

# BURGH BUZZ



Burntisland's Free Community Magazine

Previous issues at [www.burghbuzz.org.uk](http://www.burghbuzz.org.uk)

May 2021

Issue No 79

## Burntisland Harbour—Access Prohibited?

Burntisland Harbour has seen many changes over the years, but one thing that has remained constant is the freedom for generations of townspeople to wander around it. That freedom is now under serious threat.

In February 2020 the harbour's owner, Forth Ports (FP) met with Anne Smith of Burntisland Community Council to inform her that they intended to install fencing which would render the entire east harbour area and all but the extreme east end of the breakwater out of bounds to all but FP permitted entrants. The reason given for prohibiting public access was Health and Safety (H&S).

A full account of this meeting was published in the March 2020 minutes of the Community Council but that was right at the start of Covid and seems to have slipped beneath the public radar. Only recently did the community become aware of the proposal, and what a terrible shock it was! Were it not for Covid it's likely the fencing would have been installed by last summer.

Back in mid January 2021 I was chatting to local artist and naturalist Leo du Feu about what a great place the harbour is to go wildlife watching and just for a general wander. Leo expressed what a loss it would be when it became fenced off to us, the public. This was news to me! We decided we had to try to do something so Leo drafted a letter to FP's Senior Port Manager.

Leo pointed out why the harbour is an extremely important space for the people of Burntisland and listed the wide range of activities enjoyed by so many; he acknowledged the problems caused by the few who mistreat the area and offered to form a new 'Friends of Burntisland Docks', offering to set up litter-picking patrols, to enhance the habitat for wildlife and people, perhaps to design and produce interpretative panels celebrating the area's history and wildlife, etc;

Leo suggested that whilst we accept there may be some H&S factors, to simply fence off the entire area is far outside the modern-day spirit and understanding of community and outdoor space and of



The scenic breakwater will be out of bounds to the general public

physical and mental health; He also pointed out that FP's parent company/owners - PSP Investments (in Canada!) - clearly state in their literature that, "Environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues are some of the most significant drivers of change in the world...."

A pretty convincing appeal. But a month later came FP's response—NO! I then suggested we set up an online petition, thinking that if we could muster a couple of hundred signatures it might persuade FP to think again. It went live on 24th February and within 24 hours, 1,175 had signed. The local press picked it up, MSPs Mark Ruskell and David Torrance and Councillor Lesley Backhouse all weighed in on our behalf, and within a week, Forth Ports were suggesting a meeting for "further dialogue".

By now our campaign team had grown to include an East Dock neighbour Andy Wight-Boycott and High Street shop owner and ex-lawyer Louise Humpington. Along with Anne Smith from the Community Council we met with FP's Senior Port Officer and his deputy on 12th March. But despite making a very strong case against the proposal and demonstrating the strength of public opposition (2,000+ signatures by now, and lots of heartfelt public comments read out at the meeting), they remained completely uninterested in budging.

Since then we have spent very many hours researching the history of the harbour, the legal complexities and land designations and trying, in vain, to obtain the H&S report which apparently led to FP's decision. We created the

#SaveBurntislandHarbour Facebook group where people can post photos and artworks to visually celebrate the harbour (over 470 items posted at the last count), and an Instagram account to match.

As the fencing proposal is so controversial, we're lobbying our elected Fife Councillors to have FP apply for planning permission, rather than getting it signed off as "permitted development". If we're successful, the public will then be entitled to comment and lodge objections to the planning application. We expect a response by 6 May. If unsuccessful you, the reader, can expect a further petition and a call to "Fight the Fence".

Alan Hobbett has joined the team, bringing professional experience of town planning, and we're continuing to explore every avenue to try to ensure that the harbour can continue to inspire and enhance the lives of Burntislanders for generations to come.

Any significant developments will be published on the Burntisland and #SaveBurntislandHarbour Facebook pages. Meanwhile please support us by signing the petition if you haven't already done so at: [chnng.it/wqKGDWQLHD](http://chnng.it/wqKGDWQLHD) or search "Burntisland docks" on [www.change.org](http://www.change.org). You can also sign a physical copy of the petition in Grain & Sustain on the High Street, Covid precautions apply, DO NOT sign both online and physical copies.

We would like to thank those individuals (too many to name) who have assisted with specific issues and the people of Burntisland for their support.

**Andy Pay**

# BURNTISLAND'S COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

*Featuring — Local issues :: organisations :: events :: people and more*

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## From the Editor

It is really comforting to again be able to distribute a printed version of the Buzz throughout the town. Not so comforting however, are the contents of the front-page article concerning Forth Port's intention to prohibit public access to the docks area, including the Breakwater, supposedly on Health and Safety grounds. The article reflects a groundswell of opposition within the community which is supported by further historical, environmental and public health considerations as outlined in articles on pages 11 and 20.

As a youngster of Primary School age, I can recall fishing for "podlies" from the steps of the East Dock, watching and then unsuccessfully, copying the mackerel fishermen from the Breakwater - at a time when the dock area was much busier with bauxite ships unloading onto railway wagons from the east dock and ferry passengers travelling to and from Granton. At that time, the Sailing Club was not located in the dock area but the public was afforded unrestricted access with no tragic consequences.

Who can remember in the late eighties, joining the throngs of locals watching from the Breakwater, participants in the Tall Ships Race sailing up the Forth? - also with no H & S problems.

Unsurprisingly, the "Save Burntisland Harbour Group" have been unable to access the H & S report on which Forth Ports' decision presumably, has been made - I wonder why! Please afford support to the Group in any way you can.

Another disappointment to me has been the lack of response to my article on Community Policing in the winter issue of the Buzz. The Scottish Police Authority, Police Scotland and Fife Divisional Headquarters have not even had the courtesy to acknowledge receipt of the printed copies of the Buzz which I personally posted to them.

Furthermore, the police report on page 3 graphically reflects the lack of resources in community policing. Having been alerted to the illegal and dangerous parking which occurs daily outside the Primary School, what has been the police reaction? - to merely appeal to drivers to park legally and with consideration to others!

Will it require a serious or even fatal accident to spur our community police into taking some positive enforcement action?

**Bill Kirkhope**

**Editor** — Bill Kirkhope  
39 The Wynd, Dalgety Bay. KY11 9SJ  
e: [billvida@sealscraig.plus.com](mailto:billvida@sealscraig.plus.com) t: 01383 822023

**Design & Graphics** — Michael Booth  
e: [michael@michaelbooth.co.uk](mailto:michael@michaelbooth.co.uk)

**Advertising Coordinator** — James Thompson  
e: [jamesbaltas@gmail.com](mailto:jamesbaltas@gmail.com)

**Distribution** — Linda Briscoe  
e: [lindacobriscoe@gmail.com](mailto:lindacobriscoe@gmail.com)

**Editorial Committee** —  
Paul Briscoe, Dave McPherson, Kizzy Waplington

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## Your Community Council

Burntisland Community Council (BCC) is elected every four years to ascertain, coordinate and express to local and public authorities, the views of the community which it represents and to carry out other functions in the interests of the community.

Chair: Alex MacDonald  
 Vice Chair: Vacant  
 Treasurer: Fiona Watson  
 Secretary: Anne Smith

### Members:

Tim Hailey	Jim Sheridan
Brendan Burns	Lynne Ralph
Yvonne Crombie	Ken Littlemore
Clare Slater	Carol McLeod

### Contacts:

Chair — Alex MacDonald  
 1 Craig Court, Burntisland. KY3 0AT  
 t: 01592 873314 e: alex\_mac@btinternet.com

Secretary — Anne Smith  
 burntislandcc@outlook.com

[www.burntislandcc.org.uk](http://www.burntislandcc.org.uk)  
[www.facebook.com/BurntislandCC](https://www.facebook.com/BurntislandCC)

## Elected Fife Councillors' Availability

### Councillor Lesley Backhouse

Telephone: 07540 677081

Email: [Cllr.Lesley.Backhouse@fife.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Lesley.Backhouse@fife.gov.uk)

Lesley is happy for constituents to ring her on the above number or email.

### Councillor Gordon Langlands

Telephone: 01592 874612

Email: [Cllr.Gordon.Langlands@fife.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Gordon.Langlands@fife.gov.uk)

Gordon does not hold surgeries but is happy for constituents to contact him to arrange to meet at a convenient time and place.

### Councillor Kathleen Leslie

Telephone: 07714 778906

Email: [Cllr.Kathleen.Leslie@fife.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Kathleen.Leslie@fife.gov.uk)

Kathleen can be contacted by telephone or email to arrange a visit or chat at a time of your convenience.

## Scottish Parliament election

Thursday 6th May is the date for the 2021 Scottish Parliament election, where voters in Burntisland elect an MSP for the Kirkcaldy constituency as well as seven list MSPs in the Mid Scotland & Fife region.

## Community Council Bullets.....

The Community Council holds its regular meetings on the second Friday of each month, at 7.00pm in Burntisland's Burgh Chambers.

However, meetings are instead being held online using Zoom video-conferencing for the foreseeable future. Members of the public are welcome to attend or to raise matters of interest to them—please contact the Secretary or Chairman if you wish to join.

A summary of issues raised during the last three meetings is set out below.

