.org.uk
- 19 Mar **Killearn Kirk Guild** Spring Coffee Morning. Kirk Hall, 10am–12noon.
- 22 Mar **Killearn Kirk Guild** AGM and light supper with Ros McGowan. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm.
- 24 Mar **Drymen & District Local History Society** illustrated talk by Christina Noble on her book, *Arkinglas: The Biography of a Highland Estate*. Drymen Village Hall, 7.45pm. Admission £2; annual membership £7, payable at the door. Check if meeting is in person or by Zoom at www.drymen-history.org.uk.

Please note:

Strathendrick Film Society have suspended activities. Contact mikebath42@gmail.com for up-to-date information.

Killearn Village Hall Clubs and Classes

Please see page 7 for a list of classes and clubs which take place in the Village Hall. For up-to-date details visit kcfc.co.uk/killearnvillagehall/whats-on.

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

Letter to the Editor

We welcome your letters and emails. Please include your address (not for publication). We reserve the right to edit letters and emails.

Dear Sir

As a long standing resident I, like many others, love the rural location around Killearn and enjoy the proximity we have to Glasgow and Stirling whether for work or leisure. It is exactly these diverse benefits that draw the increasing number of people both coming to live, work or holiday in the area.

Local roads have been a contentious issue for all sorts of reasons, but in the last few months the A81 heading towards Aberfoyle seems to be spoken about more than most. Stirling Council has recently re-surfaced and re-marked the intersection of this road at Ballat, but retained the 'give way' permissions from the Drymen and Stirling directions onto the junction. I know of several instances where drivers have not slowed down sufficiently coming from Drymen, with accidents only avoided because drivers heading to Aberfoyle slowed their speed. I don't know what the criteria is for having mandatory stop signs rather than the 'give way', but wonder how many others have avoided near miss situations? Should the speed limit approaching the junction from all directions be reduced?

My concerns may already be out there in the local Facebook world used by other locals, but do we need to do more than just think 'that was a lucky escape'?

Yours faithfully
Concerned in Killearn
(name & address supplied)

The *Courier* asked Stirling Council to comment on the above letter. The following is their response:

Thank you for your enquiry regarding road safety at the A811 and A81 Ballat junction.

This junction has recently been resurfaced and new road markings installed. These improvements will have already improved the functioning of the junction by making priorities clear, allowing motorists to position themselves correctly in the junction and providing a new surface with a good braking surface. This will lead to improved safety. However, the letter does talk about speed limits and provision of STOP signs rather than give-way markings so I will address these points.

The road signs and junctions markings used on all British roads are prescribed in the Traffic Signs Regulations General Directions. We then use the Traffic Signs Manuals, known as Chapters 1-8, to determine how these regulatory signs and road markings should be used and regulated. Chapter 3 instructs that STOP signs should only be used where visibility is so restricted that it is essential for drivers to stop before entering the major road. The visibility criteria for provision of STOP signs

at the junctions of the A811 onto the A81 is not met. We therefore use give-way signs and road markings, and use advanced directional signs to inform drivers of the approaching junctions so they can reduce their speed and decide on their preferred route choice before the junction area.

However, following reports of an accident following the recent road improvement scheme, I have asked our Senior Road Safety Engineer to investigate local concerns and to determine whether a reduction in the speed limit at this location would be appropriate. However, I must make it clear that it is unlikely that our investigation will find that a reduction in the speed limit is recommended. Speed limits in all local authority areas are set in accordance with the recommendations set out in Circular 1/2006. As per this guidance, the national speed limit is the norm on rural roads. However, where accident rates exceed certain thresholds set in Circular 1/2006, lower speed limits can be considered together with other measures.

The accident rate thresholds are;

- Upper tier ('A' and 'B' roads that link urban centres and allow for easy movement around the Stirling Council area) – 35 injury accidents per 100million vehicle km;
- Lower tier (typically 'C' and unclassified roads) – 60 injury accidents per 100million vehicle km.

The accident rate is a trigger for intervention, indicating that accident remedial or speed management measures may be necessary on a particular section of road. In accordance with Circular 1/2006, further investigation will be necessary to allow all options to be considered in detail before any proposal to lower the speed limit is pursued.

Circular 1/2006 also makes it clear that speed limits must not be set in isolation or used to try and solve problems at particular hazards (e.g. bends, junctions, accident sites, etc.), but should rather be used as part of an overall speed management package. Therefore, if it were found that accidents were at a level of concern, other remedial measures would be considered such as provision of junction lighting.

However, I have asked the Senior Road safety Engineer to consider whether any additional signing or road markings are required to further improve road conditions as part of the investigation.

I trust that the information provided is helpful.

Kind regards,
Carlyn Fraser, Team Leader – Operations (Network)

Good News for Advent Windows!

We're having a village full of Christmas cheer again this year – more beautifully decorated Advent windows.

A new window will 'open' each evening at 6.30pm and will remain illuminated for the whole Christmas period. The first window will open at the Village Hall on Wednesday, 1 December and the last on 24 December at the Church Hall.

After raising almost £1,000 last year, we will be collecting for Shelter again this year.

Look out for our map showing the location of open windows on social media and local notice boards, or contact us at killearn.advent.windows@gmail.com.



Killearn Health Centre News

As we write this in September 2021, as a practice we will continue to run in-house clinics for both flu and Covid booster vaccinations. We will be offering both vaccinations to those patients aged 50 and over, as well as the under 50 and in at risk groups.

Similar to the Covid vaccination programme, we will be contacting patients based mainly on age criteria. If you have not yet been contacted please be patient, we will be in touch.

Most general practices now run clinics in central locations. We strongly believe this should continue to be offered as a local service.

Nick Strides Out



Courier team member, Nick Hawkins, is also a volunteer and Trustee at Maryhill Integration Network (MIN), a charity that supports refugees and asylum seekers.

Nick recently completed the Glasgow Kiltwalk to raise money for MIN's Hardship Fund.

The 16-mile 'Mighty Stride' started at Glasgow Green and ended in Dumbarton.

He was really gratified by the generous support of people from Killearn, and also further afield: £2,400 was raised and the Tom Hunter Foundation matched this.

£4,800 will be a tremendous help to people in real need. Thank you, Killearn.

NH

Ballet, Tap, Jazz and Modern Stage

Taught to children from 2½ years

Classes are held in the Village Hall, Killearn at 4.00pm.

NEW pre-school class will be held on a Wednesday.

Places available in the Primary 1/2 class on a Thursday.

Pre-school class also runs in Strathblane on a Monday at 4.00pm.

Under 3's dance FREE



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Tel: 07846 994 954

E: lyndaturnerdancing@hotmail.com

News in brief

Changes in the rules for fire and smoke alarms will come into effect in February 2022. From that date, you will need to have ‘interlinked’ fire alarms, and homeowners are responsible for complying with the law. For more detailed information, visit: www.gov.scot/publications/fire-and-smoke-alarms-in-scottish-homes/.

Stirling District Citizens Advice Bureau Ltd, in conjunction with Stirling Council Archives and Library Service, are offering drop-in sessions in Balfroun and Strathblane libraries as well as three other libraries in the council area. Residents can book face-to-face appointments to get free, independent, impartial, and confidential advice on a range of issues including debt, benefit entitlement, fuel, and housing issues, as well as support with food capacity and wider community issues. Details for the libraries are as follows: Balfroun library, 10am–1pm, weekly on Thursday; Strathblane Library, 2pm–4pm every fortnight on Thursday.

Killlearn Hospital site – if all goes well, CALA are looking to enter the site in November or December this year. CALA have agreed to deliver the full extent of the footpath – from the site and up Station Road, pending purchase of the site.

Killlearn Hotel site – the hotel has now been demolished and work has begun. Phase 1 is due to be completed in 44 weeks, with the full completion in 52 weeks.

Costs for energy increased in October. Ofgem, the independent energy regulator, has a safety net designed to support anyone having difficulties paying a bill. Your energy supplier is bound by Ofgem’s rules to listen if you contact them about a change to the way or amount you can afford to pay. If you are on a pre-payment meter you can ask your supplier for emergency credit. Do you qualify for the Warm Home Discount scheme? Find out here: www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme.

RSHA Development at Lampson Road – builders are hoping to achieve a site start in the current financial year, but the timing of this is entirely reliant on the outcome of the planning application.

You can keep up to date on local issues like these, as well as a police report, information on roads and many other pertinent issues, on the Killlearn Community Council website: www.killlearncc.org.uk. Click on the Update link to access the latest report. Or go to a meeting – see Noticeboard for dates and times.



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Killlearn Village Hall Classes and Clubs

Monday

Yoga: Main Hall, 9.15am–10.15am. Suitable for all.
Contact Sarah Fleming (sarahfleming99@yahoo.com).

Monday Music: Main Hall, 11.15am–12 noon.
Contact Clare (claremondaymusic@gmail.com).

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

Tuesday

Adult Ballet: Garden Room, 9am–10am. Contact Julie Symmonds (07496 231913; julie@danceforparkinsons.org).

Yoga Class For Carers: 10.30am – 11.30am. Funded through Stirling Carers and is free to all carers in the area. Please contact Stirling Carers on 01786 447003 if you would like to attend.

Adult Tap: Garden Room, 12.15pm – 1pm. Contact Julie Symmonds (07496 231913; julie@danceforparkinsons.org).

Town Break Friendship Group: Garden Room. 2pm–4pm, first Tuesday of the month (www.townbreakstirling.org).

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

Wednesday

Yoga: Main Hall. 9.15am–10.15am. Suitable for all.
Contact Sarah Fleming (sarahfleming99@yahoo.com).

Tai Chi & Qigong: Main Hall, 10.30am–11.30am.
Contact Sukyee (sukyee.tai@gmail.com).

Pre-school Dance Class: Main Hall 4pm–4.45pm. Contact Lynda (770390; geolyn2000@hotmail.com).

Dog Training Class: Main Hall, 7.45pm–8.45pm. Small class delivering eight weeks of basic training. Contact Brian Hunter (brian@meterology.co.uk).

Thursday

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

Children's Music: Main Hall, 11.15am–12 noon. Contact Clare (claremondaymusic@gmail.com).

Linda Turner School of Dancing: Main Hall, 4pm–6.30pm. Dance classes for children of all ages. Contact Lynda (770390; geolyn2000@hotmail.com).

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

Friday

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

Dance for Parkinson's: Garden Room, 12.15pm–1.15pm. Providing creative movement and dance to the Parkinson's and mobility disorders community. Contact Julie Symmonds (07496 231913; julie@danceforparkinsons.org).

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

Move with Julie: Garden Room, 6pm, adult beginner ballet & stretch; 6.50pm, adult tap; 7.40pm, adult intermediate ballet & stretch. Contact: Julie Symmonds (07496 231913; jjsymmonds36@gmail.com).



