

Westhill Bulletin

Winter 2016
Issue 148



Your Question To Answer

(see page 4)

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SUBMITTING ITEMS FOR THE BULLETIN

The Westhill & Elrick Community Council distribute over 5000 copies of the Westhill Bulletin quarterly to houses and businesses in Westhill and surrounding villages. We offer good advertising rates and are keen to support local businesses and services.

Adverts and articles for the spring issue should be sent in by **Friday 27th January**, for distribution in late February.

All contributions or enquiries should be emailed to:

wecc.bulletin@westhillelrick.org

Bulletin Editor – David Ritchie on 01224 744058 or 07989 637461

Articles should be submitted as **Microsoft Word** documents attached to an email. Articles larger than 600 words may be edited.

2016 advertising rates:

Black & white – 1/4 page £37, 1/2 page £60, full page £115

Colour – Centre pages – 1/4 page £60, 1/2 page £110, full page £190

Colour – Inside covers £210, back page £240

(There is a small additional one-off charge for new adverts and when changes are made)

BULLETIN DELIVERY

The Bulletin is delivered by an army of dedicated volunteers. More deliverers are always required for the ever-expanding Westhill and to replace retiring helpers.

If you can spare an hour or so four times per year to help deliver the Bulletin in your locality or nearby then please ring David Ritchie on 01224 744058.

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12 Brodiach Court
- Gurudeo Saluja, Tel (01224) 744305
40 Brimmond Drive
- John Long

Community Council meetings are held on 2nd Thursday of each month
at 7pm in Holiday Inn West, Westhill and are open to
all residents of Westhill & District

The agenda is placed in the noticeboard near Co-op a week before the meeting

Chairperson's Report

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself, I'm Shona Collins. I have lived in Westhill for many years and work here too. Last year I got involved in our community by volunteering to join the Community Council. Now, since the AGM in September, I find myself as the new Chairperson! I will do my best to work with members of our CC to achieve the best for this community. We have vacancies, you can come along to one of our meetings held on the second Thursday of every month at the Holiday Inn, starting at 7pm. All residents are welcome. We do need a new Minutes Secretary, a small honorarium is given for this position.

AFC Football Stadium

Most residents will be aware of the proposal by Aberdeen Football Club to move from their home ground at Pittodrie and relocate to a new stadium right on the edge of Westhill. There are strong concerns being expressed locally and we outlined the main ones in the Autumn issue. There is an active campaign being mounted by 'No Kingsford Stadium Group' and they have an article in this issue on page 15. They also delivered a newsletter recently to households in Westhill and Kingswells. We are aware of many of their concerns but we are also aware that other residents are supportive of the development. We hosted a public meeting on 1st November in the Holiday Inn, which was attended by almost 300 people, to discuss the proposal. The meeting was well chaired by Douglas Milne Garioch Area Manager, in a fair and even handed way. The various concerns were well aired but we were not able to provide all the answers at this stage.

AFC are aiming to submit the planning application to Aberdeen City Council in the next month and they are running a public feedback event at Pittodrie on 24th November, prior to this submission. More details of this event will be posted on our website www.westhillelrick.org. WECC are continuing to hold a neutral stance on this as we do not have all the detail at this time. You can be notified of new posts on the website by clicking on the 'follow' button in bottom right-hand corner of home page and adding your email address. The public will be notified on how to support or object to the application to Aberdeen City Council and the date by which these have to be submitted.

Gateway Project

People are asking what's this Question Mark at the entrance to Westhill? This has been put there by WECC to try and generate interest. What we want is to get residents involved in coming up with ideas for a piece of art that could depict the huge changes in this community over the past 50 years. From being a very rural agricultural area in the late 1960's to this place we now live in which has not only got a large residential population but because of the rapid expansion of the Oil and Gas industry, was given the title of the home of Global SubSea Engineering! We want to establish a clear identity for Westhill and Elrick and celebrate by hopefully getting a suitable piece of Public Art that can reflect these changes. Please email any ideas to gateway@westhillelrick.org.

Christmas Event

Once more we look forward to the switching on of the lights in the Shopping Centre, and the involvement of local people in this event. This year we are to have the music provided by local churches and also Westhill Academy School Orchestra. We will, as usual, have drinking chocolate provided by the Holiday Inn and also all the other little goodies, that are also generously provided by local retailers.

Do please come along on Saturday 10th December at 4.30pm and join in the festivities. Let's make this year even bigger and better than ever before!

WECC members wish you a happy time over the festive season and Good Health for 2017.

Shona Collins, Chairperson and all WECC members

WESTHILL GATEWAY ART PROJECT

YOUR QUESTION TO ANSWER...

You may have seen it -- a white question mark next to the Tesco roundabout in Westhill. (see photo on front cover).

The wooden structure marks a spot earmarked for a piece of public art to celebrate the town's 50th birthday (in 2018).

The question is what kind of piece of public art should eventually occupy this space?

Westhill and Elrick Community Council (WECC) is looking to residents to help answer that question.

We intend to carry out a public consultation in due course on the themes to be incorporated into the final art piece and how they might represent the heritage and current status of the town.

Meantime, we hope our temporary installation will inspire ideas and conversation!

Preliminary discussions about using this site have taken place between WECC and Aberdeenshire Council officers, who have been supportive to date.

The chosen piece would be of significant size but proportionate to its site. To pay for the design and construction, WECC is hoping to secure grants reserved for public art.

This artwork is intended to symbolize the transition of Westhill's community from a small predominantly agricultural one, to a substantial and thriving one firmly related to international oil and gas services. It should reflect the confidence in the future of Westhill.

If funding can be found, a brief will be drawn up and an artist appointed.

Please feel free to share any early thoughts and comments by emailing gateway@westhillelrick.org

Westhill in Bloom 2016 winners

The WECC, with assistance from Councillors Iris Walker and Ron McKail, resurrected the Westhill in Bloom competition after a few years absence. The main sponsor was Osprey Housing Group. The prizes were awarded as follows:

Best communal space/residential street: *Trinity Church. Runner up: Straik Place.*

Best front garden: *1st equal – Pam Yeoman and Mrs Dickson. Highly commended: Alan Crane.*

Best back garden: *Ian McAllan. Highly commended: Moira Munro.*



Best containers: *Hazel Davidson.*

Highly commended for front and back gardens: *Mr and Mrs Davidson*

Overall winner: *Ian McAllan.*

Each winner received a trophy and a prize, many of which were donated by local businesses.

Some of the winners after being presented with their trophies by Glenn Adcock (in the centre of the photo) of Osprey Housing Group at the Holiday Inn on 8th September

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Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



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Customers will now be able to access
Council services during the following hours:

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Tuesday	– 10.00–5.00
Wednesday	– 1.00–7.30
Thursday	– 10.00–5.00
Friday	– 10.00–5.00
Saturday	– 10.00–1.00

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Councillor David Aitchison

The proposed football stadium development by Aberdeen FC continues to be discussed in our community and I am often asked for information on the progress and timescale of what is proposed. The most recent information I have is that the football club are likely to make their formal planning application by the end of the year. This means that Aberdeen City Council are unlikely to make a decision on the application before the local council elections in May.

Winter is now with us and I would encourage everyone to be mindful of the vulnerable members of our community. A little help goes a long way, whether that is clearing an elderly neighbour's path of snow or gritting their driveway when you are doing your own. The council and councillors are aware and appreciative of the many positive actions taken by residents throughout the year. The actions and help for our vulnerable friends and neighbours is particularly appreciated during the winter.

Examples of what happens naturally within our communities in Aberdeenshire during spells of winter weather were heard at the recent meeting of Infrastructure Services Committee. At this meeting councillors agreed to the proposal for a snow warden scheme. This scheme will help communities to help themselves. It was also agreed that the council would double the number of large grit bins at council recycling centres to improve public access to salt and grit.

I can be consulted at any time by telephone or email on any issue and also hold monthly surgeries at Westhill Library on the first Wednesday of the month from 6–7pm.

My next surgery dates are **Wednesday 7 December, Wednesday 1 February 2017 and Wednesday 1 March 2017.**

Councillor David Aitchison

2 Fare Park Circle, Westhill, AB32 6WJ

Tel 01224 741301, Mobile 07876 475227

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Westdyke Community Club

With the 7 a side development season now complete for around 110 boys and girls, there is no rest for the coaches or the players as they continue their development over the winter months as coaching sessions continue.

The 2016 competitive girls season is also at an end and has seen success for all three under 16 teams with an excellent standard of football on display. Both under 13 girl teams have continued their development with great enthusiasm and lots of hard work. The club is excited that the 2017 season will see the introduction of a ladies team for the first time, completing the girls' pathway at the club. The club continues its recruitment for ladies aged 17 and over to join us at this exciting time at the club and if you are interested, please get in touch by emailing westdykecc@gmail.com.

Westdyke FC, our amateur team have made a good solid start to the season in the Premier Division and have made good progress in the cups. The boys competitive season is well under way with 7 teams representing the club from 13s to 17s. A solid start has been made by all teams with players and coaches continuing to develop as the season progresses.

There is a lot of football to be played so why not come along to Lawnsdale or Westdyke Leisure Centre and support the Westdyke teams.

With a new club website currently under construction, should you require more information or have any enquiries, please contact westdykecc@gmail.com.

