## Westhill Bulletin

Autumn 2021 Issue 167





On Mains of Kinmundy Hill, celebrating the opening of the Westhill Orbital Trail — see page 47

Photo courtesy of Jane McClure

Published by Westhill & Elrick Community Council Westhill website – www.westhillelrick.org



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Disclaimer: The inclusion of adverts in the Bulletin does not imply that WECC promotes or endorses any particular business or service.

#### SUBMITTING ITEMS FOR THE BULLETIN

We 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 winter issue should be sent in by Friday 5th November. The Bulletin will be distributed from 27th November.

> All contributions or enquiries should be emailed to: westhill.bulletin@gmail.com

Telephone enquiries re adverts or articles to: 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.

#### 2021 advertising rates:

Eighth Page £30, Quarter Page £55, Half Page £90, Full Page £170 Inside Covers £200, Back Page £230

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

For more details on advertising see www.westhillelrick.org/bulletin

#### **BULLETIN DELIVERY**

The Bulletin is delivered by an army of dedicated volunteers. More deliverers are always required to replace retiring helpers and add to the pool of relief 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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#### Westhill & Elrick Community Council

#### Chair

#### weccchair@gmail.com

Mervyn Barr, 6 Kingswells View, Westhill, AB32 6RZ Tel 07890 802181

Vice-Chair

William Monroe

#### Secretary

#### weccsecretx@gmail.com

David Ritchie, 11 Fare Park Drive, Westhill, AB32 6WE Tel 07989 637461

#### Treasurer

treasurerwecc@gmail.com

Gordon Prentice

#### **Bulletin Manager**

westhill.bulletin@gmail.com

David Ritchie, 11 Fare Park Drive, Westhill, AB32 6WE Tel 07989 637461

Planning Convener planningwecc@gmail.com

Diane Priestley

#### **Ordinary Members**

Malcolm Collie Heather Cook

Donald Davidson

Becky Ferguson

Audrey Findlay

Kate Lumsden

Alan McCue

Justin Reid

Kenneth Stewart

Raymond Swaffield

Tim Yeomans

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 outside Co-op a week before the meeting and posted on the Westhill website www.westhillelrick.org



#### CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Welcome to the autumn edition of our Bulletin. At the time of writing in early August we were on the threshold of a major step towards the return of our "new normality", post Covid. Reflecting on the last 18 months or so, dealing with the COVID pandemic has had many downsides but in Westhill and Elrick it has had a least one significant upside which is the establishment of the

Westhill Orbital Trail (WOT), a project that was actually triggered directly by the early COVID restrictions which resulted in the huge increase in numbers of individuals and families out walking and cycling around the town. Now I'm delighted to report that after final agreement on it's Eastern route and the completion of the related map, the WOT was formally opened in a short ceremony on the 4th August. Please see the latest update on page 47.

On a different aspect of accessibility, I was disappointed to receive a heartfelt complaint from a disabled lady about her experiences of regular misuse of the parking bays in the town centre reserved for "Mother & Toddlers and Disabled people", which means that, especially at busy times, she cannot get parked. The message here is very clear – these bays should be left clear for their intended users and if you do see inappropriate use, please remind the person involved of who they are provided for.

In the last issue I asked for ideas for projects to enhance quality of life in the town and I'm delighted to report that we got quite a few suggestions. These will be forwarded into our Community Action Planning (CAP) process for Westhill and Elrick, which will commence later in the year. We still welcome any further suggestions. Please send your ideas to weccsecretx@gmail.com.

Another significant project undertaken this year was placing hanging baskets and planters at the town centre "green wall" and on the Holiday Inn roundabout respectively. Our thanks to WECC and Rotary volunteers who helped in preparation, planting and placement of these. I'm delighted to report that we have received many positive comments about the display and have gathered some more ideas for improvement next year.

Healthy lifestyles are very much in the news recently and as we celebrate the inspirational success of medal winners, in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, particularly in cycling, for those who are inspired to get in the saddle themselves, the Westhill Bike Ride will take place this year on Saturday 11th September. Further details in the Westhill Bike Club article on page 90.