Children's Hospices Across Scotland

Killlearn Christmas Post

Post your local Christmas cards at
The Co-op
The Pharmacy
The Kirk
from

Saturday 4th December
to addresses within the village.
Please remember to put full name and address on the envelope (no post code required)

Please give generously to CHAS via the collection tins

Final pick ups
Co-op & Pharmacy - 5pm Sat 18th December
Kirk - 1pm Sun 19th December

Delivery from 20th December

www.chas.org.uk
Children's Hospices Across Scotland is a trading name of Children's Hospice Association Scotland
Scottish charity number SC 032924

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Weekly Zoom classes on Mondays and Thursdays (daytime & evening).

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A dynamic, fast-paced workout focussing on strength, stamina and control.

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Killlearn Village Hall News

If you come down to the hall today, you're sure of a big surprise...

Not quite the Teddy Bears' Picnic – but we're very pleased to be able to introduce two new additions to the main entrance hall.

We are hugely grateful to Norman McNab, who has kindly donated a 3m x 0.5m print of the local landscape to Killlearn Village Hall. Norman explained that the image was created from 14 portrait-oriented full-frame exposures taken from the slopes of Garloch Hill above Killlearn. What you see is possibly the most spectacular visual section of the Highland Boundary Fault, which stretches from Arran in a north-easterly direction to Stonehaven, and the print has been annotated with names of each of the hills for ease of reference.

If you haven't yet had the chance to come and have a look, we would strongly recommend a viewing.

In the same area of the entrance

hall, stands a bookcase – but no ordinary bookcase. We're delighted to be working with the local library group to support the 'wee lending library', a community project to help give everyone access to reading books. Please come along and help yourself. And if you have any spare books – in prime condition – then contact 'Killlearn's little library' on Facebook. The shelves are being topped up all the time. It's free to use – but please don't drop your own books off at the hall – they can be dropped off with others from the group.

And remember if you need a cuppa, some cake or a lovely lunch – then the Kitchen Window is just up the stairs.

We're loving having the buzz of activities back into the Village Hall with more people, classes and activities each week.

If you are looking for some space for a group, a community club or a family activity, then please come and chat to us: killearnvillagehall@gmail.com. #community #killlearn #thanks

FIONARENIE





THE KITCHEN WINDOW

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www.kitchenwindowkilllearn.com

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The Kitchen Window

We are a new eatery in Killlearn which brings a touch of city dining to the countryside. Our café offers breakfast, brunch, lunch, cakes and drinks, suitable for all ages. It is a place to chill, relax and unwind over amazing food and views. Takeaways and outside catering also available.

Come and try our Introductory Offer
15% off your food bill

Minimum spend £20 on food.
This offer does not apply to any drinks or cakes.
Voucher valid to 31 March 2022 excluding the period from 15 December 2021 to 3 January 2022.

Present this voucher when you pay



**JOIN US FOR
BADMINTON
ALL WELCOME**

Killlearn Village Hall
Tuesdays
9.15am - 10.15am
Just come along & meet us

HOE! Not the Show

The second 'virtual' Annual Show of the Killearn Cottagers' Horticultural Society (KCHS) was held in August, featuring photos of flowers, vegetables, baking, art, hidden gardens and craftwork. However, this year the KCHS Committee not only held the Show competition online, but on Saturday, 28 August, hosted a Horticultural Outdoor Event in Killearn: 'HOE! not the Show'.

Heather Wright, KCHS Chair, said, 'Due to the ongoing restrictions, we wanted to commemorate the 155th Annual Show, meet Covid-19 guidance and give an opportunity to share horticultural-related information whilst socialising safely. So we thought we would host an outdoor event called 'HOE! not the Show'!

'HOE! not the Show' centred around an open-sided marquee with displays based on 10 of the 12 sections of the Annual Show, such as floral and vegetable displays, craftwork and homemade produce.

Grant Farquharson, KCHS Show Convener, said, 'As well as the marquee, we had 10 Horti-related stalls from charities and local organisations dotted around the site, while The Almost Credible String Band provided some great background music. Many of the stallholders have asked to come again next year, and I'd like to thank everyone who kindly donated their time and exhibits this year to create the section displays.'

The event featured a scarecrow competition with all of the entries meeting the challenge superbly. It was the 'Glamorous Granny Gardener' which eventually received the winner's rosette.

Neil Metcalfe, KCHS Treasurer, added, 'It was a great opportunity to meet up with people we haven't seen for months and to see so many people viewing the stalls and displays.'

After the 'virtual' competition closed, eight judges spent a week browsing the 283 anonymous entries online. The 50 winning entries were then put on display in Killearn Kirk for the duration of 'HOE! not the Show'.

Paul Searle, KCHS website organiser, said, 'For 'HOE! not the Show' we created a display in the Kirk



of the 50 winning entries and then published all 283 photos and results on our website later that day. Entrants were very keen to see who won and who were runners-up! We also gave each winner their 12in by 8in photo as a memento of the day.'

Heather added: 'It was such an enjoyable day! I want to say a big thank you to all those who took part on the day and those who entered our 'virtual' Annual Show. One of the judges said there was a lot of creativity in the entries, and I totally agree with that. We hope everyone enjoys looking at all the great photos online and that it will inspire lots of entries for our next show in 2022.'

The full list of winning entries is on the KCHS website, www.killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk, and its Facebook page, along with all the 283 entry photos.

PAUL SEARLE



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JOIN US
THIS WINTER
AT GLENGOYNE
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.....

WHISKY TASTING AND TOURS
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Two years ago, the Killearn Heritage Trail project organised the excavation of a previously unknown structure found in the middle of Killearn Glen. The dig unearthed what was probably the oldest building in the village still in existence. It is thought to be a medieval house that predated The Place, the manor house in ‘the cow field’ built in 1688, and its designed landscape.

The 2019 dig exposed substantial stone walls and found a shard of 14th- or 15th-century Scottish Red Ware ceramic, but no other artefacts or items were found that would have allowed precise dating. Time limited what could be done in that season, so the project and the community volunteers very much wanted to return to the site to evaluate the building further.

At the end of August this year the team returned to ‘The Laird’s House’ in the Glen for a further five-day phase led by professionals from Northlight Heritage and Clyde Archaeology, and kindly funded by the Killearn Trust and the *Killearn Courier*. The site was carefully surveyed, and two trenches measured and marked out. Both were within the area explored two years previously: a 3m x 2m trench in what was thought to be another room in the building, and a 3m x 1m trench next to an interior wall.

The forest floor material and top soil were removed and set aside – everything had to be restored to its original condition by the end of the dig. Layer by layer, subsoil and rocks were systematically lifted; the trenches were tidied, photographed and sketched at regular intervals; sections were drawn and the levels logged. There was a great deal of ‘tumble’: stones from walls that had fallen or been pushed inwards. Other areas were probably ‘robbed’: the materials stripped for re-use in buildings or walls elsewhere.

The objective of the venture was partly to try and establish the age and purpose of the building, but also to teach the volunteers archaeological techniques and practices. Each day, 10 people had great fun shovelling, trowelling, brushing and recording, not to mention chatting and laughing!

More walls were uncovered and areas of paving clearly established the interior floor level. But again no ‘treasure’ was found; no artefacts or organic material that would have enabled carbon dating. A small additional trench revealed a revetment (a facing that supports an embankment) on the edge of a flat area outside the main structure.

After four and half days of exploration, theorising, hypothesising, pondering and studious recording – it was time to back fill the site.

The building was most likely a dwelling – it would have been very substantial for farm or domestic animals. It shows that Killearn Glen has been inhabited in the past, and that it has been important to the village for at least 500 years.

Photographs of the dig and the technical report are available on the Gallery and Features section of the KHT website www.killearnheritage.org.uk. NH



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The Weather Channel

The weather in our district continues to show signs of climate change, in particular with rainfall patterns. Scotland has the highest rainfall totals in the UK mainly due to its mountainous terrain, and the West of Scotland is usually leading the way.

This year has been quite different, as we normally have a total of around 324mm of rain over the months of April to August, but as the rainfall figures in the table show, the total in 2021 for these months is 221.7mm.

The low rainfall figure was even more marked as we had very heavy bursts of rain in single days: 31.4mm in May, 13.2mm in June, 18.6mm in July, and 18.4mm in August. Climate scientists have been saying for some time that we are likely to experience more frequent downpours that can result in flooding.

At the time of writing, the Met Office announced that Scotland recorded its warmest September day since 1906 when the thermometer hit 28.6°C in the Scottish Borders.

A busy Met Office issued its very first extreme heat warning on 19 July due to the sustained hot weather throughout the UK.

What we experienced was minor compared to the searing heat in Southern Europe and other parts of the world.

Weather forecasters used a new term (to me) to explain these uncomfortable spells of very hot weather: 'heat domes'. A heat dome is created when a ridge of high pressure remains over the same area for days or even weeks, and very warm air is trapped and does not move away.

In our latitude, pressure systems usually move from west to east, but if the jet stream (a core of strong winds high above the earth's surface) weakens and buckles, the high pressure remains sandwiched between two low pressure systems and the fronts which usually bring relief are unable to have effect. The hot air which usually rises into the atmosphere is trapped by the high pressure acting like a lid on a saucepan. Until the heat dome changes with a change in high pressure, the hot conditions bring the risk of wildfires, drought and heat health conditions.

TOM RENFREW

Summary January to September 2021 for Killearn

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | April | May | June | July | Aug | Sept |
|---------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Highest Temp | 10.2 | 10.9 | 16.1 | 19.3 | 23.6 | 25.8 | 27.4 | 26.7 | 25.7 |
| Lowest Temp | -7.8 | -6.6 | -0.3 | -4.2 | -0.4 | 4.6 | 8.4 | 7 | 4.7 |
| Mean Temp | 1 | 3.5 | 6.4 | 6 | 9 | 14.1 | 16.6 | 14.8 | 13.8 |
| Days Below Freezing | 21 | 9 | 1 | 11 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Highest Wind Gust | 28 | 20 | 27 | 31 | 26 | 22 | 16 | 32 | 22 |
| Monthly Rain | 110.2 | 172.8 | 122.2 | 14.8 | 86.5 | 32.2 | 42.2 | 46 | 85.5 |
| Most Rain in 24 hrs | 18.2 | 35.2 | 24.6 | 7.6 | 31.4 | 13.2 | 18.6 | 18.4 | 25.6 |
| Days without Rain | 9 | 8 | 15 | 16 | 15 | 19 | 20 | 16 | 9 |
| Cumulative Rainfall | 110.2 | 283 | 405.2 | 420 | 506.5 | 538.7 | 570.9 | 676.2 | 761.7 |

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

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Torrance – Thursday and Friday, 9.30am – 2.00pm

What Was All the Fuss About COP26?