Jonathan Watt, Secretary

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Cllr. Iris Walker (Ward 13), Westhill and District

Occasional Licenses

A timely reminder if you are organising a Christmas do or fundraiser where alcohol will be served in unlicensed premises, you need to apply for an occasional license six weeks prior to the event. Application forms are available at www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/licensing/OccasionalLicensing.

Trees

Many residents in Westhill contact me about trees. The space I have here doesn't allow me to list the raft of benefits trees have on our environment, but sometimes trees can be seen as a problem. Aberdeenshire Council's policy states that they will not prune or remove trees to increase light or improve a satellite signal for a property; trees will be pruned or removed if damaged, or dangerous to property or pedestrians in the area. Landscape Services do have a programme of maintenance for trees in Westhill and upcoming work will include the removal of unsafe poplar trees.

BT Payphone Consultation

BT are currently undergoing a consultation on intended payphone removals. There are two payphones in Westhill included in the consultation. Records show that the payphone on Old Skene Road has been used once in the last twelve months and the payphone on Enterprise Drive, 50 times. Both are earmarked for removal. The consultation ends on 28th November and you should direct any comments to Aberdeenshire Council before that date.

Planning Issues

At a recent Garioch Area Committee meeting, councillors discussed the engagement process of the Local Development Plan (or the LDP) which is refreshed every few years and sets out statements of the policies Aberdeenshire will use for assessing planning applications and confirms the principle of development on sites across Aberdeenshire. Planning can be a dry subject and sometimes residents don't find out about a planning application which may affect them until it is reported in the press. Aberdeenshire Council publish a weekly list of new applications so it is worth looking them up if you are interested in what is going on in the area. Getting involved in the Community Council is also a good way of finding out more as they, as statutory consultees, are kept up to date with new applications. Community Councils are also involved in the LDP process, being invited to put forward possible sites to be included in the LDP. As a planning authority, Aberdeenshire is always looking for new ways to engage with residents, particularly hard to reach groups such as the young and the elderly. If you have any ideas on how to improve engagement on the planning system or would like to find out more, please get in touch.

Enjoy the winter season and all the festivities it brings and good health and happiness for 2017!

Contact me

My surgeries are on the first Saturday of the month from 10–11am at Westhill Library or you can contact me by phone on 07876 475272, email cllr.i.walker@aberdeenshire.gov.uk, contact me online at www.iriswalker.co.uk or Facebook/Tweet me.



Cllr Iris Walker – Westhill and District



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Cllr. Ron McKail (Ward 13), Westhill and District

Westhill Men's Shed Members Voluntary Service Award.

I was pleased to be present when two local members of the Westhill Men's Shed were recognised by Aberdeenshire Council for their contribution to the work of the Men's Shed. Provost Vernal congratulated both David Thomson and Alan Eastell for the voluntary service they



Ron McKail with David Thomson and Alan Eastell at the Awards Ceremony at Woodhill House.

provide and for the considerable time they spend ensuring the 'shed' continues to provide a valuable service to its members. The Westhill Men's Shed was the first to be set up in Scotland and due to its success is frequently used as the template for other Men's Sheds which have since become established throughout Aberdeenshire.

Near Misses on Westhill Zebra Crossings

In the Autumn Bulletin I wrote about concerns regarding near accidents on two zebra crossings on Westhill Drive, namely the crossings between the hotel and the shopping centre and also the crossing beside the bus stop near to Kinmundy. This Bulletin item resulted in the receipt of several emails expressing mixed views on who was responsible for the 'near misses'. For some, whilst appreciating that pedestrians have the right of way, they were failing to give consideration to oncoming vehicles. They were striding on to the zebra crossing without looking in either direction to check oncoming traffic and without checking whether the vehicle driver had seen them. The message is clear that pedestrians have a responsibility to confirm it is safe to cross on the zebra. For others, the responsibility and blame for what could have been a fatality lies with the vehicle driver approaching too fast and completely disregarding somebody on the zebra crossing.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that there have been many 'close calls' on both these crossings on Westhill Drive.

As a follow up to the emails and phone calls received I contacted Aberdeenshire Council Roads officers to raise the profile of this road safety issue. Appropriate checks have since been carried out by council staff and it has been confirmed both zebra crossing fully comply with all appropriate Roads and Traffic Regulations. Officers also point out that there is no data available to indicate an increase in accidents at these zebra crossings. No further action is therefore planned, mainly on the basis there is no hard evidence to indicate there is a safety problem to pedestrians. For many in Westhill, however, they would disagree but what is required is evidence before any action will be considered.

As a suggestion, if you have been involved in a near accident or have suggestions as to improving safety at these locations, could I ask you to share this information with me. I will then collate it (will not use your personal information) and report it to Council Officers and to Police Scotland.

Please contact me if I can be of help in following up on your queries and concerns.

Councillor Ron McKail 17 Brimmond Drive, Westhill, AB32 6SZ
Tel 01224 742095; Mobile 07767 663787
email cllr.r.mckail@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

WESTHILL ART PROJECT

It has been busier than usual this year. Once again we decorated the shopping centre with Easter egg shapes hanging from the pillars. Thank you children. You made about 600 decorations.

The 3rd annual SCARECROW TRAIL was a huge success. It helped that it was a beautiful day weatherwise and you came out in force to follow the Trail. This is now established as a regular event for Gala Week. It can only get bigger and better.

There were two very happy mornings when you were invited to draw with chalks on the paving stones at the shopping centre. Some Dads and Grandads seemed to have as much fun as the children!

The theme for Christmas decorations this year in SNOWFLAKES. You will receive instructions soon, although your children will already know about this project and might have started making snowflakes.

PORTRAITS! The next community art project is producing self-portraits and this is not just for the children. We would like you to draw a self-portrait on an A5 card. It can be head and shoulders, full length, in cartoon style. You can use pencil, paint, felt pen, crayon, whatever you have at hand. We intend mounting an exhibition in February 2017, so you have plenty of time to produce a masterpiece. We hope as many people as possible will participate. We cannot wait to discover the artistic talent hiding away in Westhill.

Check the website and Facebook for the closing date and the collection points for contributions.

Kate Lumsden WECC member/Westhill Art Project www.westhillelrick.org



COMMUNITY COUNCIL FESTIVE EVENT

As per the last 2 years, there will be a Christmas tree at the Westhill shopping centre in the square near M & S.

Come along on **SATURDAY 10th DECEMBER** from **4.30pm to 5.30pm** when the tree lights will be switched on.

There will be music and singing, hot chocolate and nibbles!

This year the theme for the festive decorations in the arcade made by the community and organised by the Westhill Art Project is Snowflakes.

Please do come along and join in the fun

SEASONS GREETINGS from the WECC and the Westhill Art Project

BILL'S GARDENING CORNER

WINTER

Yes its winter, but don't forget to keep an eye on your plants in pots and such. They still need a drink now and again, but don't over water in case of frost.

Haven't ordered your seeds for spring sowing? Now is a good time to browse through some catalogues and choose a variety of spring, summer and autumn seeds.

If you have a compost bin or some other form of composter, remember to turn the contents now and again so it rots down evenly, keep it moist but not wet; if you have an open heap you could cover it with an old carpet to help to retain some heat.

Have a look round your garden and if you took some photographs of this year's displays, think what you would like for next year, something different or much the same.

As we are heading into the festive season and you are asked what you would like as a present, why not vouchers! You don't have to use them right away, you can take your time and pick when you want to. Have a good festive season, enjoy and look forward to next year's challenge.

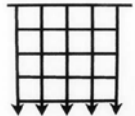
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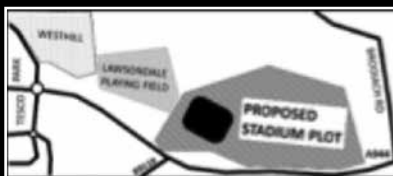


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No Kingsford Stadium Group

What is planned? Aberdeen Football Club (AFC) is proposing to build a 20,000 seater stadium, plus a football training academy with 7 floodlit pitches just outside Westhill, behind the Lawsondale playing fields. The site is just within the Aberdeen City Boundary, which means that Aberdeenshire residents will be most affected, but it will be Aberdeen city councillors who will decide if the plans are approved.



Who are we? We are concerned local residents who formed the group to oppose this development because of the impact that it will have on our community. Key issues are listed below:

Loss of Green belt. The proposed site is on green belt land, which is not designated for development and contrary to the Aberdeen City Development Plan. Previous planning applications for housing and a golf driving range were refused on land adjacent to the site.

Road Congestion. The A944 is a busy road and the new AWPR and slip roads were not designed to cope with up to 20,000 additional people using cars and buses to access a facility off the A944. The whole area will be severely congested on match days. Additionally, the A944 will probably require to be closed for a period after a match to enable traffic dispersal (as per current practice at Pittodrie).

Parking. There will be insufficient car parking available at the stadium so we are likely to have 100s of cars driving through our quiet streets searching for spaces. AFC have proposed parking permits for residents, which we currently do not have, and do not want.

Safety. The stadium is 'shoe-horned' into the site between two potentially hazardous oil and gas pipelines. Fans parking in Westhill, Kingswells or the Park and Ride will walk along the A944 cycle path which is narrow in places. How will emergency vehicles move through and beyond the A944 in heavy traffic?

Noise and light pollution. In addition to the regular football season matches, it is likely that the stadium will host football and rugby internationals as well as concerts. We anticipate sound will carry over a wide area. Training pitches will be used in the evenings, bringing unwanted light pollution to houses nearby.