Also local cycling enthusiasts can look forward to seeing first-hand the final stage of the Tour Of Britain Professional Cycle Race which will run from Stonehaven to Aberdeen on Sunday 12th September. The plan is that the race will depart from Stonehaven at 10am, and the cyclists will pass through close to Westhill on the A944 at approximately 2.30pm. A rolling road closure will mean some disruption is likely on the day. Please see <a href="https://www.tourofbritain.co.uk/race/2021-tour/">https://www.tourofbritain.co.uk/race/2021-tour/</a> for full details.

Finally – lets hope that whatever changes the "new-normality" brings to our lives, they are all for the better.

POSTSCRIPT – Recently and with great sadness we received the news that our friend and fellow Member of WECC Hilary Benson, had passed away after a long and courageous fight against serious illness. Hilary was a regular attendee at our meetings, and often provided valuable insights and suggestions. She will be sorely missed by all who knew her. Our deepest sympathies and condolences are with her husband Alex and their family.

Mervyn Barr Chairperson WECC

#### Mental Health and Exercise

Health, whether it be mental or physical, is not one dimensional, and is wholly intertwined. We cannot solely rely on one single source to ensure optimal health. There are many dimensions involved including what we eat, the exercise we do or don't do, stress and the management of it, and the quality and quantity of the sleep we get.

In this article I'll be discussing mental health and exercise. Although the link between exercise and physical health appears to be well established, what is not as well recognised is exercise and our mental health. Despite the rise in anti-depressant and anti-anxiety medication prescriptions, as well as the amount of money that has been thrown at mental health in the last decade, rates of mental ill-health are increasing exponentially, and that was before lockdowns.

Just recently I read an article regarding the six best exercises for mental health. The truth is, however, there are an infinite amount of 'best exercises'. And exercise, simply means movement of one kind or another. However, it has to be tailored to you, and your situation, whether that's about joining the gym, a class, a club, such as cycling or golf or rowing, an online class on your own, or simply dancing to some of your favourite songs – it is whatever is suited to you and your needs at that time. It does not matter which one you choose, except what is vitally important, is simply the fact that you, as an individual, enjoy it. Enjoyment in anything predicts consistency over time, and it is this consistency that will ensure optimal mental health.

However, one of our greatest issues, is we expect so much more, that much quicker – it's all about immediate gratification. We have become a society where impatience dominates our lives, we want those quick fixes. As technology develops, our needs and wants are met rapidly. Microwaves cook in minutes what might take hours in a conventional oven. Eradicating an infection or depression quickly, with one pop of a pill. Information finding, that in the past may have involved hours of research in a local library, or even weeks of sourcing, now appears on a quick internet search in mere seconds. However, this still doesn't seem to satisfy us, and we become irate when it takes too long to simply open a web page.

We've been primed for instant gratification, and that seems to be for anything and everything in life, including health and fitness. It seems we want to get from A to B as quickly as possible, without the hard work in between. But the effort is where the sense of achievement comes from. Without that, we don't have the motivation to keep going.

That sense of achievement must be earned through individual effort, something that is both difficult and also worthwhile. Difficult in the sense that it stretches you enough, though not enough to snap. It is the endeavour that generates the sense of accomplishment. The exercise you choose should be something you enjoy, but vitally, something that is not simply just a walk in the park (pun intended and relished). It is something that will take you slightly out of your comfort zone.

Gaining a sense of achievement, even the tiniest of achievements, helps us to feel like we're progressing. The sense of achievement is the actual 'doing' of it – and getting through it, no matter how hard. This in turn steers us towards naturally feeling engaged and ultimately more motivated to maintain and improve in whatever we're trying to accomplish.





Julie Anderson-Moffat BSc. (Hons) MSc., CPsychol Chartered Psychologist

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#### ATMs IN WESTHILL

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- Outside Tesco store
- Inside Costco store
- Westhill Service Station shop in Elrick

#### **TOP TRAVEL TIPS**

My name is Heather and I have been offering a one to one travel service with Travel Counsellors since 2003. We are an independent, multi award winning company delivering bespoke travel solutions (see advert on page 77). I started my career in travel in 1985. I have seen many changes over the years, although none as challenging as what we now face.