Glasgow has just hosted the biggest climate change conference in the world this autumn. The 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP 26) began on 31 October and ended on 12 November. The conference venue was the SEC, with over 100 world leaders attending, along with climate experts and business representatives.

The COP is the decision-making body of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). All parties to this convention are represented by the COP. The COP meets every year and the venue can be in one of the five recognised UN regions: Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Central and Eastern Europe, and Western Europe and Others.

The president of the COP26 conference is the Rt Hon Alok Sharma MP. He was appointed as the full-time president for the conference in January of this year. Prior to this, he held various government portfolios, including that of Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. The responsibilities of the president of COP26 include leading the preparations for the event and chairing the Climate Action Implementation Cabinet Committee to coordinate government action towards net zero by 2050.

There are 197 nations and territories in the COP, and all 197 parties have signed up to the UNFCCC. The UN Climate Change Conference has been successful in getting different countries to help tackle the global issue of climate change. For example, the Paris Agreement was set up at the COP21 in Paris in 2015.



The key goal of the legally binding Paris Agreement is to keep the global temperature rise this century well below 2°C. The Paris Agreement works on a five-year cycle of increasingly ambitious action against climate change. According to the Paris Agreement, countries are required to report what they are doing to help cut greenhouse gas emissions. They also have to report what they are doing to prepare for rising temperatures.

The first conference of the parties (COP1) took place in 1995 in Berlin. A lot has been achieved since then, including the Kyoto Protocol, which makes industrialised countries limit and reduce greenhouse gasses to their individualised targets. Another achievement of the COP is the Lima Call for Action where a lot of the Paris Agreement policies were elaborated. This happened at COP20 in Lima in 2014. At COP26, all participating countries were asked to submit their long-term goals to tackle the climate emergency.

This climate conference is important for the UK to show what the host nation is doing to tackle climate change. This is especially important for Scotland, with the conference being held in her largest city, as the government says that their targets to reduce emissions are some of the toughest in the world. Scotland has a target to have renewable energy generation accounting for half of energy demand across electricity, heat and transport by 2030.

MAJA GRANTHAM



Face to Face At Last

For the first time since February 2020, Strathendrick Stitchers were able to meet in the same room. Well, actually three rooms, since all the dividing walls in the Kirk Hall were folded back to accommodate us. The Covid guidance given by the Church of Scotland is strict, but everyone attending was very diligent. And I don't think those tables have ever been quite so clean.

It's hard to express how fabulous it was to be with each other after such a long time. It's also fair to say that more chatting and catching up was going on than stitching, which is understandable enough, really. And to our absolutely delight, we welcomed three new members to this first meeting. Definitely the cherry on top.

And there's more good news! The *Killlearn Courier*, which also supports village projects such as the Killlearn Heritage Trail, has agreed to give Strathendrick Stitchers a donation towards workshops for our members. We had to cut both talks and outside works from our syllabus this year – our first session as an independent stitch group after more than 40 years as a branch of the Embroiderers' Guild (and yes, there's a story there) meant we had to tighten our belts. We are so grateful to the *Courier* Group and KCFC. The more we learn, the more we can pass our knowledge on.

The only cloud on the horizon is that Fabric Fun – which is organised for primary school children – is still unable to meet at the time of going to press because the local libraries cannot hold any group activities. But never



fear! Other venues are being investigated. If you want to know more about Fabric Fun or keep in touch, contact Heather on strathendrickfabricfun@gmail.com.

We welcome grown-ups, too. If you'd like to know more, or would like to join us on the third Tuesday of the month at the Kirk Hall, you would be very welcome. Contact Susan Rhind (strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com) to find out more. NB

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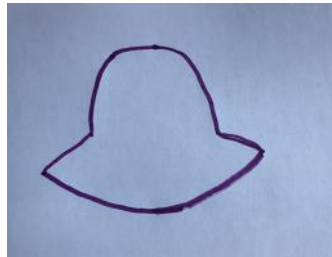
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Christmas Bell Ornament

This is a simple, easy-to-make Christmas decoration with few resources that you can easily find. Younger children may need some assistance. You can make the bell from fabric, paper or anything you can cut and glue.

Resources/materials required:

- 🎄 Cardboard shapes – see template. You can use a cereal box or similar.
- 🎄 Fabric or decorated Christmas paper.
- 🎄 Glue (stick glue will work or careful use of fabric glue).
- 🎄 Length of ribbon (about 40cm) to be used to hang your completed decoration.
- 🎄 A small bell or large bead for the bottom of your decoration (*optional*).
- 🎄 Needle and matching thread, to oversew edges together (*optional*).



Instructions:

- 🎄 Using your card templates draw the Bell – twice – on your fabric/paper.
- 🎄 Cut out the 2 shapes, leaving 1.5cm around the outside.
- 🎄 Apply glue all around the edges of the card shape and then place it on the wrong side (back) of your fabric/paper shape.
- 🎄 Carefully fold your fabric/paper over the edges and press firmly. Let dry.
- 🎄 Make the second bell in the same manner.

Once glue is dry:

- 🎄 Fold the ribbon in half and make a loop – this will be used to hang your decoration.
- 🎄 Place the ribbon down the centre of one of the shapes, and glue at the top and bottom.
- 🎄 When dry, glue the wrong sides of your shapes together and press firmly until dry. The ribbon will be sandwiched between the two sides.
- 🎄 If you wish, you can sew the two shapes together rather than glue. Make sure that the ends of the ribbon hang below the bottom of your bell.
- 🎄 If you wish you can add a small bell or beads to the end of the ribbon. *This is optional.*

Happy Christmas from Strathendrick Stitchers!



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Wednesday 1st December

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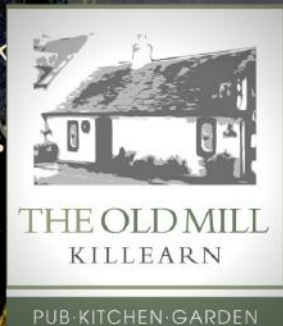
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Bridge by Zorro

Killlearn Bridge Club has been running online all through the summer using the RealBridge platform. The great advantage of RealBridge is that, as well as seeing your own cards, you can see and hear the other three players at the 'table'. We use it in a club setting, so each table plays the same cards just as when we meet physically in Killlearn Village Hall. The software is supported on many computers and tablets, so almost anyone who uses the internet can play.

Our new season has started, and due to ongoing concerns about close contact indoors, we have decided to continue online until Christmas with the hope that we can get back to face-to-face bridge in the spring.

Our bridge classes have continued online for a few folk, and we hope to re-start them if we can get enough interest. To join us for a Tuesday night club session, for the classes or for any queries, please go to our website and email us via the site.

The article this time presents a bidding challenge. I don't want to give too much away before you turn to the solution page, so just a few clues: you have a wide choice of bids at this point in the auction, and perhaps those used to Duplicate Bridge, rather than Rubber Bridge, may have a slight advantage.

What does West bid with the hand below? See page 32 for my analysis. Z

| | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Dealer: West | North-South vulnerable | | |
| South | West | North | East |
| | 1♣ | Pass | 1♥ |
| 2♦ | ? | | |

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

Cheese Straws



Always popular – very easy, but you need good strong cheddar.

Ingredients

- 75g butter
- 75g plain flour
- 50g strong cheddar, grated
- 25g freshly grated parmesan
- 1 egg yolk
- 2 teaspoons cold water
- pinch of salt
- pinch of cayenne

Method

- Rub the butter into the flour and stir in the grated cheeses and seasonings. Add the egg yolk and water and knead to a stiff paste. Chill for at least 30 mins, it will be easier to roll out.
- Preheat the oven to 200°/Gas Mark 6.
- Roll out until it is about 3mm thick. Cut into strips around 10cm by 1cm. Do not make them too long or the straws will be too crumbly.
- Place on a baking sheet and bake for 10-15mins until light gold in colour. Leave on the baking sheet for a minute or two to firm up, then serve warm or cool on a rack.

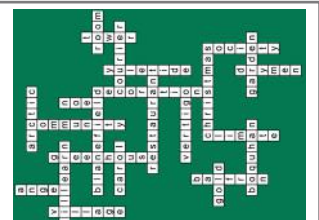
You can also freeze the strips and cook from frozen. Just give them an extra couple of minutes in the oven.

Recipe originally from Nicola Cox. JY

Solutions to the puzzles on page 37

Word Wheel: but, feu, flu, tau, tub, about, bean, blue, fue, fuel, lieu, lute, tabu, tuba, tube, tufa, built, fault, fute, tubal, fibula, futile, beautiful

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 2 |
| 6 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 1 |
| 1 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 4 |
| 4 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 6 |
| 3 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 5 |
| 2 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 3 |



Killlearn Scouting News

Cubs had a great start to the term with an overnight camp at Loch Venachar. The rain set in at nightfall, which meant everyone could retreat to their tents for an early night – or rather a lot of giggling and sweets! We had many wildlife encounters and lots of fun, and the Cubs were all fantastic, helping to carry equipment, pitch tents, make dinner, and clean and tidy up. Since then we've enjoyed learning to use camping stoves (the noodles were a hit) and attempting to make cake on a campfire (a work in progress). We've also had some active games with Zest Fitness and a litter pick. For many, the highlight of the term has been a trial paddleboarding and water safety session. Everyone got thoroughly wet, so it was a big success.

Not only have the Cubs been thriving over this period, the Scouts have also been super busy and proactively involved in helping to plan a schedule of activities. This has meant the Scouts have had an exciting few months. In August they had a very successful camp, with kayaking and canoeing during the day, and then tuition



in campfire cooking from a professional chef. They have also had a day on Loch Ard, tackling an inflatable assault course on the water, undertaken a trail run with some steep hills, and (by the time this is published) been paddleboarding and swimming. In between times they have been kept busy and active by games nights and navigation challenges.

We were very lucky that the Scouts were funded by a Summer of Play grant to offset the cost of some activities, but further fundraising is needed. We have plans to do a sponsored litter pick, where we would ask for support from local businesses and residents. Please get in touch if you would like to sponsor a local bit of land to be cleared of litter!

Contact us at killlearnscouts@hotmail.com.

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Christmas Dangers



Christmas is a magical time however it's not without its dangers for our pets... We've compiled a list of some of these to help you keep your pets out of trouble!

Plants & Flowers:

- **Poinsettias** are a popular gift not many are aware that they are potentially toxic to dogs and cats when ingested!
- **Lillies** also can cause acute kidney damage so keep them out of reach of our feline friends.

Food Items:

- **Chocolate** is a well known toxin in dogs and cats - keep those advent calendars and chocolate pennies to yourself.
- **Mince Pies** contain raisins which again can be very toxic.
- Your **Christmas Dinner scraps** also pose a risk of pancreatitis for your pet and cooked bones should be avoided at all costs for risk of constipation and obstructions.