- On the advice of Audit Scotland, we have reminded Fife Council of how rent is to be calculated for their use of the Links. Work which was not financed by Fife Council—such as the recent electrical upgrade—should increase the rent which they pay to the Common Good Fund. We await a fuller review by Fife Council.
- We have been in touch with Forth Ports and will not support the proposed extensive fencing at the East Dock, which is beyond any reasonable requirement for the safety of port operations.
- We have made small donations to several community groups. The groups which benefited were two Tenants & Residents Associations, FAB, Heritage Trust and Toll Community Centre. Those donations were made possible by the generosity of Tom Courts Butchers and also from our own operational surplus.
- Discussions continue on the possibility of finding a temporary, alternative use for the gap site opposite the Burgh Chambers.
- The project to upgrade the environs of the Cot Burn at the Toll Park is now almost complete. Trees have been planted; a fence and extended footpath have been installed; interpretation panels and seating is also now in place.
- With the support of her many friends, a commemorative bench has been installed at Union Street in memory of Christine Dewar.
- Fife Council have indicated their intention to carry out soft landscaping / remedial works in the vicinity of the prom.
- Work continues to trace and prevent flooding arising from the numerous water courses which flow from the West Binn.
- It was agreed to buy Christmas column lights which had previously been rented, as it would provide a better financial out-turn over their remaining life.
- We have been advised not to seek to reinstate the clock tower at the Burgh Chambers as a separate project, pending the possibility that the overall Burgh Chambers complex might be supported for more comprehensive funding later this year.
- It was agreed to support a proposal from the Central Burntisland TRA to buy more seagull-proof bins.
- There will be no ship movements from Braefoot Bay for about four weeks, whilst substantial upgrades take place at the Mossmorran site. The use of the elevated flare at Mossmorran is projected to reduce by 98% by the end of 2022.
- We have received a more detailed report from Police Scotland than for some time. It shows plans to prevent and respond to anti-social behaviour. It also reports action on speeding and parking. Several people have been charged with theft, vandalism, driving, assault, drug and fraud offences.

# The Burgh Poliz

from PC Stuart Kinnes



Firstly, I would like to start off hoping that we find you all well. As I write this, we appear to be making progress out of lockdown. There seems to be some genuine light at the end of the tunnel after a number of false starts and uncertainty.

Community Policing has continued throughout the last year but in different form from a community aspect. It is our hope that community meetings in their various forms, which were the norm a year ago will start to return in the coming months.

From a local Policing point there has still been a lot to deal with. Earlier this year there were a number of high value thefts from Co-op stores throughout the area. I am pleased to say that as part of a Scotland wide policing approach, two males have been apprehended and charged with a number of thefts across Scotland.

With the schools now open again after lock down closure, it has been brought to our attention that parking around Burntisland Primary school can be a problem. Unfortunately, the lack of parking at the school is causing some parents/carers to park indiscriminately around the area. In doing so, blocking in the cars of local residents or parking illegally, too close to junctions and on kerbs etc. Not only can this be hazardous for other drivers but it can also impact on pedestrians, including of course the school children themselves. I would like to ask parents/carers who drop their children off

at school by car, to park safely further away and walk the rest of the way. This would allow the volume of traffic around the school to be less and ultimately safer.

Carrying on the parking theme, Burntisland High Street remains a concern for us. We have spent a lot of time in and around the area moving vehicles which have parked inconsiderately. The focus on this will continue with penalty tickets being issued where required.

We are aware of the increase in antisocial behaviour calls in recent weeks and deal with them at the time they are reported to us. As a community team we remain focused on these issues and have engaged with partner agencies including the British Transport Police with a view to preventing large groups getting on the trains and travelling to the area. The Grange Farm on Cowdenbeath Road and Broomhill Viewpoint have regular patrols, particular at the weekend with a dedicated team in place to respond to any calls of an anti-social nature locally.

It has been brought to our attention by a number of sources that children of various ages have been observed on scooters in and around the east end of the High Street. The scooter users have been causing issues with pedestrians, especially outside the sheltered accommodation at St Andrews Court. May I ask parents/carers to speak with their children about this and be aware of where they are playing. The last thing any of us want are injuries caused by

reckless scooter users.

As the weather starts to improve and the hours of day light start to stretch, it's normal to want to get out in to the garden and carry out some much needed work. May I take this opportunity to remind you to please, ensure the security of any sheds/out buildings are maintained and tools, lawnmowers, bicycles etc. are kept safe and secure.

One last thing from us, as we are still dealing with the global COVID-19 pandemic can we again ask you all to be mindful of the most up to date guidelines from the Scottish Government. For more info visit:

[www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19)

As always, we will take this opportunity to remind the public that there are various ways of reporting crime.

Where persons are looking to remain anonymous, information can be provide via Crimestoppers using the contact details below:

Website: [www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)

Telephone: **0800 555 111**

When reporting crime to the Police, the public can use **101** to report non emergencies, **999** to report emergency situations and of course the email address below in order to contact us with concerns which are not ongoing at the material time:

[BurntislandKinghornWesternKirkcaldyCPT@Scotland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:BurntislandKinghornWesternKirkcaldyCPT@Scotland.pnn.police.uk)

## Central Burntisland Tenants & Residents Association

It has been a busy few months for CBTRA working on matters to support and enhance our local community.

March saw our 3rd AGM and the following members were elected to office:

Chair: Iain Ralph (reviewed in 6 months)

Vice Chair: Craig Martin

Treasurer: Moira Michie

Secretary: Marion MacGregor/Lynne Ralph

Committee Members: Paul Graham, Heather Michie, Gillian Newman, Susan Morrison

The events committee meet regularly to explore activities that will bring the community together. After a long winter of lockdown we are looking forward to recommencing planned activities.

Our **Easter Trail** was a great success with over 80 children taking part and we were lucky to have the Mad Hatter and Easter Bunny to hand out Easter Eggs to all the children who took part.



Winners of the Secret code were:

Max Cooper, Brandon Godfrey, Suzanne Potts, Jasmine and Jennifer Mason.

Thank you to **Usave** for sponsoring this event.

We are now working on our summer programme and hoping to join forces with other organisations in the town to offer joint community events.

Notes for your diary:

**Keeping Safe Campaign**—we are in the

process of completing leaflets that will give our community information on how best to report anti-social behaviour and crimes.

This is part of a crime prevention drive to support our community as a whole.

**Summer Activity**—we are planning to host a community event for families, to be held on the links. Details will follow once Covid restrictions allow.

**Christmas Window Competition**—After the success of last year's event we are planning to run this annually.

The **CCTV** is now in position and covers the crossroads at Kirkgate, Sommerville Square and Sommerville Street. Images are being monitored in support of public safety, crime prevention, detection and prosecution of offenders.

CBTRA still meets virtually the second Thursday of every month. Details on our Facebook page or our website

[www.cbtra.com](http://www.cbtra.com)

**Lynne Ralph**

## The Toll Park and Cot Burn Environmental Improvements

Over the past two years, Burntisland Community Council, spearheaded by Secretary Anne Smith, has managed a project to clear up the Cot Burn and replace the dilapidated fencing on the Toll Park side of the burn. For many years, the old fencing had prevented adequate vegetation management and litter picking resulting in the burn becoming a problematic eyesore.

The complex project has involved public consultation, landscape architects, chartered surveyors and intensive fund raising through official and charitable channels. Overcoming the bureaucratic



hoops and hurdles was made more difficult and consequently delayed by the prolonged Covid restrictions.

By the time this edition of the Buzz is distributed the Cot Burn and its surrounds will have been completely transformed. Old fencing has been removed, the burn and burn banks have been cleared of litter. Over-grown vegetation and non-native shrubs have been cut back.

Scottish wildflower seeds have been scattered and 12 native trees planted along the banks. Impressive new fencing has been erected and a new tarmac path runs alongside the entire length of the fence. Interpretation panels, signposts and solar lighting has been installed together with adult benches and children's seating.

We must now consider how to preserve and maintain this restored natural amenity. Fife Council will be responsible for routine maintenance including grass cutting, vegetation management, litter picking and

emptying of litter bins but we, the general public can also help—firstly, by not leaving litter!

You will also notice that the new fence has a number of gates to afford access to the burn banks for litter picking and vegetation management. We are proposing to form a "Friends of Toll Park Group" to assist in maintaining and improving this valuable amenity—arranging litter picks, erecting bird boxes and/or bug hotels are a few initial suggestions. Anyone interested in joining should contact Anne by email: [burntislandcc@outlook.com](mailto:burntislandcc@outlook.com)



## Local Business Updates

**Totally Locally's Fiver Fest** returns on 12-26th June as part of a national campaign and it's expected to be the biggest and best Fiver Fest yet.

Almost 50 independent local businesses—both on the High Street and those working from home—have signed up so far to offer special £5 deals during in June.

It was a most successful fortnight during the last Fiver Fest back in October, so organisers are excited about the buzz it will create around town, especially with shops now re-opening.

More information can be found on the **Totally Locally Burntisland** Facebook page.



**Burger Island** which has operated from the Links for 29 years, is expanding the family-run business with a new restaurant on the High Street, opposite the Silver Tassie.

Without the shows last year, Raina and Stewart Miller turned to a delivery service along with a new menu featuring burgers from Tom Courts, and opened year-round.

The second outlet will offer a different menu and more specials.

**Dears Pharmacy** has opened a health and beauty store in the former Glen Bakers on the High Street, which also features a 24/7 prescription locker.

Unfortunately, **TSB Bank** and **Stuart's the Bakers** have closed, although Stuart's products are now available from the Waverly Café. However, a new deli, **The Busy Bean** is expected to open in Stuart's premises as they expand from their café in Kingskettle.



## Toll Community Centre

The Toll Community Centre and BEAT have been very busy during lockdown supporting our local community.



We even had a special visit from the Easter bunny who kindly handed out eggs to the children in Burntisland and then surprised us by coming back to the centre on Saturday just in case she missed anyone on her travels!

But now we are getting back to some normality, we are working hard to get the Community Hub on the High Street ready to welcome back the various groups, services and agencies during the week beginning Monday 17th May.