Visual impact. The 6-7 storey building will be an imposing structure on entering Westhill, domineering the town. We will lose our semi-rural situation and we feel that this is part of a longer term plan to develop the entire A944 corridor between Kingswells and Westhill.

What happens next? Once the full planning application is submitted, the public have just 4 weeks to send letters of objection. We don't have a date for this yet but we will keep you posted!

What can you do now? You can write to your local councillors, MPs and MSPs voicing your concerns. Details can be found on the 'write to them' website www.writetothem.com

How to contact us: PO Box 11970, Westhill, AB32 6AR. E-mail: info@nokingsfordstadium.org.uk; Website: <http://www.nokingsfordstadium.org.uk> • Facebook: www.facebook.com/SayNoToKingsfordStadium/

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News from the Library

Congratulations go to our Summer Reading Challenge 2016 Star Reader and also to our prize winners in the Summer Reading Challenge photo competition. A fantastic job was done by all!

During the October holidays we held two Spooky Stories and Creepy Crafts sessions for primary school age children. Thirty four children listened to spooky jokes, riddles and stories before creating amazing creepy crafts including witches and skeletons.

The afternoon meeting of the 'Knit and Natter' group on Thursday 27th October was rather special for the lovely members as they reached the 3rd anniversary of their first meeting. Celebration cake was enjoyed by all! Since that first meeting the group has flourished and new members are always very welcome. The group meets from 2-4pm on Thursdays. To join, just bring knitting, stitching or crochet to this relaxed, friendly session and enjoy a good natter with refreshments.



Book Week Scotland celebration takes place from Monday 21–Sunday 27 November. It is an annual event for adults and children to encourage us all to celebrate books and reading wherever we are. As part of the 2016 celebrations the Scottish Book Trust are looking for the country's favourite book-to-screen adaptation (which you can vote for via the Scottish Book Trust website). We will have many of the 40 books on the shortlist available for you to browse and/or borrow.

On Friday 25th November, illustrator and author Alison Murray will visit us to read from her books and show her wonderful illustrations. Alison has followed a passion for the visual all her life, from her early career in textile design to her emergence as one of Scotland's most talented illustrators and authors for children. Her previous books have appeared on the shortlists and long lists for the Scottish Children's Book Awards and the UK Literary Association Award. This event takes place from 10.30 to 11.30 am and is suitable for pre-school children. Advance booking is required.

With winter approaching we would highlight a few sections which might be of particular interest: Soups and Winter cookery (Dewey subject numbers 641.813 and 641.564), Winter gardening (Dewey subject number 635.953), Winter sports (Dewey subject number 796.522) and Photography (Dewey subject number 770). Magazines such as Ideal Home, Lonely Planet and National Geographic (back issues can be borrowed) may be of interest too.

For information on all forthcoming events at Westhill Library please visit us at

www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/libraries and
<http://www.facebook.com/AberdeenshireLibraries>

We hope to see you soon!

Westhill's LOCAL inclusive charity

SensationALL Community Asset Transfer of Old School House, Westhill Approved

We are very pleased to announce that on 23rd August 2016, after nearly two years of negotiations, Aberdeenshire Council approved our application for a Community Asset Transfer of the Westhill Old School and Schoolhouse (OSH).

This is a momentous step forward for SensationALL. It gives us the opportunity to create a welcoming home for our charity and an asset which the whole community can enjoy.

Our plans for the OSH include: the provision of an affordable Out of School Club for local children; new and exciting facilities for play, recreation and sensory experiences; and rooms available to community groups and local businesses.

SensationALL Appeal

SensationALL is a small independent charity, born and bred in Westhill. Our aim is to improve the lives of children and adults with disabilities and their families, through various practical support, training and therapeutic activities. These families feel less isolated when they have contact with others in a similar situation, and have somewhere to turn for information and advice.

To realise our Inclusive Community vision, it will take a lot of money and support – our current estimate suggests over £1 million.

SensationALL require support for our development plans and continued services. This is your opportunity to get involved with an ambitious local charity, and make a real and lasting contribution to the community.

We invite you to join us in helping families in need and your local community in developing a first-class facility of which Westhill can be proud. If you would like to learn more, please use the contact details below to arrange a meeting with our senior service providers Susan Strachan and Adele Lindsay.

Burns Night Family Ceilidh

Friday 27th January 2017, 8–12 @ Ashdale Hall, Westhill

Live Band, Hot Meal and Licensed Bar

Adults £25 • Children £10

Please contact us by email info@sensationall.org.uk or by phone 07789 393399



ASHDALE HALL (WESTHILL DRIVE)

The Ashdale Hall is looking forward to a couple of busy months for November and December in the lead up to Christmas. We are now taking bookings for next year and some months are filling up quickly. If you wish to book the Hall, please email ashdalehall@hotmail.co.uk with your enquiry. You can also book your child's Party at the Hall, there is plenty of room for a bouncy castle indoors, great for winter parties!

UPCOMING EVENTS

03rd December – Westhill Christmas Market, 9am–1pm

09th December – Monthly Tea Dance (monthly, every 2nd Friday)

10th December – Blackburn Dance Christmas Party

11th December – Blackburn Dance Christmas Party

11th December – Senior Citizens Christmas Party (hosted by Westhill Rotary)

24th December – Blackburn Dance Christmas Eve Dance

WESTHILL COMMUNITY MARKET (9am–1pm, 1st Saturday each month)

Our monthly market is still held at the Hall and we continue to have our regular stallholders selling French breads, cakes, puddings, local meats, sausages, pies, fresh veg, free-range eggs well as locally made organic body products, bespoke cards and hearts, crafts, jewellery, paintings, wedding horse shoes and cards, also plants in season. We also have monthly community stall which can be booked free of charge. If your local project or group would like to book this stall, please email: ashdalehall@hotmail.co.uk. We had two community stalls in November hosted by Scouthall Playgroup to raise funds for their playgroup and Westhill Art Project to create awareness about their local projects.

We really need the support of the local community for the Market to be able to continue. All the products at the Market are locally sourced and made, with little or no food miles involved! Come along to the next Market and see for yourself the fantastic quality of the products and handmade crafts on offer.

HALL FACILITIES

The Hall hosts regular Dance Society Dances, Family Ceilidhs, Dance Shows & Competitions, Youth Orchestra Rehearsals & Concerts, Gigs and Scottish Nights. The Hall is also frequently used by various community groups and individuals for fundraising charity events. We also offer a wide programme of exercise and yoga classes, children's dance classes and toddler/baby classes. For full details please see our online timetable: <http://ashdalehall.co.uk/current-timetable> and our upcoming events can be viewed on: <http://ashdalehall.co.uk/current-events> (these are also displayed on the Hall noticeboards).

For enquiries or to book the hall/meeting rooms or badminton courts, please e-mail Fatima Mansoor at: ashdalehall@hotmail.co.uk or call the Hall on **01224 740137**.

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1st SKENE BOYS' BRIGADE

The first few months of a new session are always a busy time with the boys across the three sections of the company now engaged in a wide range of activities within the BB and Duke of Edinburgh's award schemes. It was also nice to welcome new boys into the company and for the information of interested boys and parents; we do not operate any waiting lists.

We have also commenced our outdoor activities programme with a weekend 'wilderness camp' for the younger boys in the Company Section. Other similar activities plus a night cycle run on the Deeside Railway Line and other mountain bike outings are being actively planned.

After the school holidays, the busy period continued with our annual fundraising 'Autumn Fayre' on Saturday 5 November in Trinity Church Hall and the annual Dedication Service in Trinity Church the following evening. The Company Section boys also participated in the Remembrance Day service at Skene Church the following Sunday.



Looking ahead towards the festive period, the Company Section will again operate a Christmas Card delivery service in the Westhill and Kirkton of Skene area. From Sunday 20 November, 'post boxes' and BB stamps at 25p each will be situated in the vestibules of both Skene and Trinity Churches. This year, the last posting day will be Wednesday 14 December.

Christmas is about fun and as is traditional, to get the Anchor Boys and the Junior Section into the festive spirit, they will be attending the Pantomime in Aberdeen Arts Centre.

As always, updates of our activities and photographs are available for all to view on our Facebook page and website www.1stskenebb.co.uk

Donald Struthers, Captain, 01224 742262

SCAFFOLD TOWER FOR HIRE

The Westhill Residents' Association purchased a scaffold tower for erecting the Christmas lights. The tower is available for hire to Westhill residents. The platform working height is 2.73m.

Charges are £10 per day for 1 to 2 days, then £5 per day for each additional day, or £30 for one week. Transportation available at £10 each way.

For more information and to book the scaffold, call **01224 744058**.

Westhill and District Gardening Club

Monthly meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the month in the Trinity Church Halls at 7.30pm. Tea and biscuits are provided at the conclusion of the evening's programme and all proceedings end by 9.30pm.

Future dates and topics for your diary are:

Wednesday 7th December 2016 – Festive Floral Arrangements by Ann Westwood

Wednesday 20th January 2017 – Annual General Meeting

The club meetings are always open to visitors or new members at any time.

For further information please contact David Dolman, Secretary, W&DGC, tel. 01224 742639, or send us an e-mail to westhillgardenclub@gmail.com

iPad/Tablets Learning Class Opportunity

Do you have an iPad, Tablet or similar device that you don't know how to use? Would you like to learn how to use it along with others in the same position? If you would, we plan to run small classes on a Tuesday 1.30pm to 3.30pm during January and February 2017 in Westhill to give you the basics to operate your device.