Miscellaneous:

- **Tinsel** & gift wrapping ribbons can seem pretty attractive to our furry friends to eat but their long length can cause problems when they attempt to pass these through the gut!
- **Batteries** from toys can be easily stolen and can cause pretty nasty upsets if they leak in the gut.

If you are concerned your pet may have come into contact with any of these potential dangers get in touch on our usual number and speak to one of our Vets.

*Happy Holidays when it comes from all at
Jackson Vets x*



Beyond Bowl and Tennis Ball

Little question: whose life is better? One Border Collie that co-owns a corner store with a small garden or one that spends a lot of time in a large, but bland, back garden? Neither dog gets many walks. Border Collies need a lot of exercise, therefore it should be the dog with a large garden, right? Surprisingly, the corner store dog has the better life because of the mental exercise (and even physical exercise) he gets by interacting with people and his interesting shop environment. In contrast, the other dog has a lot of space for physical exercise, but a definite lack of mental exercise, which often leads to problem behaviours or silent suffering.

Feeling bored despite having all the space in the world? Wasn't that what lockdown felt like? Sadly,



most of our pets, not just dogs, have this feeling of boredom and frustration to some extent every day.

How can we help them? By simply adding a pinch or teaspoon of 'environmental enrichment', especially now during the colder months when 'Who wants to walk the dog?' is often met with silence.

Many enrichment ideas are based on the fact that our pets gobble their food from

a bowl within two minutes, while their wild cousins scavenge and hunt, spending a lot of time and effort to obtain food. Why not let your pets work for their food too? For example, scatter-feed some of your pet's food rather than feed it all from a bowl, give some or even all of it throughout the day as a reward or let your pet search for hidden food. You might try using a well-stuffed Kong toy, feeding ball, snuffle mat, licky mat, fun feeder, puzzle toy or a DIY hanging plastic bottle to paw or roll on the ground (remove lid, cut holes, add food). Offer food in a cardboard box or toilet paper roll. Make mouse-sized paper wrapped parcels for your cat to rip apart. Messy, but worth it!

Add variety to their lives by offering toys of different consistency and use, and keep those interesting by 'rotating' them. Offer five or so and then replace two of them weekly.

You can make your own toys. Make a 'crackle' sock stuffed with cellophane or a braided tug-of-war toy from a fleece blanket. Safety first – initial supervision to ensure that your pet does NOT ingest either them or the string they are hung up with is advised.

Have daily play, training or massage sessions. Use lights, radio and TV on timers. Create different higher-quality walks, vary a route, venture (on lead) into the shrubs next to the path to investigate, plan a walk with a dog friend. Take your dog for car rides. You can add structure to your garden or make it a sensory adventure playground: offer a digging area, letting them dig for 'hidden treasure', hang a tug rope from a branch, make an agility course. Try using unwanted perfume to change the scent-scape of your house and garden. These are only a few examples – select what suits your pet or invent more.

Have you hung up that plastic bottle yet?

Now sit back and enjoy your tired out, happy pet!

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An Alternative Christmas

Before writing, I always find it beneficial to look back over previous Christmas articles to see what has changed in the preceding 12 months, and, of course, to make sure I'm not repeating myself. This is the third year in a row in which I sit down to write in very unusual times

In 2019, we were unsure of the effects of Brexit on our wine shelves; we are starting to see that impact in reality. In 2020, we were locked down and far away from loved ones, with Zoom and FaceTime connecting us.

In 2021, we will be able to embrace those that we have missed and once again sit around the Christmas table enjoying good food and wine, and most importantly, good company.

But what to drink? In the midst of such change, our wines should bring comfort and stability, or at least confidence they will taste good! How about this year we try something new with our turkey?

Instead of champagne or prosecco, support our local vineyards and opt for the finest fizz from down south. Gusbourne Wines, a boutique English winery in Kent (with free UK delivery), have the distinction of being the most awarded English sparkling wine producer for a reason. They have a wide range of fizz to suit whatever you are eating, and can give any champagne a run for its money.

With the traditional festive dinner, delve into the (relatively) new range from Marks & Spencer's and try a variety that doesn't get much press. The Mazuelo variety

has been grown in La Rioja for several hundred years, but today makes up just three per cent of the vineyard area – a rare gem. It is also known as Carigñena in other regions in Spain, and Carignan Noir in the rest of the world, given its French origin. Rioja's Mazuelo produces wines with great structure and freshness.

For the end of the meal, if you enjoy sweet, then the Disznoko Tokaji Aszu 5 Puttonyos from Waitrose would be a perfect match, or search out a Tokaji from your usual wine shop. It is not the best known dessert wine, but it is one of the oldest, mentioned as early as 1635, and is well priced.

However, if you are saving that last little space for the cheese board like me – unless you want to pick a wine for every cheese – opt for a Tawny Port, or a rich ripe Malbec from Argentina.

All of this is fun to consider, of course, but at the end of the day the most important thing is to drink something you like, and often the best wine to go with Christmas dinner is simply the one you enjoy the most.

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The Big Country

One of the more appealing day-time programmes on telly is *Escape to the Country*, where people who have lived in towns and cities for decades follow their dream to settle somewhere with lots of trees and open fields. We are fortunate to live in exactly that sort of place, but it is still interesting to see other parts of the country, and to admire the variety of landscapes that Britain has to offer. And one thing they all have in common is space. To have a view is something all the participants want, and if you live in Killearn, you have a view in pretty well every direction.

Our family all live in London, and although their particular habitats are surprisingly leafy, they're still very much in the city. From the middle of Glasgow, one can be in open country in about 40 minutes, and at Loch Lomond in not much more than an hour. But that's not the case in London, is it. When our lot appear in the village, they can immediately see the difference. London is pretty good on parks, but they don't have what we have. Whether they are entirely aware of it or not, when our grandchildren get here, they feel a sense of expansion, of high-quality air, of big skies and distant hills.

Even on a smaller scale, there's always space. Take the view of

the park from the corner of the Clark's garden. The wide expanse of grass that incorporates the football field gives way to a line of impressive old oaks, each given enough room to take on their natural shape. And behind them more trees, longer grass, ideal territory for Hide and Seek or just a shaded stroll. And most of the time, you can still see the hills.

And then there's the Glen. It may seem fanciful to think of the Glen as the lungs of the village, and that may not be a particularly scenic image, but it's true, isn't it. The amount of moss in there improves the air quality all by itself, before you start on the scent of grass and flowers, and the distant hint of bluebells. And even though it's full of trees, the Glen offers space – space to be on your own, to think, to breathe. It's what city dwellers dream of.

While on the subject of space, how on earth did the Killearn Cottagers' Horticultural Society manage to remove all the cars from the church car park to set up the outdoor Flower Show? And wasn't it super? It wasn't the whole package that we are used to, of course it



wasn't, but it was a pretty good substitute under daunting restrictions. There is something particularly rural about a collection of tents offering produce and art work, especially under a blue sky and summer sun. We even had spectacular scenery as a backdrop, though I don't think the Horti would take credit for that!

With the splendid summer now a distant memory, the seasons are moving steadily towards winter, and one starts to think of the charm of winter scenery. One of our prized possessions, hanging on our dining room wall, is Norman's magnificent photograph taken from half way up Dumgoyne. It is a winter panorama of the hills, the farms and fields, and the village in the midst, in deep snow under a perfect blue sky. It was a family Christmas present, highly evocative of the upcoming season. Not only is it a technically marvellous image. It is also a representation all on its own of why people want to escape to the country.

JOYCE BEGG

Support for Veterans with Sight Loss

With an estimated 20,000 veterans over the age of 75 living with sight loss in Scotland, the charity Sight Scotland Veterans is on a mission to reach out to even more veterans with visual impairment.

Established in 1915 to help those blinded in service, today Sight Scotland Veterans gives support to all veterans with sight loss – including National Service veterans – no matter if they lost their sight during or after service. A majority of veterans – 98% – supported by the charity have sight loss that is not related to their service, but resulting from age-related sight conditions, illness or an accident.

The charity's friendly and knowledgeable outreach workers are based across Scotland, and provide tailored practical and emotional support to veterans with sight loss in their homes and local communities.

Sight Scotland Veterans' free support ranges from expert advice to specialist equipment – like talking devices, electronic magnification, specialist lighting and mobility support to aid independence in day-to-day tasks – to opportunities to make new social connections in the community.

Killearn resident Alison Cairns is Sight Scotland Veterans Practice Lead

Our names have changed



for South West Scotland, overseeing Sight Scotland Veterans' outreach team. John Gouldby, Sight Scotland Veterans Outreach Worker, also supports veterans with sight loss in the area.

If you are a veteran with sight loss or know someone Sight Scotland Veterans could help, and are interested in their support, Alison and John would love to hear from you. Call 0800 035 6409, email hello@sightscotlandveterans.org.uk or visit sightscotlandveterans.org.uk.

JOE WEALE

Scam Alert

Although the last few months have been quite quiet with regarding to new scams, there have been a few.

Computer users may have encountered an email allegedly from Microsoft asking you to update your password as it would otherwise expire soon. The link takes you to a site that asks you to provide personal information to verify your account. Scam! Another 'Microsoft'-related scam is a phone call suggesting that a suspicious and unauthorised charge had been detected. To approve or deny the charges, press a key – Scam!

An older scam has reappeared: a request for help to purchase an Amazon voucher (by and on behalf of someone you know), but to send the voucher code to the sender. This is actually a different email address, or the email has been hacked and the message can be intercepted.

One person has been affected by a fake insurance comparison site which led them to a fraudulent site where they shared personal information (something you would actually expect to be doing with a genuine site). But it was a phishing attempt, and resulted in a flurry of unwanted emails offering other 'services'.

Apple is encouraging people to update their devices, as a security vulnerability has been found. This vulnerability could allow hackers to directly install spyware on iPhones and other Apple devices without any user involvement. They say that you should update to iOS 14.8 or iPad OS 14.8. Affected devices are: iPhone 6s and later,

iPad Pro (all models), iPad Air 2 and later, iPad 5th generation and later, iPad Mini 4 and later, and iPod Touch (7th generation).

Criminals are recruiting a rising number of teenagers to help them launder the proceeds of crime. The BBC programme *You and Yours* recently featured an item on 'money mules' – people who allow their bank account to be used to transfer money between accounts for a third party (www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000zv87). Students, teenagers, and those seeking to make some extra cash are particular targets. Recruitment can be via social media such as Instagram and Snapchat. Places where young people congregate such as sports clubs, schools and colleges are also key recruiting grounds. The number of cases of young people who have allowed their bank accounts to be used to divert funds has grown by 73 percent in two years. The 'mules' – who often aren't curious about the source of the money – are given a cut for allowing their account to be used. This activity is illegal and can have serious consequences.