Look out for a timetable which will be on the window of the Hub soon and also posted on our Facebook page.

We want to say a huge thank you to the

community for all the support we have received and that has been shown to each other. Therefore, we have decided to host an **outdoor cinema event on Saturday 29th May**.

It will be held in the Toll Park and a family film will be shown so everyone can attend. We promise it will be a great night with children's entertainment, a fabulous raffle and much more. So look out your picnic basket and deck chairs and we will see you on the night.

We have availability on some evenings and weekends for room hires if you are interested please get in touch.

**Yvonne Crombie**

# Burntisland Primary School

**Primary 1** has continued to use our Fairy-tale project as a stimulus for our Literacy tasks. We have also learnt about new phonics sounds daily and are using them to help us sound out tricky words.

This term, “place value” has been a huge focus—investigating tens and ones and using our knowledge of place value to order and sequence numbers. We have used think boards to help support this learning. In class, we have discussed the emotions we feel in the playground and have tried to show these through facial expressions.



**Primary 2** has been studying the Human Body. We have enjoyed learning about the heart, the lungs, the skeleton, the brain and the skin. In Maths and Numeracy, we have been concentrated on time and our times tables.

We have also practiced lots of different types of writing including recipes, letters and leaflets.

**Primary 3** has enjoyed the topic of ‘Medieval Times’ in which pupils have studied all aspects of Castles—the names of different parts of a castle, life within the ramparts and different jobs that had to be done. The children have been busy learning about Emotion Works and have covered all of the five cogs. We have been developing a deeper understanding of our emotions and the impact they have on our bodies and the things we can do to make ourselves feel better.



The children also took part in Red Nose Day Celebrations, shared a joke with their peers and learned about the importance of Comic Relief and how all of our donations help others.

Next term, our topic will be Minibeasts studying their different habitats and the importance of encouraging them to visit our gardens.

**Primary 4**, has had fun using Numicon to help the understanding of numbers and creating fraction pictures. We finished our class reader ‘Toto, The Ninja Cat’ which was a fantastic read and inspired us to do lots of writing and reading.



In Health and Wellbeing, we engaged in paired chats concerning lockdown feelings, using the Emotion Works cogs and celebrated all the skills and talents we learnt during lockdown. We have also experimented growing cress to help us understand how plants grow. Finally, we’ve enjoyed playing French bingo to help us learn our French colours vocabulary.



This term **Primary 5** has studied time and money. Also, we have been reading ‘Catscape’ and using this to complete Reflective Reading activities. During lockdown, Primary 5 learned about renewable and non-renewable energy and the impact of this on our planet. We then linked this learning to Earth Hour which happens every year in March.

In Health and Wellbeing, we have been developing a sense of security and belonging—this has been helpful after a long time of home learning and ‘belong’ is one of our school values.

Next term, we will be completing work on multiplication, division and fractions and we will study the Industrial Revolution. We are also looking forward to developing our learning around Emotion Works.

**Primary 6** has been working hard to develop creative writing this term and pupils have focused on writing detailed

character and setting descriptions. They have also spent time investigating visual texts and, in Numeracy and Maths, have learned more about time, symmetry and shape.

Next term P6 topics for study will include Japan Culture, climate, art and earthquakes. Literacy will covert poetry with animation in ICT. In Numeracy and Maths focus will be on fractions, decimals and percentages.



**Primary 7** has had a busy end to this term. The final of the Burns Competition has finally taken place over Microsoft Teams. There were three amazing finalists from each of the Primary 7 classes, and the judges from Burntisland & Kinghorn Rotary Club had a very tough job to choose the overall winner, who was Alanna Duffy from P7H.



We have also started looking forward to next term where we will all be taking part in the annual Speakers Competition. We have all chosen our topics and are well on the way to creating our talks. We are really looking forward to sharing these with our classes later on in April. We are all pleased to be back at school and are looking forward to an action-packed final term at primary school.

**Compiled by Ben Holder and Liam Keating from P7M**



## And from the Head.....

It's been another busy time in BPS!

Between Christmas and mid-March we were in school teaching key workers' children and some children from identified families. We had around 15% of our pupils in school during this time and the rest were taught online and this was quite a challenge for everyone involved.

However, we have now returned to full time, face to face learning for all children—truly lovely to finally see them all come back to life.

Generally, the children have settled really well and have adapted to being back in school very quickly. Last year has been a real journey but seeing all the pupils back has been such a milestone for us all.

We still have clear restrictions and guidelines in place—no mixing of bubbles, no face to face staff meetings, alternative lunch arrangements, split breaks, no indoor P.E., no class singing and such like. Currently, we are not at a stage where we wish to re-open Breakfast Clubs or After School Clubs, but this will be reviewed as restrictions are eased.

During the last period of working within this model, we were fortunate not to be hugely impacted as a school by Covid-19. We had no staff related Covid absences and no classes had to isolate. We are keen to ensure this continues and are adopting a steady and measured approach

Working within Covid guidelines, we continue to adjust and adapt our teaching practices to meet the needs of our learners but nevertheless, we are excited about what we have managed to achieve.

Last term, we completed two evenings of video parents' evenings and overall the feedback was very positive. We

conducted a very successful Burns Competition in partnership with Burntisland & Kinghorn Rotary Club—all via Teams. We also took part in the athletics competition—again this was done virtually—but our young athletes worked incredibly hard and did a fabulous job in all of their events.

Weekly assemblies continued throughout the latest period of schooling—sometimes through live broadcasts and sometimes a pre-recorded version was used. Each week we looked at a variety of inspirational quotes or things to think about. We enjoyed many quotes from a book called "The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse" and also used a book called "365 Days of Wonder". There is always a section on 'This Day in History', a segment for children to share their talents with the school, called 'Talent Spot' and a section called 'What's in the Box?' where children's views about the school are heard—if they've popped a letter in the box.

We have also recognised events such as Thinking Day, where children from all local Guiding and Scouting groups were able to wear their uniforms to school.

We learned about Inspirational Women for International Woman's Day and some children prepared pieces of work to share with the whole school about women who inspire them. Malala was mentioned more than once and, collectively as a school, we feel a close connection to her because of her visit in 2013 when she carried out part of the 'Topping Ceremony' and made a very inspirational speech, which appears on the wall in one of our lifts.

We also celebrated World Book Day and we all wore red for Red Nose Day during which the children entertained their

classes telling their favourite jokes all of which were shared on our school Facebook page for the wider community to enjoy.



We have had good support from our Parent Council who have produced certificates for all children recognising their achievements throughout this last year. The Council is also planning to raise funds for the children's choice of school items. The children have been asked to vote for improvements they would like to see in school amenities so that the Parent Council can then explore ways to raise money towards achieving these improvements. Fundraising is only a small part of the Parent Council function and we continue to work with them on other aspects of school development.

As parents and visitors are not yet allowed into school, we share learning for each year group on different days on Facebook. This allows parents to enjoy a 'flavour' of what's going on in school and what subjects their children have been studying. Some staff continue to use the remote learning tools to keep in touch with homes so that parents can stay connected with school activities throughout the week.

As the term progresses, we plan to organise other events such as a Covid safe Sports Day, transitions for our Nursery children to P1 and the traditional Primary 7 celebration events. With the enthusiasm and commitment from staff, the partnership with parents and the joy the children bring us, we shall continue to progress through this last stretch of a very demanding session.

**Julie Anderson**

## Burntisland & Kinghorn Rotary Club

Burntisland & Kinghorn Rotary have continued to meet weekly on Zoom with a mixture of quality speakers, quizzes & breakout chats whilst virtual committee meetings ensure continuity.

As might be expected, the use of virtual meetings has meant the Club is looking, like many other organisations, as to how we move forward as a return to some normality becomes available. Our aim is to become a 'Flexible' Club allowing those who wish to return to face-to-face meetings in the Sands Hotel to do so, whilst allowing those who prefer, or need to join remotely to also play a full part.

Being very aware of the local voluntary support groups in play during the pandemic, we are hopeful that as this need declines our organisation will appeal to those keen to continue volunteering and assisting the community whilst at the same time, joining a worldwide network of friends.

Currently our Youth & Community team are involved in the Children's Clothing Bank, now called New4U, covering referrals from Dalgety Bay to Kirkcaldy with a new storage unit being delivered to an industrial estate in the Bay. A substantial number

of children's referrals have had bags of clothes delivered since the start up.

Our Members are involved in the local foodbank which is always in need of donations of coffee, sugar, milk and laundry products.

On the schools and youth side Burntisland carried out the annual Burns Competition in a virtual manner whilst Kinghorn will conduct theirs during the summer term. The Schools Quiz Competition, although cancelled nationally, will be held locally. It is to be hoped that, subject to FM agreement, Rotary Rambles can be resumed soon.

Although opportunities to raise funds generally have been difficult, a number of ideas for spring and summer are in the offing, meanwhile a grant to Asthma in Fife has been agreed.

Anyone interested in attending any of our Tuesday meetings will be made very welcome by contacting our Secretary Ros Moffat on [ros.moffat13@gmail.com](mailto:ros.moffat13@gmail.com)

**Derek Thompson**



## Burntisland Playgroup

It's hard to believe we are already into our final term before the summer break. Our last term was quite a short one, but we still managed to pack in lots of activities in the few weeks we were at playgroup.

The children came back after their extended Christmas holidays very excited to see all their friends again. It only took a few days for it to feel like we had never been away.

The first thing to interest the children was finding out how much they had all grown by comparing their sizes on the height chart. They were really surprised to see how much some of them had grown since our last term.