If you would be interested in coming along, spaces are limited so booking is essential. For more information and to book a space please contact Aberdeenshire Council, Leisure Learning Development Officer Leslie Murison on 01467 625088 or on mobile number 07795 252445.

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We match people over 16 years of age with a disability, a mental health issue or dementia with someone who shares the same interests. The possibilities are endless with SHARED LIVES as each person decides what they want to achieve and we match them with someone who can support them to succeed. The support is unique in that it is based in and around the SHARED LIVES Carers home and community, sharing hobbies and interests together. This partnership is flexible and can range from a few hours during the day or evenings, at weekends or weekdays, to short breaks and longer placements.

SHARED LIVES are currently recruiting carers who will be trained and supported by Aberdeenshire Council. The carers are self-employed, and they can work flexible hours to fit in with their lives. So if you could offer a person with a disability a few hours respite or if you want more information about accessing the service contact the SHARED LIVES Team.

Tel: 07824 837791 or Email: sharedlives@aberdeenshire.gov.uk, www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/sharedlives





Nicol of Skene Westhill 10k

Monies raised from the 2016 event totalled £8200. The money is being reinvested by WDCSH into the community by supporting local sports clubs and investing in facilities. Our 10k partner charity, SensationALL, also benefited from a sizeable donation.

Lookout for our recent consultation, launched via Facebook, asking for feedback on the event but also on what improvements/ideas you have to enhance sport and leisure offerings in the local community. We would welcome any suggestions from members of the community in this regard, so if you would like to get in touch with your ideas, please *email wdcsh@hotmail.com*

A special thank you to two key sponsors of the 2016 event that I omitted to mention in the last bulletin article. Tesco (Westhill) demonstrated great support to the community by donating all water and cereal bars for the event. Leisure retail company, Run4It, supported the event by donating use of their finish gantry.

Planning is underway for the 2017 event with our main sponsor, Nicol of Skene, and partner charity SensationALL already confirmed. More information will follow on the event via our Facebook page.

Other News

Recent training courses organised by WDCSH for local sport and leisure organisations include:

- Social Media Training
- Safeguarding and Protecting Children

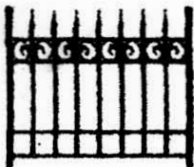
WDCSH were pleased to make a recent donation of £1000 towards purchase of a defibrillator for Westdyke Community football club.

WDCSH Website: <http://wdcsh.org/> • Email: wdcsh@hotmail.com

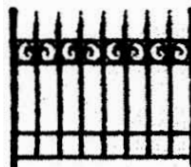
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The Bureau needs to recruit up to 3 more Board Members

Our organisation is governed by a Board whose members are both Charity Trustees and Company Directors. In common with all other bureaux in the UK we are not a government organisation but an individual charity responsible entirely for all its own affairs. The Board's wide remit includes ensuring that we work to the highest possible standards in:

- Managing our finances, including raising all the funds we need to operate
- Overseeing bureau operations, including emphasis on quality of advice
- Complying with charity and company law and other legal obligations
- Employing staff and complying with employment law
- Business and Development Planning
- Overseeing our IT & Telecomms, Health & Safety and Publicity

Membership of our Board would allow you to:

- Utilise your current skills to benefit your local charity and consequently all the citizens of South West Aberdeenshire who need help to solve their problems
- Gain knowledge and experience of all aspects of managing a company which could bring real benefit to you in future employment.

Board members take the lead on a role such as those listed above, although we currently have no leads for some of the roles.

Our main priority, however, is for someone to become Vice Chair then take over the Chair role at our AGM in September 2017 when the current Chair will step down.

If you feel you may have something to offer please do not hesitate to contact us on 01224 747714. We are a fairly diverse board with male and female, Scottish, English and Chinese members, working and retired and with ages ranging from 23 to 70s, so you are bound to fit in. We will provide full induction, familiarisation with the bureau, an understanding of all its operations and training for the general role of Trustee/Director.

If you have a problem, need help or advice, or have a few hours to spare each week and are thinking of volunteering, why not call the bureau on 01224 747714 to make an appointment to see an Adviser or our Manager. You have nothing to lose and you will be surprised by how much you will benefit.

The Bureau Opening Hours in Westhill are:

Tuesday and Wednesday 10am to 3pm (appointment or drop in)

Thursday 10am to 3pm (appointment only)

Friday 11am to 4pm (appointment, plus drop in from 1pm)

We also have a bureau office in Banchory and 6 outreaches located in Aboyne, Tarland, Ballater, Braemar, Alford and Lonach, all by appointment only. Please call 01224 747714 to book an appointment or visit our website <http://www.swacab.org.uk/where-and-when> for further information.

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Mini-Kindergym

A fun and stimulating parent and child exercise class for children aged 12-24 months. Developed to encourage toddlers co-ordination and social skills. Stimulating equipment is used including a ball pool, soft play, climbing frame, trampoline, parachute, etc.

Friday: 9.45 (crèche available), 10.45

Kindergym

An exciting structured class for children aged 2+ to encourage co-ordination, balance, confidence, social skills etc. A large range of stimulating and challenging equipment including beams, a climbing frame, jumping box, trampoline, parachute, etc.

**Wednesday: 1-1.45, 2-2.45 Thursday: 9.30-10.15, 10.30-11.15, 1-1.45, 2-2.45
+ crèche is available in the afternoon on both days**

Jumping Jacks

An exciting, imaginative, structured class for pre-school children who attend on their own. Classes help to develop children's co-ordination, concentration, balance, basic gymnastic moves, etc. Tuesday: 10-10.45, 1-1.45, 2-2.45

Gymnastics

Recreational classes teaching primary aged children bar, beam, box and floor work.

Monday: Pr2/3 4-4.45, Pr3/4/5 4.45-5.45, Pr5/6/7 5.45-6.45

Tuesday: Pr1 3.45-4.30, Pr1/2 4.30-5.15

Fitkids

Fun packed fitness class suitable for primary 1-3 children. Lively class based on traditional and new games. Wednesday: 3.35-4.15, 4.15-4.55

Toddlers

A large range of toys and equipment set up in a large hall, tea and coffee available in our coffee room. Monday morning from 9.30-11.30

Indoor Bowling

Four large carpets available on a Monday afternoon 1-3.30. A warm invitation is extended to both beginners and experienced players. Bowls are available if required.

New members welcome.

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DENMAN PLAYGROUP

Mon-Fri 9.15-12.25, Age 2.5-4 years

Our qualified staff run a warm and welcoming playgroup offering a fun environment, catering for each child's individual needs

Westhill Golf Club

In my last article I highlighted that Westhill Golf Club was in the process of making upgrades both on the course and in the clubhouse. Whilst these are still on-going there has been significant progress. The creation of our dedicated 'short game area' which features a full size putting green as well as target green for pitching, chipping and bunker shots has come on leaps and bounds. Indeed, not only has the land been shaped and seeded, the warm autumnal weather has meant that it has begun to green-up nicely. This is based at the top of the golf club near our 1st hole and is well worth a look! We expect it to be 'in play' at some point next year (spring or early summer) depending on the weather. The short game facility will allow us to further improve our junior coaching programme as well as provide space for adults to practise (both new and old!). So perhaps 2017 will be the year you get into golf!

Within our clubhouse we are still renovating our lounge and bar area. We are moving away from the dark roof, walls and carpet and will instead end up with a bright, modern and fresh space for socialising, enjoying a bite to eat or having a well-earned beverage. By the time this article is published we expect the majority of the work to be completed and will be organising a 're-opening' evening for all to come and see. For information about this, keep up to date via our Facebook page ([Facebook.com/WesthillGolf](https://www.facebook.com/WesthillGolf)).

In a previous article I made reference to the new '360 tour' which can be found on our web page (www.westhillgolfclub.co.uk) allowing you to tour the course from your phone. Well we have now been able to go a step further and add some 360 drone footage of our par 3, 6th hole. What does this mean exactly? Well, the drone takes off and flies over the hole but captures video footage around 360 degrees as it flies meaning you can see the hole from any angle. This is a very unique way of showing off the course so why not go and have a look!

Sadly, we are still observing some acts of vandalism on the course so I re-iterate that anyone caught doing so will be reported to the relevant authorities as we should not be footing the bill for someone else's actions.

Alan McCue, WGC Marketing Convenor



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Milne Hall, Kirkton of Skene

Planning is well underway to make a further meeting/multi-function room and the extension and upgrading of the kitchen.

Future Events: Family Hogmanay Ceilidh, tickets on sale soon. See Facebook Page for further information.

Regular Activities:

- A Social 'Tea Dance' Group meets on Tuesday afternoons 1.30–3.30pm.
- Jazzercise, 7.15–8.15pm every Thursday.
- Children and young adult Highland dance classes on Friday evenings.
- Skene Pre-School Playgroup Mon–Fri mornings during term time.
- Skene Women's Rural Institute – 1st Wednesday of each month. Phone Mary Gray – 01224 743285.
- Westhill Sooyang Do martial art group hold classes for children and adults on Monday evenings. Phone Chief Instructor Dave Bremner: 07970 188825.
- Indoor bowling every Tuesday evening. All welcome.
- Skene Youth Club for Primary 1–7, Thursday evenings 6–7pm during term time.