I hope, in future issues to cover holiday ideas. However, with so many questions surrounding international travel, I thought a good place to start, would be answering some of the most common questions I am being asked by my clients.

#### I'M PLANNING A TRIP TO A COUNTRY CLASSIFIED AS GREEN UNDER THE TRAFFIC LIGHT SYSTEM. SO I'M GOOD TO GO?

No, not necessarily. At the time of writing this, Norway has been newly classified as green, but you would need to quarantine on arrival from the UK. The traffic light system is for entry into the UK, you must also check the entry requirements of the country you are travelling to.

## I'M TRAVELLING TO AN AMBER DESTINATION, I'M FULLY VACCINATED AND HAPPY WITH THE COUNTRIES ENTRY REQUIREMENTS, ETC., ANYTHING ELSE I NEED TO BE AWARE OF?

Yes, you also need to check the Foreign Office advice for that destination, although some countries are in the Amber category, the FCDO advise against non-essential travel. You would need to check with your travel insurance that you are covered.

#### I'M TRAVELLING WITH CHILDREN DO THEY NEED TO BE TESTED TOO?

Each destination has their own requirements for the age of children that need to be tested for entry to their country. For return to the UK, children under 11 do not need to take a pre departure test to return to the UK. The day 2 and/or day 8 tests you do on arrival home are not required for children under 5.

#### HOW DO LARRANGE THE TESTS?

For testing to travel to a destination, there are several options, this can be done at the airport too, depending on the type of test and the time frame it is required to be taken in.

The pre departure test must be taken within 72 hours of return to the UK. Most holiday destinations have local clinics that will do the lateral flow test for you and results are sent to you in a few hours. Some hotels also can arrange the tests for you.

For the day 2 and/or day 8 tests, in Scotland we have one specific testing company, which you book with online and the testing kit is sent to you, ready for when you arrive home.

#### WHAT HAPPENS IF I TEST POSITIVE ABROAD?

Each destination has their own protocols. Some countries will provide you with accommodation for the isolation period and include meals. Some of the larger hotel chains have guarantees that you can remain in your room free of charge for the period of isolation. It has never been more important that you book with a reputable company that will offer support and that you have adequate insurance cover. Fortunately, it doesn't happen a lot, but you need to be prepared if it does.

In these uncertain times, my best advice would be to use a Travel Agent to help you navigate the rules and make informed decisions about your next holiday abroad. Even for trips you may want to plan in 2022 and beyond, you will have the security of knowing that should things change, you will have someone there to assist and inform you.

Website www.travelcounsellors.com/heather.reynolds

#### Rotary in Lockdown

It's been a busy summer for our Rotarians although at time of writing we are still unable to hold face to face Rotary meetings, so continue meeting fortnightly via Zoom. As covid restrictions are easing, however, we have started to meet in small social get-togethers, making good use of the warm summer weather.



Out and about, we have been working closely with the Community Council and are delighted to have helped with a different planting scheme for the hanging baskets this year. The result, as you can see from the photo, has been a particularly colourful display welcoming everyone to the centre of Westhill, even on one of our dull summer days.

Our relationship with the Community Council has also seen us co-ordinating our regular Litter Picks and in relocating a picnic bench for the new Orbital Trail. We've also been working with local schools and a small group undertook a tidying up exercise for the garden at the front of Crombie School.

The summer signals the end of our Rotary Year and the start of a new one. So, we welcome in our new President, Bob Anderson and his Vice Presidents, Margaret Currie and Allan Wink as we plan to tackle the challenges of returning to a post-lockdown normality.

Despite the restrictions on our activities, we have been able to raise sufficient funds over the last year to enable us to make around £15,000 in charitable donations. Those felt most in need of our help have been the local food banks, Aberdeenshire North, Westhill and CFINE, where we have provided regular monthly contributions. In addition, we have also supported Befriend a Child, Westhill Resilience Group, Grampian Women's Aid, Heart Chest and Stroke Scotland and provided the afternoon teas to Senior Citizen (in lieu of a Christmas Party) together with a new bench in Sauchen. All in all, a satisfying outcome for a covid restricted year and one that we can look to improve on in the year ahead.