We then began a theme on "Emotions/Feelings", especially as some children were a bit apprehensive about returning to playgroup. We used pictures and colours to express how we were feeling. Thankfully, most of the time the children were feeling "yellow", which was happy, although some children occasionally felt "red", especially if someone upset them by not sharing our resources.



We celebrated World Book Day by using our "tuff" table to create a different story theme activity each day for a week. Towards the end of term some children were really interested in volcanos, so we

tried to create our own volcano using vinegar and bicarbonate of soda. The children were really impressed when it bubbled out of the "playdough mountain" they helped to build.

We also spent a lot of time outdoors exploring in our local area. We visited the beach and had a few visits to the woods at the "Dells" as well as enjoying our own playgroup garden and the Toll Park on a daily basis.



This term, we will be exploring the natural world in the woods and the beach, observing the changes that happen as the seasons change. We will be finding out about caring for plants and animals through planting seeds/beans and observing life cycles as caterpillars change into butterflies. We will also be responsive to the children's own interests, whatever they may be over the following term.

Quite a few of our children will be moving on to school and nursery after the summer holidays, so we will be helping to make that transition as smooth as possible for them. Unfortunately, COVID restrictions may not allow any visits to their new settings, however we will be working together with the school to help the children settle in the best way possible.

Naturally, we will be very sad to see our

children leave, especially as some of them have been with us for the past two years. We are very lucky to have been able to be a part of their lives and to share in their education. Thankfully, we have some children remaining at playgroup after the summer, so we don't have to say goodbye to everyone, and we will be able to welcome our new intake of children.

We still have some spaces available for our August 2021 term, so if you are interested in a place at playgroup please email [burntislandplaygroup@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:burntislandplaygroup@hotmail.co.uk) for an application pack, or phone 01592 872854 for any information you require. The playgroup hours are 8.15am to 2.15pm, Monday to Friday term times.

Burntisland Playgroup offers quality childcare to children from 2 years 10 months until school age. We are in partnership with Fife Council so are able to offer 24 funded places from the term after your child's 3rd birthday. We also offer fee paying places from 2 years 10 months until your child is eligible for funding, if spaces are available.

We follow the same curriculum as nursery (Curriculum for Excellence), where children have opportunities for learning through a wide variety of activities and resources both indoors and outdoors. Applications can be placed on our waiting list from birth onwards, so it's never too early to apply for a place.

**Jenny Roxburgh (Manager)**



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Class 4



Class 7



## Civic Week 2021

Unfortunately the committee is once again not in a position to hold a proper Civic Week in 2021. However similar to last year, we are still going ahead with a virtual programme of events and hopefully some smaller outdoor activities depending on restrictions.

Civic Week will take place between 18th-27th June with this year's theme being "Heroes and Happiness". It is expected to include the sandcastle competition, treasure hunt, decorating windows, and a character walk around town after proving popular last year.

Look out for more information on our Facebook page, in the Fife Free Press or on posters around town.



Meanwhile, during the Easter holidays we asked children to get involved by decorating their window or painting an Easter egg on this year's theme.

Some "egg-cellent" entries were submitted so the Easter bunny went for an adventure around town on Easter Monday delivering prizes to all who took part, it definitely brought a smile to people's faces!

The Easter Bunny was also busy helping out with CBTRA's Easter Egg Trail on the Links on Easter Sunday, and later in the week delivered the remaining Easter Eggs to the residents and staff of Links View Care Home.

Libby Donovan

## Burntisland Shipyard FC

It's taken a long time to get there but our season was finally abandoned on 11th April with the campaign declared null and void. The club was in a decent position to challenge for the Conference B title. However, it was not to be following football at non-league level being stopped in January and ultimately not restarting.

Already looking forward to next season, the competitive action is scheduled to start on Saturday 17th July with hopefully our loyal band of supporters once again inside Recreation Park. Given how the vaccination roll out is proceeding and with the amount of Covid cases continuing to fall, we can be optimistic of getting under way with a minimum number of restrictions and social distancing measures. We are happy to confirm that we still have a clean bill of health at the club with no one suffering from the virus.

Although nothing has been happening on the park the manager has been busy off it by resigning the bulk of the squad as he looks to have a settled group and importantly, getting continuity in the camp. There will be some comings and goings in the build up to the resumption of football, however, I would not anticipate too many.

I am happy to report that the **Burntisland Nia and Groove Dancers** have been able to make use of the facilities again since the restrictions on non-contact group exercise were lifted in March.

Andrew Beveridge



## Burntisland Over 70s Christmas Treat

Due to current restrictions we are still unable to hold any fund raising events. We are hopeful that this years Christmas Treat Lunch will go ahead, and we will update everyone as soon as we know. Watch this space!

Frances Allan

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## Burntisland Heritage Trust

Looking back just over 12 months, who would have guessed that by the end of March life as we know it would change dramatically? More or less at the same time, we had just taken delivery of the boards printed up for our summer exhibition. Everything went into 'hold' mode and it became quickly apparent that for the first time in 27 years our summer exhibition would not be going ahead.

As well as the exhibition other pandemic cancellations for us were the summer guided walks; the planned dives for the shipwreck project and the intended return visit to the Parish Church Hall of Burntisland's 1883 Model Railway.

We do however remain optimistic that at sometime this summer we will once again be able to open our doors again and feature last year's planned exhibition 'Portrait of a Town'.

As mentioned in the last edition of the Burgh Buzz over the past 12 months we have been busy with various projects. Another of these concluded last autumn when following their restoration, three important Burntisland paintings were returned to the Burgh Chambers. These included two of the works by local artist, photographer and historian Andrew Young 'The Magistrates' Seat' (1906) and his masterpiece, 'The Bridge of Life' (1923).

The third painting by Stephen Humble 'View to Burntisland from Lammerlaws' is of significant historical importance to the town. It was painted in 1836 and shows a view of Burntisland prior to a time of significant change and development with the coming of the railways and harbour expansion.

The Humble painting which hangs in the Magistrates' Room has



Edinburgh from Burntisland (1869)

now been joined by the trust's recent acquisition, an oil painting 'Edinburgh from Burntisland' done by the renowned Scottish landscape artist John Harvey Oswald. It was painted in 1869 and shows a sailing ship aground on the foreshore adjacent to the Black Rock with the Edinburgh skyline in the background.

It is anticipated that the new acquisition plus the three conserved and restored paintings will form part of an exhibition in the Burgh Chambers once the lockdown restrictions are lifted.

Videos showing the Burntisland Burgh Chambers including the paintings collection and the Paintings Restoration Project can also be viewed at: [www.burntisland.net/youtube.htm](http://www.burntisland.net/youtube.htm)

Ian Archibald

## Burntisland Bowling Club

By the time this edition of the Burgh Buzz reaches you, Burntisland Bowling Club expects play to have been resumed, albeit under the continuing COVID restrictions. It has been a hard 12 months during which there were only limited opportunities to play during a short period last summer.

Like other sports clubs, it has been hit by a significant loss of traditional income from sources such as social events, garden fete and bar proceeds. Fortunately, Government aid has provided an important lifeline, allowing the club to maintain its green and premises ready for the time when playing can resume.

It is unlikely that inter club matches and competitions will feature this season, assuming COVID easing follows its expected course.

However, members will be able to enjoy playing amongst themselves and being able to re-connect with friends on the green.

For the immediate future, players wishing to arrange a game will need to book and can do so by contacting Margaret Farnes on 01592 870197 or emailing [mfarnes59@hotmail.com](mailto:mfarnes59@hotmail.com).

New members are always welcome; just contact via the Club's email: [info@burntislandbowlingclub.co.uk](mailto:info@burntislandbowlingclub.co.uk)

Richard Perry



## Burntisland Golf House Club

As restrictions begin to ease, the Club looks forward to opening the Clubhouse in the near future and getting back to replenishing members, guests and visitors alike with food and drink. Albeit this will be without alcohol in the first few weeks.

The virus has not gone away however, and we all still need to stick to protocols put in place to ensure that we don't have to close the doors again.

The whole situation has seen us acquire a good number of new members and, as a result, the course is very busy. The recent spell of good weather (despite some early morning frost delays) has also prompted a good number to dust off the old hickories and get back to it.

What has been great to see is the increased number of juniors who have signed up for a new coaching programme. Some age groups now have a waiting list and much credit is due to Colin Blackwood our Junior Convenor and Craig Armstrong the Assistant Professional. First and foremost we want the youngsters to enjoy the game but who knows, there could another champion in the making amongst them.

Rasha has been providing a takeaway service for the last few weeks but will be able to provide a fuller menu as from 26th April. We will publish information on her behalf through social media, but if anyone wants to pop up for snacks / meals, then phoning the Club number (01592 874093)

and pushing the catering option number will get you through directly to her.

Finally, just a plea to non-members. Because we are very busy, and not blessed with an overabundance of parking spaces, can I ask people who want to walk up the Binn not to use our car park on a Saturday if possible? There are other very busy times but Saturdays are the busiest.

Like our page on Facebook or follow us on Twitter @BurntislandGolf to keep in the loop about golfing and social matters.

Dave McPherson



# Burntisland's Maritime History—What it Means to Me

Burntisland is a new town—well it was way back in 1550, when King James V made a compulsory purchase order for the harbour at Wester Kinghorn (now Burntisland)—it was safe, and accessible by sea or by road from Stirling, Dunfermline, Falkland or indeed Edinburgh. The King needed such a port for his Navy. After the Union of Crowns in 1603, Burntisland stood down as a Naval Base and moved on. The harbour, now the West Dock, had developed with ship building and repair facilities and as a reliable international, fishing, and ferry port. Sure, the Queen's Ferry offered a shorter crossing, but it lacked the deeper water and protection needed for the safe handling of heavy cargoes. The loss of King Charles' treasure ship off Burntisland in 1633 reinforces the point. The ferry would have done better to stay in Burntisland's harbour.