The CD News (www.stirling.gov.uk/media/23843/cdnews-sept21-general.pdf) includes a few more scams to watch out for.

Finally, if you receive an email purporting to come from Royal Mail asking for payment to clear insufficient postage to allow collection of a package, well, it's a scam.

Be sceptical! Stay safe!

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Thought for the Issue: There is Always Hope

Cast your minds back to October, when ‘just in time’ collided rather forcibly with Covid, Brexit and a distribution-led shortage of fuel. The Prime Minister did a swift volte-face in the hopes of enticing EU HGV drivers and skilled abattoir workers to our shores to make sure that turkeys were on the table and parcels under the tree in December.

By the time your copy of the *Courier* flops on the doormat, the distribution problems might be in the past. One thing has been made abundantly clear, though: efficiency is pretty much the opposite of resilience. ‘Just-in-time’ depends on the smooth flow of goods around the globe, and the pandemic disrupted economic activity throughout the world. Not to mention the odd tanker with its \$1-billion cargo stuck tight in the Suez Canal. ‘Just-in-time’ is a fragile model.

All the kerfuffle had me thinking. Might this be the Christmas without all the electronic tat you forgot to buy batteries for? The one where the children don’t find the boxes more entertaining than the plastic contents? Or maybe not even the one that’s the stuff of innumerable comic sketches? Might it be the Christmas everyone piously bangs on about – usually after the BBC announces in approving tones how much has been spent over the holiday period as a proportion of GDP, as we look around to view a sea of torn wrapping paper and hope someone’s thought to buy an extra packet of Rennies? What if we were all about to celebrate a ‘real’ Christmas for a change?

Or are we heading for the same old Christmas? You know, the one where we are urged to keep on buying – doesn’t really matter what – to support economic growth in the aftermath of the pandemic. Apart from landfill, what hole are we really trying to fill with all this stuff?

In his thought-provoking book *Riders on the Storm: The Climate Crisis and the Survival of Being*, Alastair McIntosh, Quaker and

human ecologist, has helpfully offered a definition of consumerism. It is, he writes, ‘*consumption in excess of what is needed for dignified sufficiency of living*’ (author’s italics).

Does this mean we should all be frogmarched back to the Middle Ages? Or – possibly more exciting – back to the Stone Age? Of course not. Writing before the event, I can’t say if COP26 managed to achieve its aim of ‘accelerating action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework convention on Climate Change’. Success or not, climate change is our reality, and consumption is part and (forgive the pun) parcel of it.

What we desperately need to do is pull together and get on with the vital job of dealing with this great challenge of our time.

One way of doing this, as Mahatma Gandhi said, is to ‘live simply that others might simply live’. This is the middle ground between a reliance on the variations of the same technology that got us into this mess (Blue Gas, anyone?) and alarmism that provokes a backlash (*nothing*

matters if the Americans/Chinese/Indians don’t agree) or worse (*I’ll be dead when it happens*).

This is where the strength of communities like ours gives real hope. More of us are trying to buy

“live simply that others might simply live”
Mahatma Gandhi

locally, or using groups like Hub G63 and the Milngavie Food Hub. More of us are learning skills, from green woodworking to knitting. More of us are using repair hubs or volunteering skills to help others.

At Killearn Primary School, kids are planting gardens and planning outdoor classrooms, helped along by an older generation of residents.

Our willingness to look after one another will be at the heart of our ability to adapt to whatever future comes our way.

And how much more secure will our position be with more community and less stuff? NB


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Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Dean Lockhart MSP
Member of the Scottish Parliament
For Mid-Scotland and Fife

Please feel free to contact me if you think I may be able to help you :

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What a great summer we have had with such a lot of sun. Due to the relaxation in Covid measures, we have been able to carry through a full programme of outdoor events.

This year, for the first time independent from The Hoolie, we ran a static show event at Killearn Kirk car park with some great food provided by the Kitchen Window. This was all very well received by both members and public, and we gained several new members, so consequently we may well run it again in future years. The beautiful weather and a great setting helped, of course, and we were able to get the hoods down and give folk a full view of our cars, as well as share their characteristics and histories.

Our annual CarBQ was well attended, and we were able to try manoeuvring our cars around a course across a grassy field in addition to enjoying chat and lovely food.

Over the summer we had several lunch runs to Glen Devon, Loch Fyne in the sunshine, and south of the river to Uplawmoor on probably the only rainy day. Surely it's not always as bad as that on the southside?

All these physical activities were supplemented by a special edition of *Overdrive*, our club magazine, that

covered the intense rivalry between Ford and Ferrari to win the Le Mans race in 1966.

Our last run is to Dunkeld before we start our winter programme. We hope it will go ahead as planned. We start with our delayed AGM and then Christmas Quiz. In early 2022 we hope to have after-dinner talks on rallying and the history of Volvo before we can get out and about again as the days start to lengthen.

Meanwhile, if you would like to know more about our plans and the Club before the next issue of the *Courier*, then please contact me as Secretary at (info001@gmail.com).

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If My Friends Could See Me Now

Before I was married, I spent a few days in Scotland with the family of my Dearly Beloved. It was just after Christmas. A great deal of snow had fallen and more was forecast. It was decided that we should drive north for a day's skiing. I had never skied in my life. This was mainly because ski resorts were a bit thin on the ground in Yorkshire where I was brought up.

The Bowie family had a huge hall cupboard full of ski boots, skis, anoraks, woolly hats and gloves. I had no idea that the equipment was so complicated, but eventually my 'outfit' was chosen. I began to feel quite enthusiastic about trying something new. What did seem strange was the impression I had that they all believed that everyone knew how to ski, but I felt sure that when we got to the slopes someone would show me how to do it.

We set off the next morning at an unspeakably early hour. It was cold and dark and the birds were still asleep. As we drove north the sun shone and the scenery was spectacular. The boots were in the boot, the skis were strapped to the roof rack. An exciting day ahead!

Since this incident I have often wondered whether they all thought I was just being modest about my ability to ski. Maybe they assumed that just as most people could walk, they could also ski? Anyhow what happened next was that after parking the car we all put on (in my case with some difficulty) boots, skis and woolly regalia. Then, without a word of farewell, my companions, including my Dearly Beloved sped off towards the

chair lift and I staggered slowly behind them. I have no recollection of how I got onto the chair lift, but I suppose they all thought I had been there and done that many times before.

As the lift rose smoothly upwards I had one of those 'if my friends could see me now' moments. There was nothing to this skiing business at all, I decided.

All too soon I could see the top of the slope. I hadn't given much thought (no thought at all, really) as to how I was going to get off the lift, but I realised that the move was imminent because we were now passing empty chairs on their way down. I peered ahead, hoping to see a mechanism by which the chair would pause, allowing someone to help me to get out.

To my horror I beheld, ahead of me, lithe skiers leaping out of their chairs and zig-zagging back down the slope. Before I had time to devise a plan or shout for help, it was my turn. I threw myself out of the chair and landed face down in a heap of snow. My mouth, my ears and my nose were packed with snow and I couldn't stand up because I couldn't find one of my legs.

Yet this story has a happy ending. Before long there was a swooshing sound and my Dearly Beloved slid gracefully to a halt beside me. 'Are you alright?' he asked cheerfully. I took the chairlift down and I don't believe I uttered a word until we were back in the car and the word I uttered then was not a suitable one to recount in a respectable publication such as this. CB



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From The Archive: Killearn Primary School Outings

Those of you who have read your Killearn book thoroughly will remember that the children in primary school were treated by Colonel Blackburn to an outing to the 1911 exhibition. This was not a one-off event. The children were treated to an outing most years.

Colonel Peter Blackburn of Killearn House was the third son of Peter Blackburn and grandson of John Blackburn who bought the Killearn Estate. He went into the army and rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel before unexpectedly inheriting the estate in 1893. Despite living in England, he took a great interest in the school and served on the Killearn School Board. In 1911, he presented each of the children with a Coronation mug.

On 6 July 1911, 80 children, together with teachers and friends, travelled to the Glasgow exhibition on the 8.39am train. They arrived about 10am and were met by Colonel Blackburn, who provided them with sixpence each to spend and accompanied them for part of the day. They enjoyed a free visit to all sections of the Exhibition and the amusements in the entertainments park during the fine weather. Lunch and tea were provided in the Carlton Restaurant. They returned to Killearn on the 5.17pm train having thoroughly enjoyed their day.

On 3 July 1913, the children were treated to a train trip to Ardrossan. On arrival, the children had a snack before going to the sands, where they took part in various sporting activities and also had great fun riding donkeys.

After lunch, Colonel Blackburn joined the party and gave out prizes to the winners. The travel arrangements went without a hitch, and the day was dry.

In July 1914, the children were grouped in prime position on the Killearn Station platform to see King George V and Queen Mary arrive to board the royal train, following a visit to the Duke and Duchess of Montrose at Buchanan Castle. Several hundred people had come from the surrounding area to see Their Majesties.

By 1 July 1915, excursions were restricted because of the war so they were treated to an outing on the Killearn Estate. Some 120 children, under the charge of teachers and friends, left the school at 11am. On arrival at Home Farm the party was met by Colonel Blackburn and were served lunch. After engaging in some very enthusiastic games, their host invited the party to visit either Finnich Glen, Dault Glen or Killearn House gardens. This made interesting expeditions for the children. Unfortunately, rain began to fall heavily before tea, which took place under shelter at the farm. Afterwards, Colonel Blackburn's sister, Mary, presented prizes to the winners of the games.

Provision of outings seems to have been common. The Buchlyvie and Drymen children were also taken to the 1911 Exhibition. The Drymen children were especially lucky because they travelled by special coaches from Drymen Station without the need to change at Balloch, as was normal practice.

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Killlearn's Own Paralympic Medallist

Shortly after 3am BST on Saturday, 28 August, on the other side of the world in Tokyo, six beeps sounded – the race was on and less than one minute later it was over. Lewis Stewart, from Killlearn, with his tandem partner, James Ball, had secured a Silver Medal in the Paralympics Men's B1000m Time Trial. Fantastic!



But how did this former pupil of Killlearn Primary School and Balfour High climb to the pinnacle of this highly competitive sport?

Lewis Stewart's dad, Andy, was always a keen cyclist and a member of the Glasgow Ivy club. He encouraged young Lewis and his sister, Abby (also a really good athlete) to join the Glasgow Riderz when they were still at primary school. A talented all-rounder, Lewis enjoyed football, rugby and athletics. Then, at the age of about 13, he started to take his cycling more seriously and his potential began to shine through. He did well at the Scottish Championships at 14 and was invited to join the British Cycling 'Talent Team' – their select youth development programme.