Our hall can be booked for children's parties, funeral teas, etc.

For booking enquiries phone Mary Gray on 01224 743285. Milne Hall Management Committee is registered as a charity (SC045034). **Help wanted** – if you feel you could contribute in any way in looking after and improving the hall, you will be made most welcome. Please contact 01224 742804.

Westhill and District Senior Citizens Club

We were pleased to see so many of the previous members, and quite a few new ones, at our first meeting on Thursday 1st October. There were quite a few men present which was good to see.

The Senior Citizens Club is open to anyone age 55 years and over. We meet fortnightly in Trinity Church Hall 2pm until 4pm. We have a varied programme (subject to change if necessary) and welcome any suggestions for entertainment.

Thursday 24th November – Inverurie Wind Band

Thursday 8th December – Christmas Lunch at the Holiday Inn

Thursday 5th January 2017- Tara Leiper – Pianist and Singer

Thursday 19th January – Inverurie Glee Club

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Contact **Heather Cook**, 01224 741194 or e-mail heathercook@tiscali.co.uk for further information.



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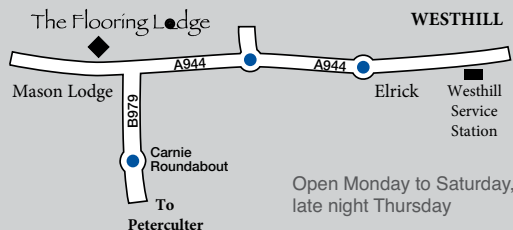
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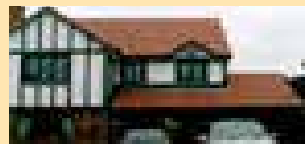
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Skene Committee of Macmillan Cancer Support

The annual coffee morning held at Lyne of Skene Hall on Saturday 17th September raised £2,353. This included money raised from our large raffle draw. Thanks to all the numerous local companies and individuals who contributed towards the raffle.

1st prize winner (£100) was Cailleigh Troup, Skene

2nd prize winner (£75) was Emma Coull

3rd prize winner (£50) was Brian Troup, Skene.

There will be a collection in Tesco Westhill on Friday 25th and Saturday 26th November. Helpers are still required to cover these days. If you are interested in helping, please contact a committee member.

The committee are now planning ahead for the Dunecht Burns supper on Friday 27rd January 2017. This very popular event is a traditional Burns Supper with three course meal, speakers, musical entertainment and a lively ceilidh, dancing to "Ceilidh Fusion" until 12.30am. Tickets are £20/person and will be available from the secretary. All proceeds will go to Macmillan Cancer Support.

From time to time we receive donations from individuals own fund raising events, collected from parties, sponsored challenges, etc. These donations are very gratefully received and are a terrific boost to our fund raising. All money received is "ring fenced" for the use of patients in our local area.

Thank you to all who support our fund raising events. If you have a little time to spare – why not join in our fund raising activities? **Contact 01330 860226.**

Follow Macmillan on our Facebook page by going to www.facebook.com/skenefundraising or by searching for Skene Fundraising Committee – Macmillan Cancer Support on Facebook.

Kath MacBeath

Westhill District Amateur Swimming Club

After the Summer holidays the competition season started for Westhill in September, when we were hosts for the Minnows Meet. Lewis Elrick won the trophy for the best Westhill Swimmer.

Towards the end of November we will hold our annual Club Championships. This is open to all swimmers in our club and is a fantastic day with an exciting atmosphere bringing together all our swimmers and

their families. For some this is their first taste of a real competition. We will celebrate everyone's achievements with a medal presentation and disco night in December.

We are always delighted when we receive any donations from local companies and extend grateful thanks to Dennis D'Arcy of Recognition Express North Scotland who kindly donated a banner which Brian Milne of Mercury 92 designed.

If you are aged between 7–12 years and reached level 4/5 in the 'learn to swim programme' and are interested in competitive swimming please contact our membership secretary Mrs Sam Louw at membership@westhilldistrictasc.org.uk for more information.





WELCOME!



Services

Sunday – 10.30am – Morning Worship

Crèche (*crèche room, downstairs*)

Mini Roar! (*age 3-5, downstairs*)

Roar! (*P1-7, upstairs*)

Alive! (*S1-S3, upstairs*)

6.30pm – Soul (*S1 and up*)

6.30pm – Café Church (*every 2nd & 4th Sunday of the month*)

For further details please contact the Church Office (01224) 740291 or email: office@westhillcommunitychurch.org • For room hire call the Church office or email: bookings@westhillcommunitychurch.org



Westhill Community Church have launched a new community action initiative where we now have a store cupboard of tinned/dried food items, toiletries and other items available **for anybody in need**. If you, or anybody you know could do with a helping hand, please do come and see us. In addition to this you can also collect your Foodbank parcels from us if you have a voucher for Aberdeenshire North Foodbank.

There will be drop in sessions every **Tuesday from 10am–1pm and Thursday from 4–6pm**. Please come along during these times and we will help in whatever way we can.

If the above times do not suit, please contact us on 01224 740291 or email beckyferguson@westhillcommunitychurch.org

Street Café

We gather on the Streets at

the Westhill Shopping Centre twice a month to give out free hot chocolate and biscuits!

Come hang out with us! **Upcoming dates: 25th November.**

Life Café

Each month we run a Life Café event

in the Ashdale Hall in Westhill! It is a relaxed Café drop in for young people in the community with a cut price tuck shop, free hot chocolate, video games on big screens, pool, table tennis and more! **It is Free Entry! Next events on: 16th December.**

Friday Night Live – 2nd December.



WCC CHRISTMAS SERVICES 2016

December

4th Advent All Age (10.30am)

11th Jesus Brings Hope (10.30am)

18th Nativity Service (10.30am) Carols by Candlelight (6.30pm)

23rd Christingle (6.30pm)

24th Christmas Eve Family Service (4pm) Midnight Service (11.15pm)

25th Christmas Day (10.30am)

Christmas Craft Fairs 2016

**Saturday November
19th 10am–3pm**

**Saturday December
3rd 10am–3pm**



Our cafe has now been open for two years! We would like to thank everyone who has supported us over the past two years. It's been great fun and we absolutely love seeing you!

The menu will be changing once again for the festive season and will include some festive favourites. You can also now get a

delicious bacon roll or pancake stack in the morning to start the day!

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES are always available if you are looking for something to fill your time and an opportunity to meet new people then pop along and see us to find out more. We also have young people volunteering for hours towards their Saltire Awards or Duke of Edinburgh Awards. No experience is necessary. The only criteria is that you must be over 13 years of age, be relatively physically able (it gets busy!), and have a willing heart to serve and meet people.

OPENING HOURS are Tuesday to Saturday, 10am to 3pm.

****Please note that the cafe will be closed on Saturday 24th December and remain closed between Christmas and New Year, reopening on Wednesday 4th January 2017 at 10am****



We will be launching Messy Church at WCC on the 11th of December, 4–6pm, and are so excited to see you there!

Messy Church is a fun expression of church for all the family. Come along for crafts, songs and fun all related to a bible story, followed by some food and fellowship together. 11th December 2016 15th January 2017 19th February 2017 19th March 2017 16th April 2017 (all 4–6pm, Westhill Community Church, Broadshade).



Café Church takes place on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month and it

begins at 6.30pm The venue is our Green Pastures Café. The evening begins at 6.30pm and at 8pm. There will be worship, prayer, interactive talks, fun events, and much, much more! There will be **NO EVENING SERVICES** on the 1st or 3rd Sundays of the month. Please come along and invite a friend or two.

BADMINTON

Adult Badminton Group – every Tuesday during term time from 8pm to 10pm, in Westhill Academy. Cost £2.00 payable at the Academy Reception on the night. Contact the Community Centre for more information 01224 740089.

JOGSCOTLAND IN WESTHILL

We meet on a Monday and Thursday night at Westhill Swimming Pool, 6.30–7.30pm

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Further info from **Pam Wilson** on **07734 541616**

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WESTHILL TENNIS CLUB

The colder weather and darker nights bring a close to the outdoor tennis season and a chance to look back on our activities this autumn.

All three of our NESLTA leagues teams had an outstanding season this year. Our Ladies A team continued their winning streak with a 3rd successive promotion up to division 1 and our Ladies B team also secured promotion to division 3. Not to be outdone, our Mens team also won their division and will be competing in division 1 next year. We would like to extend massive congratulations to all our league players for their success this year and a big thank you to John and Nora, our team captains, for all their hard work in organising the matches and keeping everyone motivated. We are always keen to hear from people looking to play competitively so please get in touch if you are interested.



We've also been involved in several social leagues this year which has encouraged some new faces to take part and have some fun playing against other clubs. The social leagues are a great opportunity to play in matches without the pressure that comes with the competitive leagues. A huge thank you goes out to Margaret for coordinating these matches and to the players who took part.

In early October, we held a fun evening to mark the "end" of the season for our Club night players. This was a chance for our adult members to play some fun tennis related games (which our junior members are probably more than familiar with) such as Round the Houses, Waves and Wipe Out. Though it was a cold night everyone warmed up afterwards with copious amounts of tea, sandwiches and homemade cakes. Club nights will continue every Monday, Thursday and Saturday throughout the winter. That is unless the courts are iced over! Westhill are a hardy bunch.