The next 150 years saw little further development, the drove road over the Binn to Burntisland connected the Highlands and its livestock to Edinburgh while fishing fleets came and went in pursuit of the herring. The act of union in 1707 broadened Burntisland's horizons from the already extensive Baltic trade to include the Atlantic and more especially the West Indies. The graveyards of the Parish and Kirkton churches give ample evidence of Burntisland's diverse interests.



1854 map

It was coal that put Burntisland ever more firmly on the map or perhaps chart. Coal brings steam. Steam to power railways, ferries, pumps, quarries, mines, coal to heat houses, make salt and (later) crush rock for oil. The first steam ferry service from Leith to Burntisland started in the 1820's to augment the fast-developing trade in quarried stone and Fife coal for Edinburgh's New Town. The ferries also allowed the wealthy to escape smoky Edinburgh for the cleaner sea air of Burntisland—the Georgian Terrace of Burntisland's "new town" was now complemented by the Victorian Terrace of Craigmarnochie. Burntisland became a hotbed of dissenting intellectuals while a nautical family raised a self-taught mathematical genius, Mary Sommerville.

In 1846 the railway reached Burntisland, or more prosaically, the railway started at the Burntisland Harbour terminus on its way north to Dundee and on to Aberdeen. The railway was initially for passengers conveyed by ferry from Granton but was quickly adapted for the transport of coal, facilitated by the inception of the world's first Roll-on Roll-off train ferry. The West Dock concentrated on coal while a new passenger pier was built close to the railway terminus.



1895 map

In 1890 the Forth Rail Bridge opened and the railway was extended and re-routed along the western edge of Burntisland. The railway passenger terminus was no more but the exportation of coal continued to grow leading to the creation of a new dock in 1900. The bigger, purpose built, deep water, East Dock.



1950 air photo

Coal, fish, quarried stone, whisky, and shale oil (1870-1900) sustained the town and port into the 1900s, World War I added the import of Bauxite for rendering into Alumina (East Dock) and modern ship building (West Dock) to the mix.

At first the railway bore the brunt of the bauxite but from the early sixties, it was being transported by lorries along the High Street, lorries that leaked bauxite from the tailgate and had it blowing from the (all too often) open top—250,000 tons a year along the High Street and the waste, 150,000 tons, dumped first into the Red Pond and later, adjacent to the old Binn Village from where it contaminates the town's spring water. This water, thankfully, is now neutralised and "cleaned" in the holding reservoirs adjacent to the Golf Course.



1964 map

For most of Burntisland's commercial life, the community has freely gone along and around the foreshore for work or leisure. The minerals have gone, manufacturing is decreasing, leisure is the new industry and yet, curiously, you can no longer see the sea from the High Street or Links. The creation of the railway, its embankment and bridges had an unremarked consequence—it neatly cut the town from the sea, physically and visually. The sea that defines Burntisland disappeared.

Not entirely, with a little exertion, Burntislanders and visitors can cross over or under the railway to swim, fish, sail, walk, run, cycle, row, watch birds, count whales, dig for clams, feed seals, pick brambles, fly kites, embrace the Forth Panorama and marvel at their good fortune.

**Andy Wight-Boycott**



2018 imagery

Historic OS maps and air photo reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland: [maps.nls.uk](https://maps.nls.uk) Aerial imagery: Google Maps

## A Pandemic of Period Poverty

Last November, the Scottish Parliament passed the Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act, which requires all public buildings, such as schools and libraries, to provide free menstrual sanitary products to anyone in need on their premises.

This became law after years of grassroots campaigning against period poverty (inability to afford or access sanitary products on a monthly basis) which, as well as having severe physical and mental health consequences, exists as a result of income inequalities: this is because until recently sanitary products were labelled as a “luxury” and not what they really are—a basic health necessity. Period products are also ridiculously expensive, with the average female\* in Scotland spending thousands of pounds on period products over the course of their life. Until recently they were also taxed.

People who don't have access to adequate sanitary products often resort to using newspapers, or taping socks, toilet paper or even old clothes to their underwear. These substitutes can lead to problems like infections, and often make the victim feel ashamed.

The Act is supposed to eliminate period poverty, as by routinely providing free products in public places like schools. It is

*assumed* that everyone will be able to access these. However, at the time of writing there is a lockdown, meaning most public buildings are closed. This means that people have been left with little information about how (or even if) they can still access free products, with no messaging from the government. Apparently, informing people about accessing basic healthcare products has not been a priority.

Lockdown has caused the closure of most public buildings in Scotland, meaning some, like Burntisland and other OnFife libraries, have been unable to continue to provide free sanitary products safely.

Lockdown also means that public buildings are not legally required to continue to provide sanitary products, with local places that continue to provide products reporting that they do so voluntarily.

Because of this, not only can the supply of sanitary products potentially stop, meaning people again would have to either rely on charities, or, more likely, go without, but it would be entirely legal. This is not currently happening in Burntisland (although it may be elsewhere) and whether it is happening or not, it should not be allowed.

**If you are unaware of where you can now access free products, below are a list of places in and near Burntisland where they are available.**

**Fife Council:** (if you can, please order a few weeks in advance)

Hey Girls Period Packs - Fife Council Survey form: [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/PYDYV66](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/PYDYV66)

**Burntisland Emergency Action Team (B.E.A.T):** Sanitary products can be taken from the table outside the Toll Community Hub, 183 High Street, Monday - Saturday 10am-4pm (subject to availability)

**Burntisland Primary and Balwearie High School:** Pupils and households - contact the schools for more information:

**Burntisland Primary School.**

Tel: 01592 583414 or email:

[burntislandps.enquiries@fife.gov.uk](mailto:burntislandps.enquiries@fife.gov.uk)

**Balwearie High School**

Tel: 01592 583402 or email:

[Margaret.Johnstone-qh@fife.gov.uk](mailto:Margaret.Johnstone-qh@fife.gov.uk)

\* Referring in this context to biological sex and reproductive system, not gender identity.

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**ReKonnnect** is the creative project of Burntisland based musician Mike Delaitre. Originally from the Indian Ocean island of Mauritius, Mike created the project to give awareness to others about the importance of our connection with nature.

Having suffered with low mental and physical health since living in the colder climate of Scotland, Mike's aim is to encourage others to find the healing and well-being within the natural world and the elements.

**Re-Konnnect** presents five videos with atmospheric music, which can be used as a tool for self-motivation and healing in this period of COVID-19 and beyond, encouraging us to take "5 minutes" for ourselves.

The National Lottery, through Creative Scotland,

have funded the project. Filmed entirely in the Burntisland area the videos reveal the importance of space and nature to health.

Presented on Mike's website: [www.mikedelaitre.co.uk/rekonnnect](http://www.mikedelaitre.co.uk/rekonnnect) and the Facebook group ReKonnnect [www.facebook.com/groups/890768768348146/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/890768768348146/) it is a project for the people of Fife, of Scotland, and all over the world.

**Re-Konnnect** explores through music and moving image, how we can create a positive energy and a shift in the mind for inner peace and harmony in challenging life situations. With visuals connecting us to nature, the music is rooted in the ancient African Nyabinghi rhythm connecting us to our hearts and the life force.

## Burntisland on the box!

Our town has featured in a number of TV programmes during the month of April:

Channel 4 news carried out an interview at the beach.

BBC's Reporting Scotland spoke to shoppers on the High Street and reported live from the Aberdour Road layby overlooking the town.

BBC Scotland's "The Service" broadcast a seaside-themed service from the Erskine Church, also featuring the ministers of Burntisland and Kinghorn Parish Churches.

Lastly, BBC's Landward filmed whale watching from the Lammerlaws—available on the iPlayer if you missed it.

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# 11th Fife (Burntisland) Scout Group

## BEAVERS

We started off the year by saying goodbye to eight Beavers who moved on to Cubs and welcomed Simone Thomson to her new role as Beaver Leader on a Thursday.

Under the current restrictions we moved back to Zoom sessions and covered a variety of badge work. We made models out of recycling to help us with our home learning, baked lemonade

scones which were delicious and learned how to be safe online. We enjoyed a Lego building night, shared our talents and hobbies, made Chinese window art and participated in five experiments to earn our Experiment badge.

We look forward to meeting up outside again and welcoming our new Beavers to our group.

**Simone Thomson and Shirley Kent, Beaver Scout Leaders**



## CUBS

A slightly different term than expected as everything had to be changed to move over to zoom. However we still managed a full and varied programme with new skills and challenges. We did some baking making

lemonade scones and chocolate mug cakes. Both went down well. We completed our International Challenge Badge and also completed our First Aid Level 2. We then finished up the term with some Eater craft. Fingers crossed, we are all looking forward to getting back together outside for the summer term

**Michelle Paton, Cub Scout Leader**



## SCOUTS

Our Scouting has again been restricted to online sessions only but that has not stopped us providing an exciting and engaging programme of activities and badge work. Our Scouts have done home baking, developed skills for life including sewing as they made a mouse puppet for Burns Day and recited "To a mouse".

To tie in with the NASA Perseverance Mars mission we worked on and earned the Astronomer Badge learning about our solar system and current missions. Another badge our Scouts gained this term was the Artist badge by sketching or painting pictures which were truly fantastic as we have some very talented young artists within our Group. We are all now looking forward to returning to outdoor face to face Scouting when we return after the Easter break.