Our membership continues to increase and we welcome our new Rotarian Sathya Vasudevan. Sathya was a member of a student version of Rotary whilst he lived in India. However, he now works in engineering with Technip, lives in Westhill and has a thriving cottage industry as a vertical farmer producing Micro-salads. If you feel that you would like to join Sathya and give something back to the community either by becoming a Rotary member or simply to lend a hand with some of our projects, then please get in touch — john.glascodine@gmail.com.





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#### Ron McKail, Councillor for Westhill and District

### Do we do Enough to Promote the Welfare of Older People in Our Community?

Aberdeenshire Council has appointed two additional 'equalities champions' with particular interest in the issues concerning older people and I along with a fellow councillor from Banchory have been appointed to this position.

As Older People's Champions our role will be to listen and respond to issues concerning the older people and ensuring their voice is heard. Within Westhill, like other parts of Scotland, the number of older people in our community is increasing. Coronavirus has had an impact on all but the effect on the elderly it could be argued has been greater. Factors such as loneliness, mortality, digital exclusion, money, health and housing problems has had an effect on many resulting in mental health issues.

Whilst accepting there are excellent services targeting the elderly in Westhill should we be providing more? Are the older people in our community getting a fair deal?

While appreciating it is early days for my fellow councillor and I in our Older People Champions role I write to ask if there are issues which readers of the Bulletin would like us to promote, please let me know.

#### Would Setting Up Neighbourhood Watch Schemes (NWS) Make for Safer Communities? As a volunteer I have been involved in community safety programmes for many years\* and

As a volunteer I have been involved in community safety programmes for many years\* and at one time the number of NWS in Westhill had a higher profile than it appears to have now.

Having recently been appointed to the Neighbourhood Watch Scotland Board as a Trustee I'm very much aware the value of NWS have in keeping communities safer in other parts of Scotland. I pose the question, is there interest in establishing or re-establishing NWS in the Westhill Community?

Please email me if you are interested in setting up a NWS in your street and I can set up a meeting to discuss moving forward on this proposal.

\*The link to the community safety programmes is www.aberdeenshirecommunitysafety. org.uk.

#### Thank You >> Skene Medical and Council Home Care Services

Periodically I read in the local press negative comments about the services we receive from the medical and health services and I wanted to share my recent positive experience with these services during my wife Ann's palliative care programme. From the time she was discharged 'home' from hospital the support from Skene Medical was outstanding. There were home visits and phone calls from doctors who oversaw and monitored the treatment programme. The District Nurses visited daily and administered the medication ensuring Ann was comfortable and free of pain. Aberdeenshire Council's **Responders for Care at Home** (ARCH) visited 4 times per day providing personal care. What a fantastic support they were. In addition there was contact with Macmillan nurses and the support from Marie Curie nurses who provided us as a family with respite care. My thanks and appreciation for the support we as a family received from these medical and health services all of which were carried out in a highly professional and caring manner.

Councillor Ron McKail



#### Councillor David Aitchison

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant effect on the council and its services. Many activities had to be suspended in order to ensure that the essential services which we rely on most could continue to be delivered. We are now beginning to see a slow return to normality although that will take some time and inevitably the way some council services are provided will change permanently.

Throughout the pandemic help and resources have been directed to most sectors of our society. As part of that effort the council's Economic Development team have sought to assist businesses with a wide range of advice and support.

That help continues to be provided to businesses which have been impacted. Currently proposals for the use of Aberdeenshire Council's remaining Discretionary Grant funding are for it to be used to support businesses to improve their digital resilience, workforce health and well-being or net zero preparedness, with grants of up to £20,000 available. Only businesses that previously received a Discretionary Grant will be eligible because Covid-related financial hardship remains a key condition for grants offered through the scheme. There are nearly 1,000 Aberdeenshire businesses in this category and they have been contacted to invite them to apply for the Phase 3 grant, which will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis.

In the last edition of the Bulletin I commented on instances of anti-social behaviour in Westhill and sadly these continue. I have been alerted to further incidents including vandalism in and around the shopping centre. This damage to local businesses of course comes at a time when they are trying to recover from the financial consequences of long periods of lockdown. It is important that Police Scotland are aware of the full extent of this issue so please contact them on 101 to report an incident.