Junior and mini coaching will run until Christmas and will start up again after the school holiday break. If you are interested in finding out more about dates, times and age groups for coaching sessions please get in contact with our Head Coach, Vikki Paterson.

Contact

Email: westhilltennisclub@outlook.com • Facebook: www.facebook.com/westhilltennisclub

Website: www.clubspark.lta.org.uk/WesthillLawnTennisClub

In person: Monday evenings from 7.00pm (Adult Club Night)

Coaching: Vikki Paterson vikkipaterson@hotmail.com

DONATIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Westhill & Elrick Community Council have a surplus of funds due to the strong demand for advertising in the Westhill Bulletin. Some of these surplus funds are available for donations to local voluntary groups.

Applications for donations will be considered and awarded twice yearly, in early May and November, so the next set of donations will be made in May 2017. The deadline for applications is 5th May. Applicants must be voluntary organisations based or operating in Westhill, Elrick, Kirkton of Skene or Garlogie.

The recipients from the November 2016 donations round will be listed in the Spring 2017 Bulletin.

Donation requests can be sent at any time to the WECC Treasurer by email to wecc.treasurer@westhillelrick.org with a brief description of what the funds will be used for. The donations can be to help with normal ongoing running costs and will not be restricted to one-off projects.

For more information, please contact: **David Ritchie, Treasurer, Westhill & Elrick Community Council, Tel. 01224 744058, wecc.treasurer@westhillelrick.org**

WESTHILL CHOI KWANG DO SCHOOL, ASHDALE HALL, WESTHILL CELEBRATED ITS 21st ANNIVERSARY ON 5 MARCH 2016!

Students, old and new, wearing our anniversary T-shirts at the end of the seminar. A good turn out and lots of smiles were the order of the day and the seminar was enjoyed by all levels of students. A great big thank you to all instructors and assistant instructors who helped make the morning possible and to our ever supportive parents who assisted with the food and extra activities, like ninja gingerbread biscuit baking and picture taking on the day.



Come and join us and earn your own black belt!

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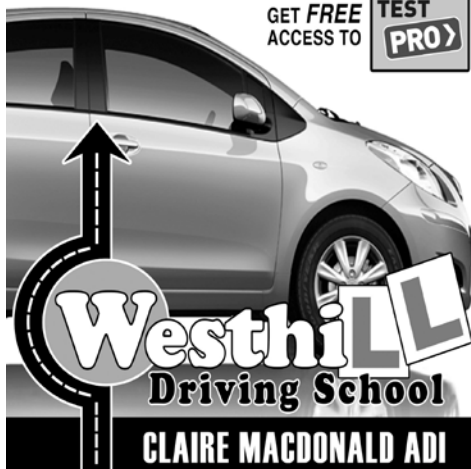
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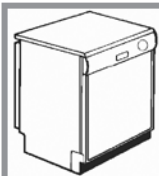
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BADMINTON

The coaches give children of P4 and above the chance to learn an enjoyable life-long skill playing Badminton. Cost £3.20 per class paid in a block. Beginners Mondays 6-7 pm, Improvers Tuesdays 6-7 pm, Proficient Tuesdays 7-8 pm, Saturday (all levels) 10.30-11.30 am.



MULTI SPORTS

P1-3 come to this group to have fun and exercise through story-telling and imaginary play. Cost £3.20 per class paid in a block. Mondays 6.15-7.15 pm.



COOKING

P6 and above come along and make both sweet and savoury dishes. A totally enjoyable experience for all. Cost £5.90 per class paid in a block. Tuesdays 4.30-5.45 pm.

BAKING

Come along and try baking an assortment of cakes and biscuits. What better way to finish off the day than with your own home bakes? Cost £5.90 per class paid in a block. P6 and above. Wednesdays 4.30-5.45 pm.

DANZE

P1 onwards learn different dances to great music on Wednesdays. Each year these children get the opportunity to perform in front of an audience at their own show. Cost £2.80 per class paid in a block. Wednesdays: Beginners 1 6.15-7.00 pm, Improvers 7.00-7.45 pm, Advanced 7.00-7.45 pm.

FOOTBALL

Football coaching for boys and girls in P1 and 2. If you enjoy football then you will love this. Cost £3.40 per class paid in a block. Tuesdays P1 & P2 6-7 pm, Wednesdays P1 6-7 pm, P2 7-8 pm.

SATURDAY DRAWING AND PAINTING

P4+ take part in drawing and painting animals and other subjects on a large scale using a variety of materials. A popular art class. Cost £6.35 per class paid in a block. Saturday morning 10 am-12 noon.

SATURDAY DANCE

Boys and girls of P1 and above can come along and learn how to do dance routines. At the end of the year the children get together with the Wednesday Danze group and have the opportunity to impress their parents with their end of year performance. Cost £2.80 per class paid in a block. 9.15-10.00 am or 10.00-10.45 am.

WEDNESDAY ART

P4 upwards, learn different techniques in drawing and painting. This class has been very popular with children staying term after term. Cost £6.35 per class paid in a block. Wednesdays 4-6 pm.



To enrol or for further details contact
Westhill Community Centre, Hays Way, Westhill
Tel 01224 740089
Email westhill.cec@aberdeenshire.gov.uk





Westhill Walkers

Open to all no matter what your age or ability

After a full programme of walks this summer we are now looking forward to the autumn/winter ones. Summer walks have varied from munros to coastal walks and an orienteering session at Aden Country Park. Geographically we have travelled from the Angus glens to the Cairngorms and the Banffshire coast.

We have also been delighted to have several new members but would be very happy to welcome more walkers interested in the outdoors and wanting to enjoy some exercise and good company in the stunning scenery we have around us in Aberdeenshire.

Joining a walking group is a great way of discovering new walks in the area with a leader to make sure you don't get lost. Members are always happy to help out anyone wanting to learn navigational skills.

We meet on alternate Sundays throughout the year. In the summer we have two grades of walk to cater for all tastes and abilities whilst there is just one walk on shorter autumn and winter days. In addition to our regular walks we also have a variety of social activities and weekends away.

In September a group of 20 spent a weekend in a hostel near Aberfeldy. Quite a few munros were bagged including four in one day by one group whilst others chose to be more leisurely – there are some very nice coffee shops in Aberfeldy for refreshment after a wee walk! In October we had our annual Bowling Evening and it won't be long till the Christmas Dinner weekend at Muir Cottage near Braemar.

Why don't you come and join us? No need to be a resident of Westhill and you are free to try a few walks with us before you join the club. There are no restrictions on age or ability but under 16s must be accompanied by an adult.

For further information please contact **Lin (01224 740165)** or **Tony (01224 740505)** or consult our website at westhillwalkers.wordpress.com/

<i>Some forthcoming walks/social events – please join us and be sure of a very warm welcome. More details on the web page.</i>	
<i>Sunday 27th Nov 08.30</i>	<i>Cairn William and Pitfichie Forest</i> <i>A circular route on tracks and mountain bike trails with great views of the surrounding countryside.</i> <i>Start/Finish NJ 654131 – 10 miles</i>
<i>Sunday 11th Dec 09.00</i>	<i>Dunecht Estate and Barmekin Hill</i> <i>A circular walk through the Dunecht Estate then on moorland paths to Barmekin Hill to the ruins of an iron age fort.</i> <i>Start/Finish NJ 754090 Dunecht – 7–8 miles</i>
<i>Monday 26th Dec 10.00</i>	<i>Boxing Day Walk</i> <i>Our annual stroll along the prom to work off those extra calories. Maybe a stop for coffee and bacon butty on the walk from Bridge of Don to Fittie and back. Meet at start of walk.</i> <i>Start/Finish NJ948093 on Esplanade just east of the Bridge of Don</i>



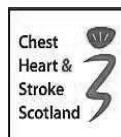
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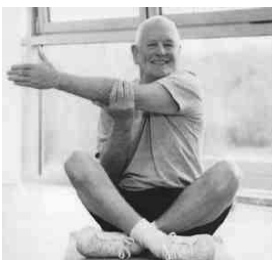
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**GCRA has been running special exercise classes for over 13 years in NE Scotland and has over 700 members
in 36 weekly classes. Our classes are all led by experienced instructors qualified to level 4 or above.**

The Westhill Exercise Class meets every Friday from 1.45 to 2.45 pm in the Westdyke Leisure Centre.

Class Fees are £4 per class and Annual Membership (giving access to all GCRA locations) is £10.

*If you are interested, just come along to the Leisure Centre on any Friday,
complete a Self-Referral Questionnaire and sample a first, free taster-class to see how you like it.*

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Back after the holidays and raring to go....We now have 3 Beaver Scout Colonies, 3 Cub Scout Packs and two Scout Troops – so we are still growing after 40 odd years!

At the end of September we held our AGM in the Hall and what a good evening it was, well attended by parents, guests, Leaders and young people. The business meeting, as usual, was completed fairly rapidly and then on to the real business of the evening...the presentation of Awards to the boys and our Leaders and Group Supporters.

Two of our boys, Caelan Teismann and Jonathan Reeks had worked hard to meet their challenges and gain the Chief Scout Gold Award, the highest award made to Scouts under the age of 15.



Scout Leader, Stephen Bland was awarded his 'Wood Badge' beads, on completion of Leader training.