**David Laing, Scout Leader**



## EXPLORERS

As with our other sections our Explorers had to meet online this term but we all still managed to complete a lot of badge work including the Science and Technology Badge by finding out about the history of space flight and the current Mars missions.

We also completed a Young Leader Training module with our

Explorers which will help them to help run activities with our younger sections. Our Explorers also had an evening with a former Crime Scene Investigator who told them about using DNA and fingerprints to investigate crimes.

We finished up this term with a fantastic evening's entertainment from the magician Cameron Young who has appeared on several TV shows including Britain's Got Talent.

**David Laing, Explorer Leader**

**11<sup>th</sup> Fife (Burntisland) Scout Group**

**Group Scout Leader: Kerry Laing** Tel: 07517374459 Email: [11thfife@gmail.com](mailto:11thfife@gmail.com)

**District Commissioner: Dick Cook** Tel: 07753121909 Email: [richard.cook@kirkcaldydistrictscouts.org.uk](mailto:richard.cook@kirkcaldydistrictscouts.org.uk)

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## Burntisland & District Pipe Band

If you thought a second national lockdown would stop Burntisland & District Pipe Band then you'd better think again. If you have been following our Facebook page these last few months then you'll know about some of the amazing things that we have been busy doing.

Back in December we put together a video of our favourite Christmas song 'Fairytale of New York' by the Pogues. We then posted this with a fundraiser link in the hope of raising £100 for CHAS to help children and their families when they needed it most. We were absolutely blown away by the support we received and our final total was an amazing £860. A huge thank you to everyone who donated to this worthwhile cause.

January is always a cold and dark month, but we were celebrating Robert Burns by taking part in the Burntisland & Kinghorn Rotary Clubs' Auld Lang Zoom. We created a video with the traditional tune that pipers would play to pipe in the haggis—"A Mans A Man For A' That."—great fun!

Our next challenge was a big one. We entered the freestyle competition run by the Scottish Schools Pipes and Drums Trust. Although we have competed a couple of times at this competition, it was never in the freestyle event. All the kids in the band spent many hours perfecting their part and the finished video I think is our best one yet.

The competition was excellent and the standard of each of the other 15 school bands was incredibly high. Although we didn't win a prize from the judges this time round, we did win the People's Choice award—another huge thank you if you were able to cast your vote for us. If you haven't seen our video of us rocking out to Guns and Roses' "Sweet Child of Mine" then it's well worth a watch on our Facebook page.



Looking ahead now and everyone in the band is just desperate to be back together again. When it's safe, we will be resuming our snare and tenor drumming practise, as well as the pipers using their electronic chanters—all socially distanced of course. You may also see us practising our marching and some other crazy shenanigans down on the Links soon.

It's been a long road for everyone but there appears to be a glimmer of light now at the end of this tunnel. We hope that it won't be too long until you can hear the sound of the pipes and drums marching down the High Street again.

Thank you all for your continued support of the band, and if you'd like to keep up to date with what we are up to, then the best thing to do is follow us on Facebook.

**Pipe Major Craig Hooper**

[www.facebook.com/burntislandanddistrictpipeband](https://www.facebook.com/burntislandanddistrictpipeband)

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# The Black Rocks Rowing Club

Here we are poised at the “potential” end of lockdown and the most excitement we’ve had recently was when Abbey, working on the logo subcommittee, rendered an image of the club logo on a black t-shirt. Oh what we have come to!

As the temperatures warm and we face our impending return to “normalcy” let me tell you what you can expect in your first year of rowing by recounting some of my first year.

### Before Covid

The Freshwater Sprints at Loch Tummel is the last event of the Scottish racing season but was my first. Old friends warmly greeted each other as more and more of the brightly painted St Ayles skiffs arrived on light boat trailers and were hauled to the water’s edge by random club members lending a hand. And though it was a race event it was obvious that winning a race was secondary to engagement with the racers.

Next was the Frostbite regatta, held at Kinghorn Loch where the club rows during the winter. And as I was able to row through the winter months I was ready when the rowing season began again. I was even starting to cox.

Loch Awe was a weekend event and a group of us piled into rented accommodation so I got to know a few of my fellow rowers better. I got to cox my crew of powerful women to help us win a 3rd fastest time for the event. I was chuffed.

Near the end of the season the Castle to Crane race where about 80 fixed seat coxed rowing boats set off at one minute intervals from the mouth of the River Leven, below Dumbarton Castle, in a 13 mile race to the Finnieston Crane in Glasgow. It’s a real test of what you are made of.

The Skiffie Worlds took place in Stranraer in 2019. I brought my big bell tent which easily housed four of us and became a hub of socialising in the evenings. With crews from Tasmania, the Netherlands, England, and The US, there were over 70 boats participating. I’ll be able to row in the over 60s at the next Skiffie worlds—I cannae wait.

There were at least three other events that I haven’t mentioned



before the season once again wound down to the Freshwater Sprints at Loch Tummel. I remember seeing our oars bend under our pressure as the spray speckled our faces and we strained to pull the boat forward. It’s just a bit of fun but you might as well give it your best. I was starting to feel what it was like to be a part of a team.

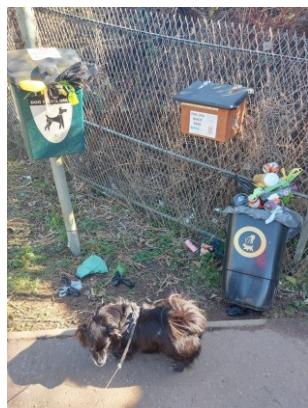
We entered the one turn with a little trouble but to my great surprise emerged from it in close alignment with the two leaders. It would be another loss but nothing to be ashamed of. Still we all pulled to make as good a showing as we could... IN, reach for a long catch, IN, lay back to get a full stroke, IN, keep time with the stroke oarsman, GIVE ME 20 AT 100%! The horn blows signalling the first boat has crossed the finish line... What!... IT’S US... IT’S US! WE’VE WON! THE LAST RACE ON THE LAST DAY OF THE SEASON!!! AND WE’VE WON!!!

And that’s what you have to look forward to. For more information go to: [www.burntislandrowing.org.uk](http://www.burntislandrowing.org.uk)

Joel Houck

## Dogs’ Dirt!

Bonnie Scotland as they say. However judging by the frequent views of over-spilling dog-poop bins along the Burntisland coastal path, you may not always have the opinion of the former statement being accurate. Fife Council obviously understand the need for dog-fouling bins along recreational routes.



One may then assume that the powers that be would have a good grasp of the frequency that said bins require emptying. I would personally vouch that unfortunately this isn’t the case as over-spilling bins like those pictured in the image above are often a sight in this burgh.

Obviously fault also lies with the dog walkers that add their bags to the piles on the floor, knowing full well that they are technically littering.

Perhaps the presence of more bins as well as more frequent emptying schedules are required. There obviously can’t be a straightforward solution otherwise this particular issue would have been solved long before my time.

James Thompson

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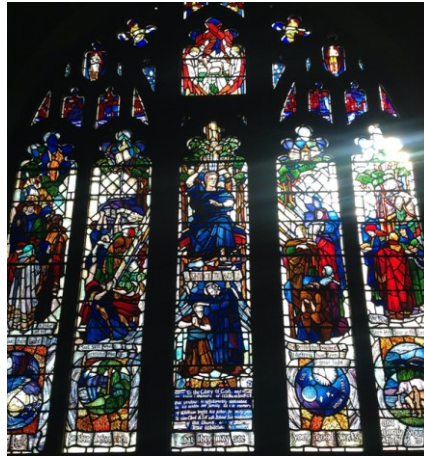


## Erskine Church

Easter. For the second year running, none of our usual church events took place - Palm Sunday walk, Maundy Thursday or Good Friday services, early Easter morning atop the Binn or on the beach. Nonetheless it's great that we can now finally open our buildings for worship. Erskine plans a weekly 30-minute service at 10am, you'd be very welcome to join us. Listen out for the church bell which folks always say they love hearing, 9.45am onwards. Our BEK & Call online services continue each Sunday at 11am, live on Zoom and Facebook then later on YouTube. There's lots to take part in every week!

TV. Who'd have thought Erskine would star in a TV service? Well, on Sunday 11th April at 12 noon, a 30-minute service was duly broadcast on the BBC Scotland Channel. We recorded it safely in the church a couple of weeks earlier, it was great to share with David Redmayne & Jim Reid from Burntisland and Kinghorn Parishes respectively.

The wonders of video editing and proper lighting made the three of us look younger, certainly Erskine's lovely Light of the World window was shown to great effect. It's a visible sign of our growing



partnership that these things are happening. The service will be on BBC iPlayer for a limited time only, so please get watching.

Your Lockdown has been tough on everyone, especially those vulnerable and isolated. If we're totally honest, I suspect we've all experienced both of these feelings at some point over the past year. Community still means something in Burntisland, I'd vouch for that 100% and say again that we've stuck together and supported one another during these long bleak months of pandemic.

Bible. Here are Jesus' words, "Let your light shine before others, that they may see

your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5.16, NIVUK). That's the verse inscribed along the baseline of Erskine's window, we are called to follow the example of Jesus, the true Light of the World.

Future. It looks like the combination of vaccines and fewer virus cases is heading us in the direction of less restrictions. We long for normality, with a real sense of just doing simple things without worrying and being able to see one another in person. I hope our churches get fully back to that sometime soon. I pray you'll find the peace of mind and light of hope, both of which are so vital as we start putting our lives back together all over again. Light, of course, can be reflected for others to share. The way we engage and interact with people makes all the difference, both for them and for ourselves.

One day soon Erskine's famous coffee & pancake mornings will resume, but for now let's continue to be patient, look out for our neighbours and keep the light shining.