I can be consulted at any time by telephone or email on any issue and also hold surgeries at Westhill Library. Check www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk for a full list of surgery dates.

> Councillor David Aitchison Mobile 07876 475227

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#### **Councillor Iris Walker (Westhill & District)**

#### **NHS Grampian seek your views**

NHS Grampian (NHSG) are looking beyond the Covid-19 pandemic to recover and rebuild; working with partners and the public to improve the health and well-being of the people of Grampian. One of the challenges is that more and more people are living with diseases and long-term conditions like asthma or diabetes; what things do you do to keep well and in good health? Do you have any worries, concerns or disappointments

about the way services were delivered during Covid-19? These are some of the questions you can respond to by completing the survey (Google the link below). This survey is the first stage of the consultation process with a further round in October/November. Please note this first survey closes 31st August.

NHSG Plan For the Future 2022-2028 (nhsgrampian.org)

#### **SEPA Draft Flood Risk Management Plans**

According to SEPAs latest consultation document, the main source of flooding in Westhill is surface water flooding and there are approximately 870 people and 440 homes and businesses currently at risk of flooding. This is likely to increase to 1200 people and 600 homes and businesses by the 2080s due to climate change. The report says that Westhill is sensitive to the effect of climate change, particularly in Elrick, Kirkton of Skene and areas located to the east and west of Westhill Golf Course. You can read more about the long-term objectives and actions, and respond to phase 2 of SEPAs consultation in this link:

Flood Risk Management Plan: North East Local Plan District consultation – Scottish Environment Protection Agency – Citizen Space (sepa.org.uk)

#### Gulls

Following numerous complaints, the council have been made aware of the growing problem of gulls. I have previously shared statistics on the work carried out on council properties to remove nests and eggs. Council officers are considering what immediate and additional measures can be taken and are preparing a report to go to Infrastructure Services Committee to set out their strategy. In the meantime, I am still getting reports of deliberate feeding of gulls; please do not do this as it encourages them and they come to expect supplementary feeding. I am also working with the Environment group in WECC to persuade the council to replace the small, open bins in the town centre with larger capacity, gull-proof ones to see if we can cut out another source of their food scavenging.

#### **Dogs**

During the summer, I have received complaints from residents about neighbours leaving their dogs barking in back gardens for long periods of time. Section 49 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 permits a District Court to deal with "anyone who keeps a creature which is giving reasonable cause for annoyance to any person residing in the vicinity". The first port of call for advice on barking dogs should be the Dog Wardens who can be contacted via email: <a href="mailto:environmental@aberdeenshire.gov.uk">environmental@aberdeenshire.gov.uk</a>.

At the time of writing, consultation surgeries in the library have not resumed but I am always available via email or phone. I am very happy to set up an online meeting if required – just get in touch, phone on 07876 475272, email *cllr.i.walker@aberdeenshire.gov.uk* or Facebook/ Tweet me.





## WESTHILL AND DISTRICT MEN'S SHED

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#### **Queens Award for Voluntary Service**

Our Shed has received the "Queen's Award for Voluntary Service" in recognition of our work supporting the community of Westhill and surrounding area. The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service is the highest award a voluntary group can receive in the UK.

"Special recognition – Covid-19" will be engraved on it for the production of PPE in the early days of Covid-19 when it was impossible to source supplies even for front-line workers.

#### Shed open again

We are running again and by the time you read this hope to be back to normal. Donations, requests to repair and commissions to construct wooden items have started to roll in, there is a backlog of course which we are slowly working through.

We have lots of garden tools, mowers under repair or waiting for pickup.

We will be having a second Tool Sale in the shopping centre on 28th August so this Bulletin might not Picnic benches for Elrick Primary



get to you in time. However you can always email us, phone (01224 917345) during opening hours (10-4 Mon, Wed, Fri) or drop in if you want to see if we have what you want.

#### Recruiting!

If you want to join the Men's Shed come along anytime we are open and we will show you around; you can then join if you want to. There are no fees. We would particularly welcome woodworkers who could join our Woodshop to help make and repair garden benches, bridges, pagodas and the big range of things the community wants from us. Skills can be built up from scratch or if you are an experienced woodworker take on a project yourself.