Up to the age of 16, competitors ride on both the road and track – but Lewis always preferred the latter, training regularly at the old Meadowbank Stadium in Edinburgh. In common with many sports, Lewis' progression not only demanded dedication on his part, but huge commitment from his family – travelling to training camps and events across the country.

The opening of the Chris Hoy Velodrome in Glasgow was a major boost for the sport and incentive for Lewis and Abby. He worked his way steadily up through the junior ranks – joining the Junior U18 Academy and going international, competing in the European and World Championships.

Lewis was now really flying. In 2016, he won Bronze in the team sprint at the UEC Junior Championships and a year later won the individual keirin event at the British Junior National Track Championships.

High-tech equipment is so important – and expensive – in elite cycling, so support from his parents, the community and later British Cycling and the National Lottery has been key to Lewis' progression. The Killlearn Trust once funded a disc wheel for Lewis – which made a huge difference at the time.

At 18, Lewis, in effect, became a full-time athlete, moving to Manchester for the next four years, training daily at the velodrome with the backing and demands of the British Cycling team. Then, 18 months ago, fate stepped in. The pilot of James Ball, one of the UK's top disabled track cyclists, was injured and a replacement was sought. Still eligible to ride in the Paralympics, Lewis committed his next two years to building a highly competitive pairing with his new tandem partner.

In 2020, at the UCI Para-cycling Track World Championships in Canada, James and Lewis lost out to the more experienced Neil Fachie and Matt Rotherham in the kilo (1000m), before turning the tables on their teammates by triumphing in an all-British sprint final.



And so to Tokyo. All that training and commitment, all those hours in the gym and on the bike, all those hopes and dreams came down to four laps of the track.



Second last to go in the kilo, James and Lewis posted a new Paralympic record of 59.5 seconds. GB teammates Fachie and Rotherham then won the gold, achieving a new world record. Winning Silver at the Paralympics was a hugely proud, happy moment for Lewis, James, their families and all their supporters.

What is next? Well, the Manchester velodrome is being re-furbished, so Lewis is back in Killlearn for the time being. If you want to know what his training regime was, what Tokyo was like, what his diet consists of or how much his bike costs – when you see our local hero in the Co-op, or perhaps in The Old Mill, you might care to ask him.

Lewis has high expectations of being in a strong Scottish team for the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham – racing in the kilo, keirin, individual and team sprints – and then, depending on how things go, perhaps the Paris Olympics in 2024. After that? Who knows, but it probably includes a science degree at Glasgow University.

Watch this space. Good luck, Lewis, Killlearn is rooting for you.

Killlearn 10k: We're Back!

We're very pleased to confirm that we have started preparations for a full-scale, in-person, all-singing, all-dancing, best-ever Killlearn 10k and Mile in 2022!

It's hard to believe that 1 June 2019 was the last time we were all able to get together, but now's the time to look to the future and focus on the positive.

Save the date, you runners and marshals: the 10k will return on Saturday, 4 June. And while you're at it, runners, put a note in your diary for Thursday, 9 December, when entries will open online.

Our committee members are already hard at work on all the many behind-the-scenes tasks that need attention before the race can happen: seeking the necessary permissions, arranging chip timing, securing insurance, etc. The guys played a blinder to turn this summer's Virtual 10k into reality, and the organisational task of staging a full-scale race is all the more demanding.

We're also on the hunt for sponsors, so message us on Facebook if you'd like to chat about getting involved in supporting the race.

We're all determined not only to live up to the high standards the event has set over the years, but to go even further. We're still in the early planning stages, but we hope to introduce improvements which will provide an even better experience for 10k runners, milers and spectators alike. Watch our Facebook page for news.

We can't end this update without expressing our heartfelt thanks to committee member Julie Murray, who is standing down for a well-earned rest after years of steadfast service. Thank you so much for everything, Julie, and we'll miss you.

DAVID MCKAY

A Hundred Hikes

If you had to draw the Killlearn landscape, most of us would include Dumgoyne in it. Dumgoyne is a volcanic plug that sits 427 metres (1,401 feet) high on the edge of the Campsie Fells.

We see it from all over the village, but how many of us tramp its tough paths? I've met many a villager who, despite living in Killlearn for years, has never attempted to reach the hill's trig point.

Well, not Carol Murray. Working from home during lockdown, and not able to run her usual miles because of injury, Carol set herself a challenge: 100 Dumgoynes in 2021! A challenge she completed on 14 October.

Carol's challenge has encouraged many of us to get up Dumgoyne this year. We huffed, puffed, got attacked by midges and cleggs, we got burnt in the sun and soaked in the rain, but mostly we chatted, laughed and enjoyed being outdoors. Well done, Carol!



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Killlearn Football Club Steps Up to the Tee

It was always going to be a bit different this year as we got back to playing again on the 'field of dreams' after a long break. The boys rose to the challenge and, although we didn't win any trophies, overall it was a very good season.

We found ourselves in the top half of the league at the split and finished 4th overall, only Drymen conceded fewer goals than us, and we reached the semi-final of the Cup, where we lost by the narrowest of margins. We look forward to getting back to a full season next year and – fingers crossed – maybe winning some silverware.

The team spirit was high, not just on the field, but off it too – whether supporting the Killlearn Virtual 10k or travelling to Wembley for the Euros. However, our spirit was best reflected in our end of season golf outing to Strathendrick, where we saw 25 players and supporters taking part in a fun and entertaining day. Scott Cameron took the glory as this year's winner on a day that saw 2019 winner, Colin McGowan, pick up the booby prize!



Thanks to all at Strathendrick Golf Club for being excellent hosts, and to the Old Mill Inn for providing the ideal 19th hole setting.

Finally, a thank you to all who have supported the Club this year, it is very much appreciated.

Stay safe, keep well and see you next season!

CB







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Killlearn coaches do the village credit



Strathendrick 2nd XV: a blend of youth and experience Photo: Ciera Campbell

After an entire season wiped out by the pandemic, seniors and juniors at Strathendrick are pleased to be back playing competitive rugby on a regular basis. Numbers are good at all levels – but new members are always welcome.

One or two players retired from the 1st XV over the extended, enforced break, but fortunately a number of talented young bucks have stepped up from the previous U18s, so Strathendrick now boasts a useful, youthful squad. Good results in pre-season have been followed by more competitive matches in Tennent's West Region League Division 1. The 2nd XV – with a mixture of youth and experience – have enjoyed their early games of the season. How many of the squad in the accompanying photo do you recognise?

The Balfour – 'Endrick Midis have teams competing in the Barbarian Conference at every age group from S1 to U18. The commitment of the boys and the coaches

in training and in the Saturday morning and School's matches is tremendous – and young talent is flourishing. For more information on teams and training visit the Club website (www.strathendrickrfc.com).

Numbers are also good in the Mini section who train or play in matches and tournaments on Sunday mornings.

A significant number of the Club coaches reside in Killlearn and Boquhan including Campbell Millar, Sylvia Werner, Craig Moir, Chris Jewell, Ronnie Hayton, Mike Bottomley, Steven McCooey, Andrew Falconer, Jason Dawes, Ewan Mackay, Mark Walford, Nic Jonsson and Mark Gibson (some roll-call!). All these dedicated people are SRU qualified and 'PVGd', and devote a lot of time to their squads. You are a credit to the Club and to our community: thank you. (And if you are a Strathendrick coach and live in Killlearn and I've missed you out – apologies!).

NH

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Killlearn Tennis Club News

The dark nights are now upon us, but what fantastic weather we had over summer. There was lots of play over the summer months and into autumn. Great to see so many members enjoying our local club.

We held an Open Day in August and, par for the course, it rained on the day after all the glorious weather we had enjoyed. Despite the damp conditions, there was a great turnout. The weather didn't deter many of us from playing, while others spectated from the gazebo and clubhouse. The strawberries and cream went down a treat and the delicious home baking (from our 'star-baker' members) was scoffed pretty quickly. The liquid refreshments also hit the spot. We hope to have many more fun open days next year. Members and non-members will be very warmly welcomed.

So with the winter months and dark evenings to contend with, play continues at the club. We have excellent floodlights for evening tennis, so no excuse not to play!

Just a reminder that we have various social apps in place for those members looking to arrange a game with others. We also plan to keep all our members updated on Club news with a regular newsletter.

Our AGM was held on 9 October, and we now have a number of new committee members on board which will enable the Club to continue and grow in strength. An update with all the latest news will be in the *Courier* spring edition.

Prior to writing, our secretary, Jan Biggart, decided to retire from the position after many years of tremendously hard work. Jan, thankfully, will still be very involved with the Club. Thanks for all your hard work and commitment, Jan.

We now look forward to springtime. Hopefully we will have more normality after a couple of difficult years. Perhaps some LTA summer league matches will proceed for those interested in team competition. We also hope to organise some inter-club tournaments for all ages and for all levels of play, just for a bit of fun and/or some serious competition. So there's lots to look forward to this coming year!

As always, all are very welcome at the Club. If you are interested in membership, please have a look at our website (www.killlearntennisclub.org.uk) or find us on Facebook.

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Curling – Stones Are Rolling Again!

Or to quote from a poem by the avid curler, poet and one-time Killearn minister Rev. Gordon Mitchell, ‘We’ll hae a game at curlin’ yet’.

The other good news is that the game is basically back to normal, apart from disinfecting the handles of the stones and wearing masks when we are not on the ice.

Active Stirling, who operate The Peak, in conjunction with Stirling Curling Group, who represent the clubs, arranged a ‘Bounce Back’ week at the end of August. The idea was to help players get their confidence and skills back after an 18-month break. Quite a number of Strathendrick members took advantage of this event as a useful start to the season.

The main Club has planned two single-round leagues with six teams in each. The Ladies Section have two leagues with four teams in each, but three rounds in the autumn and two in the spring.

The Ladies started with a well-supported practice session, including trying out various shots and playing

positions. This was followed by an opening bonspiel which was won by Gill Smith’s team of Jane Weir, Annette Rogers and Norma Thornton by the smallest of margins.

The main Club started with the President v Vice-President competition which forms their opening bonspiel. The result was a win for the Vice-President by 14 ends to 7.

The Club had victories in their first two external matches. They progressed to the second round of the Forth Valley Area Knockout and defeated Balfron in their first Forth & Endrick Province league match. Let’s hope this success continues.

The Club will be 175 years old in 2021, so a special celebration will be held in due course.

The contacts for the Club are Tony Flisch (860580) and Gill Smith (550726) or look at our website at strathendrickcurling.org.uk. New members would be welcomed by both the Main Club and the Ladies Section.