**Rev. Alexander Ritchie**



## St Joseph's Church

St Joseph's opened its doors for services again on Friday 26th March, still operating under restrictions, with numbers limited to 45, based on the size of the building. It was a great joy to welcome people back and to have a physical as well as a virtual congregation. It is a strange experience talking to a phone in an empty building.

Our Holy Week and Easter celebrations were a bit more subdued than normal, but they were well attended. People seem to have a bit more confidence in coming back to Church, perhaps because of the vaccination programme. We are doing everything possible to keep people safe, but we can offer no guarantees—entering any indoor space these days involves risk taking. Parishioners are reminded that if they wish to be sure of a place in Church

they should do so through Eventbrite—there is a link on the parish's webpage.

I hope that, by the time you are reading this, the numbers allowed to attend funerals and weddings will have been increased to 50, or the building's safe capacity. Having restricted numbers at funerals has been a particular hardship for many families over this last year. Not being able to celebrate a person's passing in the ways we were accustomed to or offer comfort and consolation to the bereaved has been difficult.

I had four weddings postponed, leaving disappointed couples and families and frustrated hopes. Yes, it has not been easy but the situation is improving and things are slowly coming back to some normality. The days are getting longer, the weather is getting warmer, we are able to see more people and hopefully able to travel more

freely. However we can't afford to be complacent or not compliant to essential safety measures. We don't want to be locked down again.

After the crucifixion of Jesus the disciples went into lockdown, not because of a pandemic, but out of fear. They were afraid that what happened to Jesus would happen to them. But into their presence came the Risen Jesus and his first words were: 'Peace be with you.' He calmed their fears and brought them peace. May the Risen Lord bring you and yours a peace which offers some respite in the midst of all that is happening around us and may it point to better days to come.

**Fr James**



## Burntisland Parish Church

Spring is well under way now and we are slowly emerging from the winter lockdown in much the same way that plants are coming to life in our gardens. It's been a long hard winter and many of us are desperate to get back to normal life again. But it seems it will take some time.

One very welcome piece of news has been that churches and other places of worship

were allowed to open again and Burntisland Parish Church had its first post-lockdown in-person service on Easter Sunday. It was so good to be able to gather for worship for this high point of the Christian year.

We were able to celebrate the good news of the resurrection of Christ in our regular place of worship. But it was a very muted

affair—with face masks, social distancing and no singing. The music was either recorded or simply played on the keyboard. And all the other events of Easter—the Binn and beach services—were not possible for yet another year.

However, we were able to mark Holy Week with online "BEK and Call" services along with our friends at Erskine United Free Church and Kinghorn Parish Church.

(continued on page 19)

We celebrated an online service of Holy Communion on Maundy Thursday evening and then on Good Friday evening I joined my fellow ministers, Rev Alexander Ritchie and Rev Jim Reid in reading the passion story from Mark's Gospel interspersed with Andrew Herbert of Kinghorn Church singing, "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?". The Easter Sunday morning service was a real celebration of Easter with some of our young people showing us how to do action songs and with folk joining in to tell us what Easter means to them. Easter Sunday evening was marked with another online Communion service.

Following Easter, we had further excitement when Alexander, Jim and myself led a service on BBC Scotland at noon on 11 April, recorded at Erskine Church. It was a great opportunity for Burntisland to be featured on the television and also for us three ministers to work together in this way. We are grateful to Alexander for including us in what was originally an approach to Erskine Church.

Throughout lockdown the three churches have worked together on the BEK and Call online services which go out every Sunday at 11am on Zoom, Facebook and later on YouTube. The Burntisland Facebook page gives details of how to access these. We'd be very happy for you to look in on any of these services. There is a real mix of worship: songs, children's talks, and Bible talks. Recently we have interviewed different people about their faith and their part in the life of the church. It has been fascinating to hear each person's story.

One of the people I interviewed was Pamela Henderson, the new CAP (Christians Against Poverty) Debt Centre Manager to cover the Burntisland and Kirkcaldy areas, appointed by Burntisland Parish Church. Pamela will be taking over the role from Doug Drysdale who is retiring from the post. I am delighted that Burntisland Parish Church is supporting this work which helps so many that have found themselves struggling with debt, especially in these times when financial hardship has hit even more people because

of the pandemic. CAP's help is there for anyone struggling financially—they just need to get in touch. We wish Pamela every blessing in her work with CAP.

As the weeks go on, we anticipate that the COVID restrictions will slowly ease. For the moment Burntisland Parish Church will be holding in-person worship services in the church every third Sunday at 10am. The next of these service will be on 16th May. Numbers will be limited because of social distancing requirements, so booking is required (see our Facebook page for details). Currently facemasks are necessary, and singing is not allowed. Nevertheless, visitors are always welcome as long as they have booked a place. And of course, there is always a welcome to our online services which will continue for the foreseeable future.

Take care, stay safe and keep well!

God bless,

**Rev David Redmayne**



## Craigencalt Rural Community Trust

It is good to report that things are beginning to happen once more. Our first task of the year, in February, took place a little late, in April, but we got the barley straw out on the loch at last. The number of helpers allowed was limited, so we only spread two bales out on rafts instead of the usual four.

The loch has excellent water quality, so hopefully less straw will be adequate for now. The weather was super, with a blue sky and light breeze, we couldn't have had better. The wildlife on the water were delighted to see us at work.

By the time work was complete, geese and swans were already competing for the best nesting spots on the straw. A sign that Kinghorn Loch will soon be productive again, and an ideal place for bird watchers to enjoy seeing young broods grow up.



At a recent Zoom meeting with the sports and leisure groups, all were able to report that they hope to be back in action by mid-May. After a long time away from the water some may need to improve fitness, giving time to get in training for when events like regattas can once more be held. The Trust walking group will start up in May. Many walkers have put individual walking exercise to good use during lockdown. Hopefully this continues, as life returns to normal.

The Trust has some new projects in the pipeline, a disabled fishing station is planned near the sluice, something we have wanted to facilitate for a long time. The Trust also has agreement from the Ecology Centre to widen the narrow bridge at the sluice. This will allow disabled buggies to now cross the burn and be most convenient for families with buggies too.

As many of you will be aware, the old cycle track from the golf clubhouse in Burntisland to Binnend has been completely eroded in recent years. There are plans for the Trust to work with Alcan to make a new, improved path through the woodland, at a gradient that will make it suitable for all users. This project is at an early stage and will take a while to achieve, as funding and volunteers will be needed, but it will succeed.

Lastly, anyone walking past the Earthship at Kinghorn Loch will see that it is being dismantled, as SCI could not get an agreement for it to stay. Built into the hillside, it has been a landmark at Craigencalt for twenty years, and on the list of visitor tourist attractions for Fife. It is a great sadness to see it go, but wish the SCI team well in any new ventures they take on in the future.

The Trust hopes that live meetings can resume soon, and summer maintenance workdays will return to normal. If you have some time to spare and would like to help, please get in touch by phone 07740999514 or email [info@craigencalttrust.org.uk](mailto:info@craigencalttrust.org.uk)

**Marilyn Edwards**





## Burntisland Harbour: wildlife, conservation and community

Readers will be well aware of the plans of Forth Ports to deny our townspeople access to the vast majority of Burntisland breakwater and dock, one of the best wildlife watching areas in and around the whole town. This edition of Burntisland BirdWatch is therefore taken over by dock wildlife. This article is written by Andy Pay and Leo du Feu.

During this past winter it has become a daily occurrence to see local people watching wildlife down at the harbour, as folk have been limited in where they can travel to see wildlife and as they have felt the need for and benefits of outdoors and nature. Sammy the seal is a big draw of course but birds too have been making a great positive difference to people's lives—and humpback whales!

The big increase in folk observing the wildlife around the harbour and sharing what they see on **Burntisland Wildlife & Woodlands Facebook group** emphasised just how important the site is for providing sheltered feeding and resting opportunities for a variety of waterbirds. There are the almost always present rafts of eider ducks in numbers as high as 40 or 50. They are often accompanied by red-breasted mergansers and the occasional goldeneye. Guillemots, razorbills and kittiwakes (many of which were sadly washed up dead all along the shore after significant mortality at sea during strong easterly gales) have often been found sheltering in the harbour. Different gull species use the whole dock area and can be studied and enjoyed there with ease.

More unusual visitors have included a great northern diver (see last edition of Burgh Buzz, available online) and a glaucous gull, both of which were present for several weeks, and also a red-necked grebe. We were interested to discover that the ringed plovers which spend their winter down on the beach use one of the wooden harbour jetties to roost at high tide. Very useful information for regular volunteer waterbird counts.

From the much loved breakwater walk it's been possible to see other species often at quite close range, including Slavonian grebes, long-tailed ducks and



Leo's Docks stonechat

red-throated divers, and not forgetting whales, dolphins, porpoises and seals. Shags often fish really close in along the breakwater and sometimes cormorants. Five or six years ago severe storms forced little auks far in from their usual North Sea wintering sites and we were treated to seeing them close-up along there too. Further out from the breakwater gannets flash black-tipped white crosses, look for their wing-tucked dives, on fishing trips from their nests on the Bass Rock. The Bass Rock is now the *world's largest colony of Northern gannets* with over 150,000 birds living there during the spring summer breeding season.

And the 'unused' scrub around the docks. While some consider this sort of place derelict 'wasteland', enlightened eyes see priceless habitat for a whole host of birds, mammals and invertebrates. A pair of stonechats were around over winter, seeking the slightly milder conditions associated with vicinity of the sea. Thrushes, linnets, a Scandinavian rock pipit and a kestrel are also spotted, along with resident dunnocks, sparrows, wrens, robins and more.