You are also welcome to repair or make your own items.

We have a very competent crew of metal workers so you could join them to learn how to repair mowers, etc.

**Sheshed** will open on the 23rd August this year and then every 2 weeks on a Monday 6.00–8.30p.m. You are welcome to join, no previous knowledge necessary as we have a programme to teach woodwork and DIY from scratch.

contact@westhillmensshed.co.uk Tel 01224 917345 www.westhillmensshed.co.uk Registered charity SCIO number SC042663

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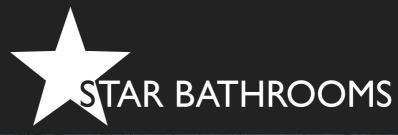
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Ashdale Hall reopened on April 26th for children's classes and on May 17th for exercise and sports groups. Parties and events have been allowed since August 9th. Email <a href="mailto:ashdalehall@hotmail.co.uk">ashdalehall@hotmail.co.uk</a> or call on 01224 740137 if you are interested in booking for classes or an event, a

party or a game of badminton. See next page for the September Class timetable.

The Westhill Market has enlarged since reopening from lockdown as local people and crafters have been setting up new businesses. We normally have between 20 and 25 stalls selling a range of local foods and handmade craft items on the first Saturday of the month. Normally 500-800 local residents attend, depending on the weather.

We hope to have occasional car boot sales and other fundraising for the Hall as we have seen a considerable drop in income.

Since last year the kitchen and foyer have been painted. A new kitchen has been fitted. The floor in the Main Hall has been resurfaced and varnished.

Hopefully we will see customers old and new return soon as Covid restriction on social distancing and numbers have ended. Some mask wearing will remain in line with Government advice.

We are always keen on new people interested in becoming a member of our Management Committee.

#### **Westhill District Amateur Swimming Club**

Westhill District ASC welcomed all their swimmers back into the water at the end of April 2021. After another lock down we were able to start training again and it is fantastic to see the club fully up and running again. WDASC would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that has been involved in getting the pool 'Covid Ready' for the swimmers to return to the pool again. During the pool closure the older swimmers were kept busy with online fitness classes, cooking classes and an excellent talk from Hannah Miley via Zoom. At the end of July Scottish Swimming hosted the 'Summer Festival of Swimming' across Scotland, Westhill District swimmers competed at the Aquatics Centre in Aberdeen, whilst other districts competed at the Royal Commonwealth Pool in Edinburgh and Tollcross International Swimming Centre in Glasgow. The 'Festival of Swimming' was held under very strict Covid-19 conditions to enable the event to take place. It was great to see the swimmers competing again and the event was very successful with some fantastic swimming from Westhill. With Covid restrictions now being eased the club is looking forward to more competitions being planned in the near future.

The club's older swimmers were due to go away to 'La Santa' in Lanzarote for warm weather training in October 2020 and October 2021, but unfortunately both trips had to be cancelled due to the current uncertainties around Covid-19 and foreign travel. As the swimmers and parents had made great efforts to fundraise for the trips it has been decided that the swimmers will now attend Dalguise Outdoor Centre in Perthshire instead. Hopefully the weather will be good, and the swimmers will all have a fantastic time.

If your child is in level 4, 5 or 6 with the 'Learn to Swim Programme' or reached this level and aged 7–10 years and is interested in competitive swimming please contact our membership secretary at *membership@westhilldistrictasc.org.uk* for more information about joining our club.