Bridge by Zorro Solution to the problem on page 16

West has a difficult decision to make over South’s 2♦ bid. One possible bid would be 2♠, but that won’t go anywhere unless East also has four Spades. Game in Hearts might be possible or even in No Trumps. Alternatively, with West’s hand, there is a good chance of defeating South’s 2♦ contract so what about a penalty Double? Down by one trick would give a score of 200 which would exceed a part score if that was all the East–West cards could produce. If East–West could make game, the penalty is likely to be even more (500 for two down) and better than the non-vulnerable game score of 420.

As it turned out the result was even better than expected. The lead of ♥Q from West was followed by ♥2 to East’s ♥8. East then switched to Spades for West to take both ♠A and ♠Q and return ♠4 for East to ruff with ♦10. East returned ♣2 for West to take the A and K. West next led his fourth Spade for East to ruff with ♦Q. Having lost the first seven tricks, South decided to stop the rot and over-ruffed with ♦K. Unfortunately, this left West with ♦J 8 3 over Declarer’s ♦A 9 7 so the Defence took two more tricks for a total of four down and a score of 1,100.

Many intermediate players restrict their penalty Doubles to high contracts (game or slam) believing that these are harder to make and so more likely to fail. More experienced players will know that the other pair will have a good idea of what they are doing by the time they reach game or slam, and so a good chance of making the contract. They will also recognise that a Double may actually help Declarer in some way.

In contrast, Doubles of lower contracts can usually provide larger penalties simply because the bidding has not developed sufficiently to provide the information needed for a sound contract.

(With acknowledgement to *The Daily Telegraph* and G.C.H Fox for his choice of hand and notes.)

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Robert (Bert) Atkinson 1930 – 2021

Bert – as he was known to all – was born in Gargunnoch to Thomas and Margaret Atkinson, the middle child of a family of four sons and a daughter. When Bert was five the family moved to Killearn to the Toll House and he lived here until he was married. He attended Killearn Primary and Balfron High schools, and on leaving became an apprentice mechanic and coachbuilder at Paterson’s Garage, Glasgow. When he left Paterson’s to go into the army it was REME that he joined, where his interest in all things mechanical was developed further. He was a keen motorcyclist, and some of his leisure time was devoted to riding with other local lads on their motorbikes and to following speedway racing. When he began courting Phyllis, whom he met in Gartness, he found she shared his interest in motorcycling, and together they also shared a dream to set up their own business.

They bought a piece of land at Woodside and here Bert built a home and a business. Literally, with his own hands, he built the garage and a house and here they lived after their marriage in 1956; here they raised their family – a son, Brian, and two daughters, Carol and Shirley. The business – the garage for repairs and restorations, and the petrol pumps – provided a service seven days a week and became a trusted source of support for the local community, as well as providing breakdown vehicle recovery for the police and the servicing of Strathendrick Milk’s tankers. It was very much a family business, with everyone – but Phyllis, in particular, on call from her kitchen – to man the pumps whenever a driver pulled in for fuel when Bert was engaged on motor repairs. He had a deep interest in all things mechanical and could mull over a problem with a piece of equipment until he could devise a way of fixing it. Renowned for his refusal to throw away anything apparently beyond repair, he had a workshop full of spare parts and bits and pieces which he would modify and re-use, making them serviceable again and solving a problem. His ingenuity and resourcefulness

was matched by his skill with his hands. He trained many apprentices, and many of those who worked with him and many of his customers became a part of a large circle of friends.



Alongside his successful business he had a great love of agricultural vehicles – vintage tractors, in particular, of which he had quite a collection.

He retired from his business in 2000, but kept his hand in by continuing to restore these ancient agricultural vehicles which he would show at local shows, especially the Drymen Show, where he won numerous awards. His favourite ‘Grey Fergie’ attracted much praise and attention.

He and Phyllis enjoyed their retirement years together, watching their grandchildren and great-grandchildren grow until Phyllis sadly died in 2014. For the following seven years, Bert’s independent nature ensured he coped well on his own. He took up baking and bread-making, and enjoyed the social interaction afforded by the meetings of the Thursday Club at which, although often the only man present, he was a popular member and appreciated the company and the tea. He was always immaculately turned out in collar and tie, and treated everyone with great courtesy and friendliness.

Until the pandemic intervened he attended church regularly and the coffee sessions after the service. It was no surprise to find the church filled with a great range of mourners at the funeral service which celebrated Bert’s long and industrious life.

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John Robbie 1946 – 2021



John was born in Inverness to Tom and Mary Robbie. His father was with the Forestry Commission and they moved around Scotland. John lived in Peebles, Pitlochry and Brechin, and then at the age of 11 moved to Glasgow.

He attended Kelvinside Academy, and while there he joined the CCF and went into the Naval Section; from there he joined the RNR. He met his wife, Sheila, on board *HMS Clyde*. They married in 1969, and Fiona and Heather completed the family.

He started his working career with Stewarts and Lloyds, after it was nationalised he had a few other jobs, then in 1977 he moved to Killearn and joined Tube Developments Ltd, where he worked until his retirement in 2010. His job took him round the world and as the children had now grown up, Sheila and he also travelled the world. They enjoyed many cruises together.

The arrival of his grandchildren brought him great joy. He was a loving husband, father and grandad, and will be sorely missed.

THE ROBBIE FAMILY

William McLachlan McGee 1950 – 2021

William (known to all as Bill) McGee was born in Scotstounhill, to parents Jimmy and Annie, and had an older brother, Jim. His childhood was a happy one and he spoke with fond memories of a home filled with music and laughter, and of games with his friends, one of their favourites being to race their bogies around the back lanes, sometimes to the annoyance of the neighbours.

He left school at 16 and joined his father in his car sales business in Yoker, until he and his brother opened their own business at Kessington filling station and expanded this into car servicing and repairs. They employed a mechanic – Bill Mouldsdale – and the two Bills soon developed a close and lifelong friendship, both sharing a lively sense of humour and a love of music. They worked hard, but terminated their lease after some years.

Bill began a new career in radio communications, working for Air Call Communications, one of the first companies to introduce paging and mobile phones.

Bill met Sandie in the late '60s, and they married in 1973 and settled in Milngavie, where their daughter, Claire, was born. The family moved to Killearn in the late '70s, first to Harpers Road and then to Oak Place.

Health problems caused him to retire from work at the age of 54, and a thrombosis following a heart attack necessitated the amputation of his left leg. His cheerful personality helped him to face this disability positively and he was determined it was not going to diminish his life. He adapted well to his prosthetic leg and was able to walk his daughter proudly down the aisle at her wedding. The birth of his granddaughter, Holly, was an occasion of great joy for him, and the two enjoyed a devoted relationship in which Bill taught her first the acoustic and then the bass guitar.

Music and cars were Bill's lasting interests throughout his life; he followed Formula One keenly and had amassed a vast collection of model cars. Bill was an



accomplished acoustic guitar player and he also played the keyboard.

His family meant everything to him, and he enriched their life together by his positivity, his energy and his great sense of fun, filling the home with laughter. He will be sorely missed.

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Helen Elizabeth Macnab 1950 – 2021

Helen was born in Bearsden, a second daughter for her mother, Marjorie. She was educated at the local school and on leaving took an office job in Milngavie. In her teens she joined friends who were visiting a patient in Killearn Hospital. That patient was George Macnab, and that unplanned visit proved to be the starting point for their courtship. The couple married in 1969 and settled in Killearn and here raised their family, Tricia, Andrew and Gillian, who sadly died at the age four. Her death was a great blow for the family.

Helen was essentially a caring person and much of her working life was dedicated to looking after others and their homes. She worked in several houses in Killearn, very often helping to care for elderly people; she also worked as an auxiliary in Killearn hospital and in several local nursing and care homes, and at one stage was a lollipop lady.

She was also a great lover of

dogs, particularly the Lhasa Apso, which she bred, so she was frequently seen on walks with several of these attractive dogs on leads around her feet. Prospective buyers would come from far afield for one of her puppies, but she was most particular and would vet every interested purchaser with care before letting any dog she had reared go to a new home. She and George made many new and lasting friendships through the dog breeding.

She maintained links with her family and visited her sister in Canada on numerous occasions, sometimes with George and sometimes alone, leaving George at home to mind the dogs. There was a strong partnership and a happy marriage in which they were great supporters of each other.

Helen had a number of health issues throughout her life and over 10 years ago was diagnosed with throat cancer, with little hope of



recovery. However, her strong will and a determination to get back to her own home gave her the resolve to fight the disease, which she did successfully enough to allow her a few more years of companionable marriage.

Death from a heart attack came suddenly and unexpectedly, and left her family and friends shocked and bereft at her passing. She is sorely missed by them all.

BP

Vilma Southam 1932 – 2021

Vilma was born in Annan and grew up in Ballachulish, the second of three children. She attended Ballachulish Primary and then boarded at Oban High School for her secondary education, where she first developed her love of hockey. She went on to study nursing at Glasgow's Western Infirmary, but after a year decided that this was not for her and enlisted in the Royal Signals, where she was able to develop her hockey skills whilst based at Caversham.

On leaving the Army, Vilma went to Wellington, New Zealand, where she worked in communications for Civil Aviation. Whilst there, she met Len Southam who also worked in communications. They married in 1958, and went on to live in Melbourne, Australia, before returning to the UK in 1961.

After a brief stay in England, the couple returned to Scotland, staying

initially in Clarkston Road and then Bearsden. They had a daughter, Moira, in 1968 with whom they moved to Killearn in 1969. Sadly, Moira died in a road crash in 1972. Vilma and Len went on to have two more children, David was born in 1973 and Morven in 1975.

Vilma was a keen contributor to village life, being on the committee of the local playgroup for many years and helping many of the Cub Scouts and Brownies of the '80s to pass their Cookery and Communications badges

As her children grew up, she studied knitwear design at Cardonald College and went on to found a knitwear business with her long-term friend, Elizabeth. The business thrived, with regular clients in Japan, USA, and closer to home, as well as fulfilling requests for film productions.

After a fall and a brief period of rehabilitation, Vilma passed away in



Forth Valley Royal Hospital with her children around her. The family are grateful to her friends and neighbours in the village who did so much for Vilma over the last 18 months.