Long Service Awards were presented to Group Scout Leader, Chris Pinnell for 40 years as a Leader, and Rae Taylor for 15 years as a Leader.



A presentation of a **Thanks Badge** was also made to Jim Wood, who had been our Factor and all round Volunteer helper for over 40 years. Jim has been connected with the Group for many years and has been the man who helps keeps the Hall in good condition and the grounds looking well kept.

After the presentations the youngsters, with the help of their Leaders, gave us their "Highlights" from the past year. These took a different format for each of the Sections.

Redwood Beaver Colony was just great using cards and props. Each Beaver came out with their prop to explain their personal highlight, and very varied they were too.

Our new Colony out at **Lyne of Skene** had a 'Shadow Puppet' display with one of the Leaders telling the meaning of the scene as it was shown by puppets. Very unique and interesting for the audience.

Amazon Beaver Colony used a huge picture of all the things they had done. Using this to prompt the youngsters to explain some of the things that happened in their year.

All of them enjoyed their Sleep-Over and are (according to their Leaders) raring to go and looking forward to another year of 'Beavering'.

Shere Khan Cub Pack told us all about their joint visit with Bagheera Cubs for a 2 night stay at the Jock Neish Centre, Finavon for a weekend of really good fun – all of them gained the Adventure Badge – this to go with a goodly number of badges gained over the 12 months.

Bagheera Cub Pack then told us about their day sailing on Lock of Skene. They also had an exciting time Scuba Diving and a bit calmer, an Italian Night they also gained a goodly number of badges over the year.

Both Scout Troops gave talks... **Keir Troop** enjoyed a very varied year with Sailing, Camping, Fire Safety, Star Wars themed games night and many, many other experiences and challenges. Visits to the RGU climbing wall and Transition Extreme and their annual Brainiac Evening.

Beechwood Troop Also had been very busy with outdoor activities, and many other adventures. Their 12 months Scouting was based on the balanced programme in Scouts Outdoors and Adventure, Skills & World. They also gained many badges and had a Scout Duncan Wight gain his Chief Scout Gold Award.

Our young people have done so many things over the past year ... too many to mention but all equally well done and well enjoyed.

Then it was time for refreshments and a good blether with old friends and new.

**Next Event..... SATURDAY 26TH NOVEMBER – SOUP & SANTA
12.00 TO 2.00, SCOUT HALL, OLD SKENE ROAD, WESTHILL**



WESTHILL AND DISTRICT MEN'S SHED

What's going on at the Shed?

A recent success has been the completion of a **bench for the children's charity the ARCHIE Foundation**, which was installed at the Children's hospital at ARI. You can see it in the picture below left, along with the giraffes that roam that part of Aberdeen!

The **upgrade to the Shed** is nearly complete.

We have increased the workshop area by one third, doubled the size of the kitchen and kept the same area for



socialising. This was funded by a grant from the NHS, which recognises the benefits of the Shed in improving men's health. The picture above right shows how cluttered we have been during the work.

The **3D printer** has arrived (following a generous grant from NEXEN) and we are getting to grips with the complexities of designing the parts to be printed on the PC and then seeing them come out like magic. The **model railway** was designed to be portable, and has recently been on display at two events in Aberdeen, where it is a great attraction that helps to 'spread the Shed' as we say.

We had a fascinating visit from **Barry Golding of the International Men's Shed group**, who gave us his take on development questions. We were pleased to hear that Sheds are now spreading to America, with the first site recently opening in Hawaii, and several more in development throughout the USA and Canada.

Container for the Men's Shed at the Recycling Centre

We are collecting broken lawnmowers and other equipment in a container at the Recycling Centre in Westhill. This has been supplied by Aberdeenshire Council and is working well with the cooperation of visitors and staff. We are getting a steady flow of petrol driven equipment, mostly mowers but also leaf blowers, hedge trimmers and suchlike. One downside is that the Council has an exclusive contract with a firm for anything electrical, so we cannot get electric mowers, drills, or sanders through this route. If you would like to donate electrical items we would be pleased to receive them directly at the Shed, or if they are too heavy, give us a call and we can arrange for them to be picked up.

The Shed always welcomes new members, so why not drop in and give it a go? We are open on Monday and Friday, 10-4, and Wednesday, 3-8. You will find us directly behind the swimming pool.

contact@westhillmensshed.co.uk Tel 01224 917345 www.westhillmensshed.co.uk

This Christmas at Vinespring Church

It is that time of the year again. Christmas trees, carol nights, special treats and that wonderful story that has changed, and is still changing the world.

But before we tell you just what to expect at Vinespring Church this Christmas, permit me to reflect on what we have been up to over the summer.

In August about 200 individuals in Westhill received our free invitation and offer of a free coffee at Costa Coffee. Our team handed out the invitations at the Westhill Shopping Centre, Denman Park, and around ALDI car park. Nearly forty persons took advantage of the offer, which lasted from the 8th–12th August. We are grateful for the kind assistance of the staff at Costa Coffee, without whose partnership the outreach would not have been possible. This was also our way of giving back to the community while giving everyone an opportunity to know more about who we are and what we are about.



The team after the 'Need a Break' Coffee outreach

On 27th August, we had another outreach; this time an environmental clean up exercise within Denman Park. We had identified a shaded area outside the immediate visibility of the local cleaners, but was often used by our young ones for play. This place had been littered with broken bottles, empty cans etc. We decided to come together and clean up this small area, to make it safe for our young ones and all who may want to rest in those shaded areas from time to time. All those who participated attested to the great feeling of being able to do something worthwhile for the benefit of all in Westhill that use Denman Park.

In a nutshell, that's what we have been up to at Vinespring Church over the summer. We would like to invite anyone to join us for another clean-up event on 3rd December from 10.30 am. We will be meeting up at Costa Coffee.

This Christmas, we will be heading back to the Holiday Inn, Westhill for another experience of our annual Christmas event themed **'Watered'**. This promises to be an evening of love, friendship and joy for all who will come. We will be having carols, talks, laughs, recollections of our best Christmas memories, and light refreshments. Children under 12 years will have their own, duly supervised, special Christmas entertainment for the duration of the event. The programme is available on Eventbrite for bookings to help us prepare adequately for the numbers coming.

Date: 10/12/16, Time: 5:30–7.30pm, Venue: Holiday Inn Westhill.

We hope you can add us to your to-do list for this Christmas but whatever you choose to do this Christmas, let Christ's joy and peace be your guide. We wish you a fantastic Christmas celebration and a Happy New Year, when it comes.

Chika Edeh, Pastor at Vinespring Church



The Rotary Club of Westhill & District

I am happy to tell you that the Rotary Club of Westhill and District has been awarded the District 1010 Youth Services Award for the work we do with schools, youth organisations and the youth in Westhill, and its surrounds, over the past year. A huge thank you to everyone who helped us attain this award. One of the youth initiatives we support is the Rotary Youth Leadership Award (RYLA) which takes place each July. It is open to boys and girls between the ages of 15 and 17. We will soon be recruiting candidates for 2017. If you are, or know of someone, who would be interested please contact us through our Facebook page.

Perhaps you have wondered about the purple crocuses that have popped up around Westhill over the past few years? Well they have been planted in recognition of Purple for Polio, part of Rotary's goal to eradicate Polio throughout the world. 24th October is world Polio Day and we can celebrate that Polio is only found now in parts of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Nigeria. As we have planted 1000 bulbs this year we can look forward to a hint of purple around Westhill in the springtime.

On 10th September an audience of almost 100 people gathered in the Ashdale hall to celebrate Last Night of the Proms. It was the brain child of Rotarian John Fraser and saw the concert displayed on a huge television screen and the audience enjoy a buffet supper. We raised approximately £1500 for Rotary International funds. Well done to everyone who made the night a huge success.



We are lucky that the Rotary Club of Westhill and District is a thriving, vibrant club of over 50 members which enjoys a well-deserved reputation locally as a friendly club. Rotary as a whole has been looking at how we continue to attract members and a few years ago did away with the necessity to attend 80% of meetings. Recently we in Westhill reviewed our strategy for membership and have introduced two new categories of membership in recognition that lifestyles and work /family balance is important; Associate and Corporate membership. Check out the definitions of each on our Facebook page or website and while you are there please take a moment to view the short video about who we are and what we get up to. There are details on both of how to contact us should you be interested in coming along to a meeting or an event.

<https://youtube/4Zarcc1fWuM>

<http://rotary-ribi.org/clubs/homepage.php?ClubID=1524>

Jane Graham, Westhill Rotary

The Physio says – Back pain myths: time they were busted!

With a recently published set of leaflets, The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) is 'busting myths' about back pain, and reinforcing what the latest evidence says is best for your back. Below are four myths that many people believe, none of which are helpful in ensuring the speediest recovery from back pain. Find out more at www.csp.org.uk/mythbusters.

The vast majority of sore backs are not life threatening, they can be very painful, they're an annoying inconvenience, and very common. Usually the pain goes up and down for a number of weeks, sometimes months, then goes away. In a few very rare cases the cause is serious and should be dealt with right away by a doctor. For example someone who is in constant pain day and night, or who has had a recent injury or fall, should see a doctor. These are two of a number of signs which doctors and physios are trained to watch out for in our patients. If you're worried then we can assess you and advise. Otherwise learn from these myths below. The replies relate to the majority of cases of back pain.