#### ASHDALE HALL SEPTEMBER CLASS TIMETABLE

#### Monday

- 0930 to 1015 Matwork Pilates Main Hall Block booking required\*\*
- 1030 to 1115 Matwork Pilates Main Hall Block booking required\*\*
- 1230 to 1430 Abricabeats (1 to 4 years) Main Hall
- 1500 to 1800 Free to book for classes or badminton
- 1830 to 1930 Jazzercise Main Hall Online booking with Jazzercise
- 1945 to 2045 Badminton (private term time) Main Hall

#### Tuesday

- 0945 to 1045 Jazzercise Main Hall Online booking with Jazzercise
- 1100 to 1200 Spear Pilates Main Hall Block booking required++
- 1215 to 1315 Free to book for classes or badminton
- 1420 to 1800 Baby Ballet Main Hall
- 1815 to 1915 Choi Kwang Do Main Hall hello@westhillckd.org

#### Wednesday

- 0945 to 1045 Jazzercise Main Hall Online booking with Jazzercise
- 1100 to 1300 Free to book for classes or badminton
- 1330 to 1430 Badminton (private)
- 1600 to 1730 Pre School and Tap/Ballroom/Latin Main Hall
- 1745 to 1845 Spear Pilates Main Hall Block booking required++
- 1915 to 2045 Line Dancing Main Hall (term time) from 1st September

#### **Thursday**

- 0945 to 1045 Jazzercise Main Hall Online booking
- 1100 to 1700 Footstars Main Hall 11-12pm, 1-3pm, 4-5pm https://www.footstars.co.uk
- 1800 to 1900 Choi Kwang Do Main Hall hello@westhillckd.org
- 1915 to 2045 Badminton (private) Main Hall

#### Friday

- 0830 to 0915 Matwork Pilates block booking required\*\*
- 0930 to 1015 Matwork Pilates block booking required\*\*
- 1030 to 1115 Matwork Pilates block booking required\*\*
- 1130 to 1800 Free to book short term until Tea dance or parties/events return

#### Saturday

- 1000 to 1100 Choi Kwang Do Main Hall On hold
- 1230 to 1730 Script to Screen Drama Classes J. Ogilvie 07989 484315

#### Sunday

#### Free to book short term for classes until parties/events return

- \*\*All Matwork Pilates Classes marked with an asterisk need to be block booked in advance, contact Annette on *annette.macpherson@ymail.com* or **07817 736525**, or website *www.westhill.physiotherapy.co.uk*
- ++ Spear Pilates Classes marked with a cross need to be block booked in advance, contact pilates@spearphysiotherapy.co.uk

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#### Skene Parish Church

One of the recurring comments throughout the pandemic has been how lucky we are to live in this corner of the world. On our doorstep we have access to beautiful, wild countryside and many of us enjoy having a garden to retreat to. With a surplus of green fingers we all get to enjoy the bright and colourful results and it was great to support the Bee Bomb Initiative through the Westhill Resilience Group.



With COP26 just around the corner, it is a

good opportunity to stop and think about creation and our place within it. (COP26 is the 2021 edition of the United Nations Annual Climate Change Conference).

The story of creation as found in Genesis helps us understand our relationship with the environment in which we live. Humanity is given the responsibility of caring for creation – stewarding its resources. Humans were the pinnacle of God's creative work, but they were meant to look after their home.

We've not always taken that seriously – choosing instead to exploit the Earth's resources and pursue progress at its expense. And for so long we've been able to ignore the consequences, in part because those worst affected live elsewhere.

But in recent years it has become much more apparent that our climate is changing. Even working towards holding global temperature rises to 1.5 degrees still means we face potential food and water shortages, the extinction of species and exposure to extreme heat. In this year alone we have witnessed deadly heatwaves in America, and horrendous floods in Europe – not to mention record-breaking temperatures in the UK and flash flooding that left parts of our building under water. Many of the most vulnerable communities in the world are already living with devastating extreme weather.

#### But what can we do to make a difference?

Perhaps the first step is to get informed. In the coming months there will be plenty of opportunity to find out more about the challenges we are facing and what can be done to address them – at local, national and internal level.

Then think about what steps you could take to get involved. It might be about changing habits in your home or workplace – thinking about energy, waste, transport. It could be about adding your voice to thousands of others to campaign for our governments to pursue greener policies. It may be about taking time to pray, remembering those whose lives are already badly impacted by an increasingly hostile climate.

Given how much we love our neck of the woods, now is the ideal moment to channel our energy and enthusiasm into ways that protect the global environment, so that others can enjoy it as much as we do.

One of our values as a church is to be committed to caring for creation. We are going to be exploring this theme through September and October. Why not join us (online or in person) as we explore the biblical principles behind this value.