THE SOUTHAM FAMILY

Prize Christmas Crossword Set by PeeWit

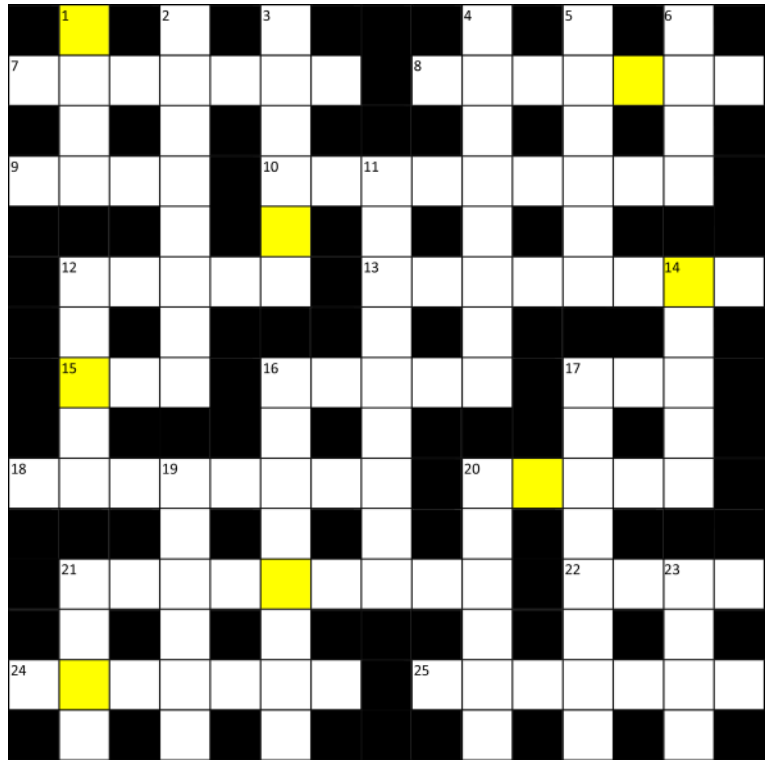
Our prize for the Prize Crossword is a Family Ticket to the Theatre Royal or the King's Theatre, Glasgow, subject to availability and restrictions on certain days. Our prize for the Children's Prize Codeword is a £10 voucher from the Co-op. Entrants must be 12 years old or under. The *Courier* would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

ACROSS

- 7 Present fight welcome at 21ac (4,3)
- 8 Conceal risen top (5,2)
- 9 See 20ac
- 10 See 21ac
- 12 Three seen at 21ac (5)
- 13 See 21ac
- 15 Record can be burnt (3)
- 16 Anoint black horse with initial light (5)
- 17 See 21ac
- 18 See 21ac
- 20,9 Cockney eyes food to eat at 21ac (5,4)
- 21,13,18,10,17 Bird needing Weight Watchers as the season approaches? (9,2,6,3,5,2,7,3)
- 22 Pawn wine (4)
- 24 Monk digs shortly around this province (7)
- 25 Expensive car in fire around another (6)

DOWN

- 1 Two soldiers join musical (4)
- 2 Putting away remains in police operation (8)
- 3 Old boy ends in garden centre (6)
- 4 Meets eyesight correctors (8)
- 5 Smell around priest caused by gas (6)
- 6 Bribe is a small cake before the end of evening (4)
- 11 Game due, it must be girls playing hockey (5,4)
- 12 Spirit becomes shy about a record (5)
- 14 Gunpowder ingredient – can I treat it inside? (5)
- 16 Reserve then betray place to buy present for 21ac (8)
- 17 Locate brass instrument at Moray eco-community (8)
- 19 Music genre to house car (6)
- 20 Ox meets space traveller with old firearm (6)
- 21 Cheat found in nativity play (4)
- 23 Joker who came at 21ac (3)



The letters in the coloured squares make up an anagram associated with 22 across (8). Solve the crossword and find the answer to the anagram. This is the answer.

Email it or write the answer on a piece of paper and send it to the *Courier*. Instructions in the box below.

Lucky winner of our last crossword was John Leonard, Killearn.

Solution to the last crossword: Across: 1 adept 4 mum 6,8,15 the *Courier* edition fifty 9 dryer 10 sing the blues 11 ex-directory 18 twang 20 octagon 21 ran 22 ray 23 agent
Down: 1 access 2 equinox 3 twist 4 market economy 5 mudflat 6 thyme 7 earl 12 integer 13 refugee 14 cygnet 16 drain 17 fatwa

Children's Prize Wordsearch

Find 10 words in the word search grid that are related to the Christmas season.

Eight of the words are: *Advent, holly, Bethlehem, nativity, Rudolph, stocking, tree, yuletide.*

Find the other two words, write them down and post them or email them to the *Courier* for a chance to win a £10 voucher which you can spend at the Co-op.

Please give your name, your age and a contact address or telephone number. Entrants must be 12 or under.

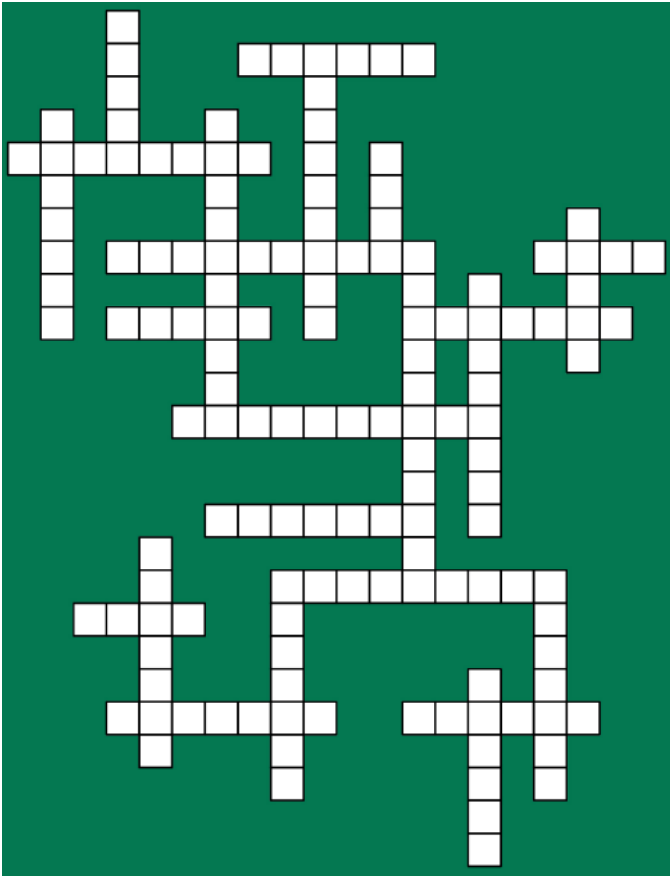
Instructions for sending it are given in the box below.

We urge everyone who tries our competitions to send in an entry – it's easy! Winners are selected at random from those received, so everyone has a chance to win. Email your solution(s) to peewit@kfc.co.uk, or drop it in the postbox outside the Village Hall. Remember to give your name, address and a contact phone number before **27 November 2021**.



Peewit is on the naughty step, one of the towns was missing from the last wordsearch. Deepest apologies.

Word Fit



Can you fit all the words into the grid to complete the puzzle? There is only one way they will fit.

4 Letters: gold, Noel, room

5 Letters: angel, carol, tower

6 Letters: arctic, Drymen, garden

7 Letters: Balfon, Boquhan, climate, courier, society, vertigo, village

8 Letters: Killearn, Yuletide

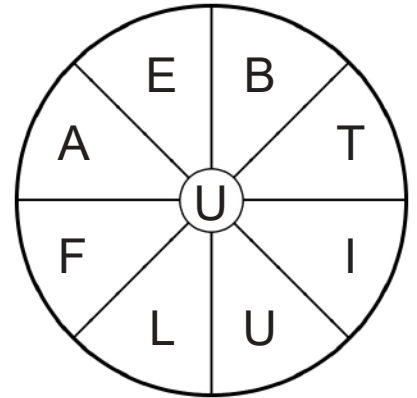
9 Letters: Christmas, community

10 Letters: Blanefield, greenhouse, restaurant

11 Letters: decorations

Word Wheel

This is an open-ended puzzle. How many words of three or more letters, each including the letter at the centre of the wheel, can you make from this diagram. We have found 23, including one nine-letter word. Can you do better?



Sudoku and Children's Sudoku

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | | 1 | 9 | | | | 6 | 4 |
| | 2 | | | 4 | | 1 | 9 | |
| 4 | | 9 | | | | | | |
| | | | 4 | 6 | | 5 | | |
| | | | 3 | | 5 | | | |
| | | 2 | | 7 | 9 | | | |
| | | | | | | 3 | | 7 |
| | 3 | 4 | | 8 | | | 2 | |
| 7 | 5 | | | | 1 | 8 | | 9 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 6 | | |
| | | 2 | 4 | | 1 |
| | | | | 2 | |
| 4 | 2 | | 3 | | |
| 3 | | 4 | | 6 | 5 |
| 2 | | 6 | 1 | | |

The Sudoku above is medium difficulty. Each of the nine blocks has to contain all the numbers 1–9 within its squares. Each number can only appear once in a row, column or box.

The Children's Sudoku follows the same rules, with the numbers 1 to 6.

You can find the solutions to these puzzles page 16.

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What's the Buzz?

One of the most striking aspects of the winter months is the apparent lack of insect life. They don't completely disappear, of course, but sightings of the larger flying insects are generally few and far between while temperatures remains cold. Some species hibernate as adults, while others have life cycles involving eggs or pupae that endure the winter, before larvae or adults emerge at the onset of spring.

When it comes to bees, I must confess that I am inclined to forget about them during winter, save for the occasional glance at the honey jar while spooning a dollop of the stuff onto my morning porridge. And so it is with some surprise, and indeed a fair degree of relief these days, when I catch sight of the first queen bumblebee of the year buzzing brazenly through the air. Freshly out of hibernation, she either searches for a suitable nest site or, if she already has one, zigzags busily and intently from flower to flower, looking for both pollen (in which to lay eggs back at the nest) and nectar (for feeding).

There are over 200 different species of bee (including over 20 species of bumblebee) in Britain, only some exhibiting social behaviour. Their general decline is a much publicised and significant concern that now jostles for attention with other climate-related portents of doom. After all, it has been estimated that one-third of our food supply depends on pollinating insects, bees in particular. The reason for the declines of bees is, like most things in nature, not straightforward, with various factors at



play including climate and habitat change (the rise of the monoculture), pesticides and disease.

But not all species are in decline. The Tree Bumble Bee has successfully colonised Britain from Europe in the last 20 years, spreading into southern Scotland in the last eight. It has a distinctive black/brown/black/white pattern which makes it relatively easy to identify. However, other bees can be much trickier to sort to species level and, while I believe that the one pictured is a Common Carder Bumble Bee (*Bombus pascuorum*), I'm happy to be corrected! In any case, there were hundreds of these on lavender and sedum in the garden this summer – a most welcome sight and an indication that, for now, there *is* honey still for tea.

MARTIN CULSHAW



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| Deanston | Killearn | Strathblane | |

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Anyone wishing to contribute to the *Courier* spring edition is reminded that it will be distributed on 14 March 2022.

Advertisements and artwork should be sent to us by Friday, 28 January 2022. Contact Gwen Stewart (01360 550856).

Contributions and letters to the editor should be in the hands of the editorial team by Friday, 28 January 2022. Please send them to:

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