As spring has arrived in chaotic stages we're seeing chaffinches, goldfinches and greenfinches. Queen bumblebees and

a few butterflies have emerged and a whole host of other insects will soon follow.

Via **#SaveBurntislandHarbour Facebook group** we've been forwarded great photos of a variety of butterflies from previous years including red admiral, painted lady, common blue and meadow brown. The wildflowers attract bees, hoverflies and lots of other pollinators too. Semi-industrial areas like this often provide the perfect breeding sites for a number of bee species—something we'd like to study.

The area is also home to a fluctuating-in-size, colony of rabbits which help keep some of the tracks open and the turf short. And there's good evidence of hedgehogs and foxes.

We've been delighted by the quantity and quality of artwork and photographs featuring the nature of the docks from so many townspeople. A proliferation of wildlife and wildflowers (as well as of course sunsets, atmospheric studies of the infrastructure, boats, wrecks of boats and general views).

There's no doubt that there is an overwhelming sense of this area "belonging" to the community, that they feel invested with its past, present and future. It's just the kind of site that would benefit from community involvement: habitat enhancement and interpretation referencing its historical, cultural and environmental significance. It could be such a valuable educational resource covering a range of disciplines for schools and nurseries.

We are confident that a Friends of Burntisland Harbour group would attract a great deal of active support. It would bring the well-recognised mental and physical health benefits associated with being in nature and open space to the local folk who would help to maintain it. We would relish the opportunity to further improve the harbour area for wildlife and for people.

Join us on Facebook at **Burntisland Wildlife & Woodlands** and at **#SaveBurntislandHarbour**.

## Earthship Fife—Projects of Hope

The Earthship, a self-sufficient structure built entirely from waste materials on a south facing hillside adjacent to Kinghorn Loch is now no more. However, Sustainable Communities Initiatives (SCI), the grass roots charity which established the Earthship almost 20 years ago, is planning to use the demise of this unique structure to continue to promote its aims of encouraging the public to engage with nature and become more connected with Earth's climate and natural resources. The new initiative is called "Projects of Hope".

The Earthship, the ingenious design of Michael Reynolds of Earthship Biotecture in New Mexico, was modified for the Scottish climate and constructed by an army of over 200 volunteers who beavered away during weekends and holidays packing car tyres with earth and generally turning an abundant amount of waste product into an efficient, naturally resourced building.

The impressive Scottish whinstone frontage, expertly fashioned by local stonemason Norman Masterton, has welcomed a wide variety of visitors to discover how a building can operate efficiently in respect of essential amenities such as water, sewerage and electricity,



using solely natural resources. Over the past eighteen years, visitors have included school children, families, home educators, college and university students from all over Scotland, the UK and even Europe. Architects, engineers, builders and designers have all had their curiosity piqued enough to venture up the grassy track.

Over the years, when visitors have been asked what the Earthship offered them, the universal answer from young and old alike has been—Hope! Hope for a future that makes more sense, for the chance to follow dreams and live more connected to the earth's climate and resources.

"Projects of Hope" will begin this Spring with small Covid-friendly gatherings at the

Earthship Fife Visitor Centre to facilitate the closing of one dream and the beginning of many new dreams. Community groups will symbolically take away pieces of the Earthship to begin "Projects of Hope" in their own areas. By early summer, the wee hillside by Kinghorn Loch will be returned to a grassy slope for the creatures that live there.



SCI continues to thrive as a small grass roots charity, delivering nature connection and outdoor learning projects across Fife, as well as working with schools and home-educators, teenagers, and community groups.

If you have any ideas for a Project of Hope that would benefit from the Earthship's transformation, would like to say goodbye to Earthship at a gathering, or be involved in the decommissioning of Scotland's first Earthship, please find out more by emailing: [paulacowie2@gmail.com](mailto:paulacowie2@gmail.com).

## The Ecology Centre

It's spring at Kinghorn Loch—the spring flowers have been blooming, the birds are singing, the new baby ducklings are out exploring and The Ecology Centre is open again!



New arrivals!

Photo courtesy of Pauline Bell

### Volunteers are back

Our volunteers are slowly and safely returning to the Centre and are keen to get cracking with planting all the fruits and veggies in the Community Garden and all the different jobs on site.

Due to space restrictions in the Tool Shed, we're taking a slower approach to re-opening. We have restarted our dementia friendly sessions but we've taken the Tool Shed outside to the courtyard area for the time being.

It's safe to say our volunteers are happy to be back and we're delighted to have them back too. Long may it continue.

We've got lots of re-opening news to share with you, here's what else is happening at Kinghorn Loch:

### Tool donations

we're accepting tool donations again. If you're having a clear out, don't forget we accept all kinds of tools that we refurbished with the aim of getting them back into use. Tools can be dropped into the Centre from Monday to Friday, 9am–4pm or email

[toolshed@theecologycentre.org](mailto:toolshed@theecologycentre.org)

### Tool Library

is open again for new and existing members to join and borrow tools. Not heard of this service before? Well, it's just like a library borrowing service—but for tools. We have an impressive range of tools available and it's only £20 per year to be a member. Save yourself storage, hassle, maintenance and money buying tools that you might only ever use once and borrow them instead. See our website to sign up. [www.theecologycentre.org](http://www.theecologycentre.org)

### Venue hire

we're taking bookings again for our room hire and outdoor space at the Centre for weddings, outdoor gatherings, parties and small meetings. We offer flexibility, lots of options and every booking goes back into supporting the charity and our education and volunteering programmes.

### The Nest café

We've lost count of the number of times we've been asked if we're open as a cafe for a cuppa...

Well, hopefully by the time you read this the answer will be: "Yes!" as we're going to be opening on a Friday, Saturday and Sunday as The Nest community cafe, supported by volunteers.

This new cafe will help to support the Centre as we recover from the pandemic and we hope that it will provide a welcoming space for everyone to visit and enjoy the stunning lochside views, with nature all around.

If you have some spare time, would like to meet new people, try something new and volunteer at the café, email [admin@theecologycentre.org](mailto:admin@theecologycentre.org), we would love to hear from you.

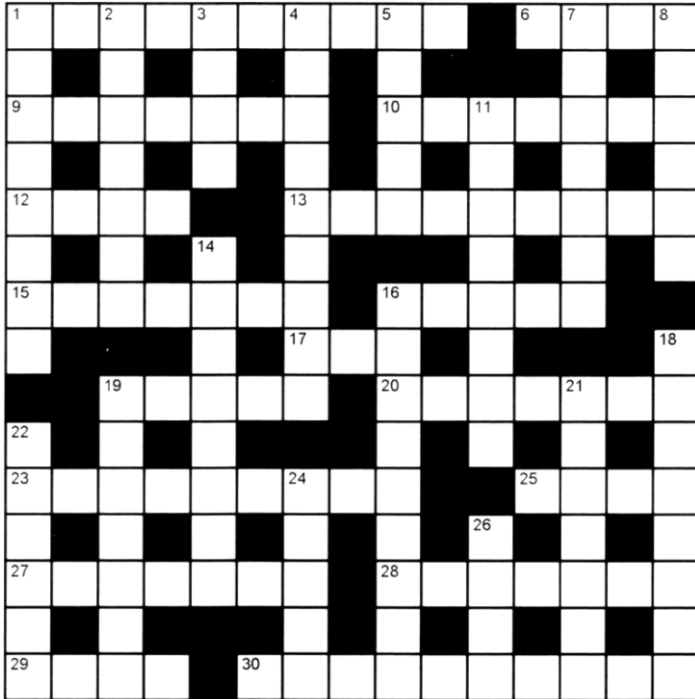
### Spring events

We will be doing seedling giveaways and our annual Tool Sale later in the Spring, but we are still working on the dates for these. Keep an eye on our social media pages where we will keep you up to date.

Have a great Spring, stay safe and we look forward to welcoming you back to The Ecology Centre.

[www.theecologycentre.org](http://www.theecologycentre.org)





## THE PRIZE CROSSWORD

### ACROSS

1. Noble (10)
6. Unobstructed(4)
9. Small flute(7)
10. Distress relief (7)
12. Coarse file (4)
13. Oversee (9)
15. Sub's weapon (7)
16. Group of lions (5)
17. Brazilian city (3)
19. Furious (5)
20. Break into fragments (2,3)
23. Long solo speech (9)
25. Percussion instrument(4)
27. Correspondence (7)
28. Slope (7)
29. Underworld river (4)
30. Minders (10)

### DOWN

1. Harsh manner(8)
2. Cutting tooth (7)
3. Pairs (4)
4. Popular puzzle (9)
5. Fables author (5)
7. Biographical sketch(7)
8. Hospital workers (6)
11. Knitted jacket (8)
14. Moby Dick author (8)
16. Future generations (9)
18. Spectrum (Anagram) (8)
19. Long (7)
21. Breed of dog (7)
22. Strolls (6)
24. Lively enjoyment (5)
26. Unbleached linen colour (4)

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### Solution to November Crossword

**Across:** 1 Instructed, 6 Ache, 9 Minimum, 10 Defiant, 12 Rook, 13 Carnation, 15 Absolve, 16 Natty, 17 Ape, 19 In Fun, 20 Forsake, 23 Buccaneer, 25 Frau, 27 Eminent, 28 Origami, 29 Shed, 30 Prospector.

**Down:** 1 Immortal, 2 Sinuous, 3 Rime, 4 Come clean, 5 Elder, 7 Clarify, 8 Extend, 11 Fracture, 14 Old flame, 16 Nefarious, 18 Peculiar, 19 Incline, 21 Abreast, 22 Abbess, 24 Enter, 26 Wise.

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