"Moving will make my back worse" – not true. The spine is a series of joints and all joints like movement. Your spinal discs depend on it for their supply of nutrients. There's no need to fear bending and twisting. Stay active, start moving gently and slowly increase how much you do.

"I should avoid exercise, especially weight training" – not true. There's no reason why you shouldn't continue to exercise when your back is sore. Continuing with regular activities can help you recover more quickly. If weight training is something you normally do, you can continue this within reason.

"A scan will show me exactly what's wrong" – sometimes it can, but more often than not, it shows normal age-related changes which people who don't have any back pain have as well. Being told you have wear and tear on a scan can cause unnecessary fear and make you reluctant to move, slowing your recovery. This is why GPs rarely recommend having an X-ray or scan.

"Pain equals damage" – not necessarily true. When something hurts, it's not always a sign that it's broken or injured. If you cut your finger or sprain your ankle, there's an obvious cause of the pain. It's useful to have that pain as it makes you change your behaviour, by avoiding bending the cut finger until it heals, or by limping to avoid stressing the ankle until the swelling has gone down. If you have a sore back, that pain is often unhelpful as it can stop you moving, which in itself slows recovery. The pain often comes from muscle spasm or tension, and how much pain you perceive is influenced by all sorts of things. Your past experiences of back pain, how stressed you are in your job, or at home, can each change your perception. *"So why is the pain there?"*, you might ask. That can be harder to answer. Maybe it's your body telling you to look after it better! Need more exercise, a healthier diet, less stress? Whatever the reason, physiotherapy can ease your symptoms and speed recovery.

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WesthillDoE@aol.co.uk or look online at www.WesthillDoE.co.uk

CONGRATULATIONS ON COMPLETING YOUR QUALIFYING EXPEDITIONS – or your deferred success

Well done to all 10 Bronze and 4 Silver teams who completed their Expedition sections in the Rothiemurchus and Abernethy Forest areas this summer. Two very determined Gold teams also completed their challenging 4 day 3 night expeditions in the beautifully scenic Glen Tilt – Glen Feshie and Fisherfield – Poolewe areas. We have a 3rd Gold team worthy of mention who collectively opted to defer their qualifying expedition when one of the team suffered an injury weeks before they were due to start. We congratulate you on your team spirit and will celebrate your success even more when you cross that finish line together. Thank you to all our volunteer leaders with an extra thank you to Niall Ritchie who helped to plug a Gold gap this year.

Our volunteers have been up-skilling to nationally recognised outdoor leadership qualifications including Summer Mountain Leader (SML) or Hill and Moorland Leader (HML) plus BASP First Aid. With the support of the Aberdeenshire Council Award Office team at Inverurie we have made great progress in building volunteer group capacity here in our local area. Also pleased to report we continue to attract new volunteers including Gold participants returning as young leaders.

Our enrolment information event early September was well attended. New Bronze participants got started late October/early November with 10 teams of friends coming along to get started on their own personal challenges across, not only Expedition sections, but also their Physical, Volunteering and Skills sections. More information is available on the national Duke of Edinburgh's Award website at DofE.org and locally at WesthillDoE.co.uk. New Silvers and Golds are also getting organised to make plans for summer 2017 and we'll keep you posted with their progress. **Remember, if you have STARTED YOUR AWARD and need help to finish it, contact: WesthillDoE@aol.co.uk**

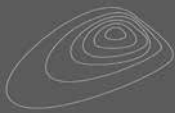


1st Skene Girls' Brigade

Our new session is well under way with over 20 girls, ranging from P1- S4. We held our Annual Dedication Service on Sunday 6th November where Kerry Milne was commissioned as Lieutenant with the Company after attending since she was in P1.

We are in the middle of badgework and practising for competitions but we will also be attending the Inverurie Panto once again and on the 19th December our Brigader, Mhairi Grant, will be hosting a Film Night where girls' can attend in their onesies and eat popcorn for a fee. All proceeds going to Children In Need.

Any questions please call **Mrs Fiona Cumming (Captain) on 07792 471199.**



SKENE MEDICAL GROUP PATIENT INFORMATION UPDATE

Do you want to book a routine GP appointment or order a repeat prescription at a time that suits you? We have the answer!

Interested? Collect a Vision Online Services Patient Registration form from the Practice or download a form from our website skenemedicalgroup.co.uk

It couldn't be simpler!

Seasonal Flu Vaccination Programme runs from 1st October 2016 to 31st March 2017

Patients Eligible for Seasonal Flu Vaccination this year:

- Over 65s – vaccinated in the Practice
- Under 65s in an 'At risk' group – vaccinated in the Practice
- Pregnant women – vaccinated in the Practice
- Carers – vaccinated in the Practice
- 2-5 year olds (not yet at school) – vaccinated in the Practice
- Schoolchildren aged 5-11 years (P1-P7) – vaccinated at school

If you normally get a flu vaccination but haven't had it yet, please contact the Practice to make an appointment as soon as possible.

We have more than 3,500 patients eligible for flu vaccination this year, so please understand if we cannot offer you an immediate appointment.

Pneumococcal Vaccination 2016/2017

Patients who are eligible for the free Pneumococcal Vaccination:

- Over 65 years (if you have not had this vaccination before)
- Patients with immuno suppression (if you have not had this vaccination before)

(If you are eligible you will normally receive a letter of invitation)

Shingles Vaccination 2016/2017

Patients who are eligible for the free Shingles Vaccination this year:

- 70 years old – born between 2nd Sept 1945 and 1st Sept 1946
- 76 years old – born between 2nd Sept 1939 and 1st Sept 1940
- 77 years old – born between 2nd Sept 1938 and 1st Sept 1939
- 78 years old – born between 2nd Sept 1937 and 1st Sept 1938

(If you are eligible you will normally receive a letter of invitation)

**SKENE MEDICAL GROUP
WOULD LIKE TO WISH ALL
OF OUR PATIENTS A VERY
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HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW
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Westhill Air Cadets

Cadets at 875 (Westhill) Squadron Air Training Corps have been enjoying a busy few months, with a lot of activities being undertaken, ranging from Adventure Training to community services.

July was our busiest month, with Cadets Inglis and Cameron and Sgt Marwick on Camp at JHC FS Aldergrove in Northern Ireland. Sgt Marwick, together with Cdt Welsh, subsequently attended a "Greens" Camp at RAF Spadeadam. Sgt Smillie and Sgt Tierney were selected to attend the prestigious national Air Cadet Leadership Course at RAF Cranwell.



church service at Banchory for cadets and staff.

Five Cadets attended the week-long Adventure Training Camp at Llanbedyr in Wales, in October, taking part in various outdoor activities, including abseiling and kayaking. Cadets Mackland, Flett, and Cameron, Sgt Tierney and Sgt Western all enjoyed the event.

Also in October, Cadets from 875 were again asked to marshal at the local "Glack Attack" events at Dunecht. The "Halloween Special" on 22nd October was very popular, with the Squadron joined by Cadets from the Turriff, Banchory, Aberdeen and Aberdeen Airport Squadrons to provide suitably scary Marshals.

Overseas activities also took place. The Squadron was successful in having places allocated for overseas visits and activities. In addition, Sgt Bellarby undertook the demanding Nijmegen road march, in the Netherlands, for the second time. This involves marching up to 160km in four days!

Cadet Fraser Jarvis attended the Camp being held at USAF Base, Ramstein, in Germany and Sgt Tierney visited RAF Cyprus.

On the sporting front, several of our cadets took part in various sporting activities with three of our cadets being selected to represent North East Scotland Wing at swimming and football.

Four Cadets received national governing body qualifications as Level 1 Climbing Wall Instructors, the first Cadets to do so. Following the course, held at the Squadron, they can now train Cadets and others on the safe use of the Mobile Climbing Tower (sometimes seen at Westhill Gala).

During the year, the squadron has maintained its' strength at around 30 cadets, with ten new cadets joining in the last few months. We have said farewell to a number of Cadets, who have gone off to University or to work, including Cadet Warrant Officer Wendy Patterson, who reached the age limit. Fortunately, Wendy will be returning as an adult NCO as soon as the paperwork clears!

Oh, and we got to do some flying...



The Squadron continues to actively recruit new Cadet and Staff Members.

Email 875@aircadets.org for more info.



Check out our Facebook page for more info on what we get up to.

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WESTHILL FINANCIAL UPDATE

In our previous article we wrote about the concerns caused to many people in the area by uncertainties in the oil & gas industry and the knock on effects.

These uncertainties have now been added to by the recent BREXIT vote with no clear understanding over where things are going over the next few years.

Forbes Lawson have continued to see enquiries from individuals and companies looking for guidance in these unpredictable times.

Remaining calm and avoiding knee jerk reactions in the short term seems to have been the best approach. We have been able to demonstrate how the effects of some of these factors may impact on clients.

Director, Richard Macmillan commented: "There have actually been some areas that have benefited from BREXIT so far, and having a financial plan enables us to demonstrate this to clients. While many advisers are focusing on just investments, the whole picture needs to be looked at."

Fellow Director, Ian Robinson says: "Our offer of an initial meeting at our expense has proved popular. Some people may, quite rightly, be put off by the prospect of a hefty bill for something they may not need. At Forbes Lawson, if we do not think we can offer real value for our service we make that clear at the initial meeting and suggest alternatives."

"History has told us that there are always uncertainties so it's important not to let them get in the way of living life to the full."

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Skene 07789 871601

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