You can find out more at www.skeneparish.com.

## Westhill District



#### **Girlguiding Westhill District**

We have some congratulations from the end of last term – to Victoria Layt from 3rd Rainbows for completing her Leadership Qualification and to a number of the girls in that unit for completing Section Awards: **Bronze** to Nina, Georgia, Esme and Maisie, **Silver** to Abbie and **Gold** to Emma. Special mention must go to

Emma for being the first Girlguiding Westhill member to achieve a Gold Section Award – well done for all the hard work she has done during her time as a Rainbow (largely during lockdown Guiding). The theme awards, interest badges, outdoor meetings and virtual visit to a Brownie meeting represent just some of the fun she's had.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU! We particularly want to use this edition of

the bulletin to thank all our volunteers who have kept Girlguiding going in Westhill during the pandemic, which has understandably taken a variety of forms. Without the time, effort, patience, resilience and flexibility of Leaders, Young Leaders, Unit Helpers, Parent

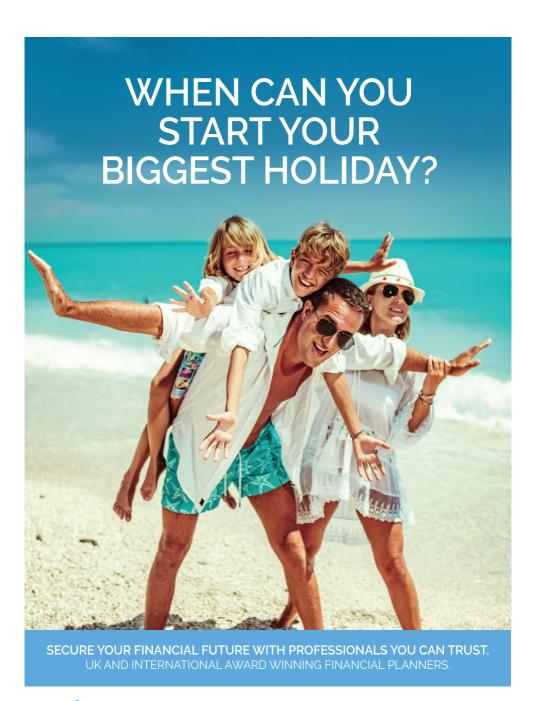


Helpers, Treasurers, D of E helpers and Friends of Guiding committee, none of this would have been possible. We have become Zoom pros, beaming unit meetings into girls' living rooms; done doorstep drops; written risk assessments; completed accounts; applied for grants; done virtual sleep-outs in our own gardens/homes and celebrated many badges, awards and qualifications.

Girls and volunteers are so excited to return to unit meetings again this term. We have been able this year to offer even more girls the opportunity to join units in Westhill. However, there continue to be girls on the waiting list who have not been able to gain the skills and experience Girlguiding brings. We could easily fill another Rainbow, Brownie and Guide unit with girls but we are just short of volunteers to accommodate this. We wanted to shout out to those of you with an interest in volunteering with girls from 5-18 years old; currently the greatest need is for help in our Guide Units (age 10-14) but any time you can give to any age group would be most welcome. There is no need to have Girlguiding experience but if you have been a Rainbow, Brownie, Guide, Ranger or Leader in the past, you'll know the satisfaction you gained and might now be able to offer that back to girls in Westhill today. Even if you are not currently able to volunteer, perhaps you know a friend, colleague or family member for whom volunteering might give them a boost. Please register interest at the link below and feel free to get in touch with us if you would like to discuss further and find out more about units meeting in Westhill.



Caroline Gray and Alison Smith, District Commissioners westhilldc@gmail.com





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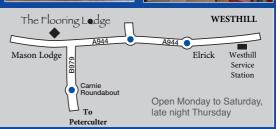
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Hi everyone, I hope we have all been having a good summer despite the odds.

I know that for many families it has been a huge relief to see the lockdowns ease, albeit cautiously. Businesses, sports events, and several other activities have now been allowed to fully return as we moved to level zero; though certain restrictions may still persist for some indoor activities.

The gradual return to 'normalcy' following the harsher periods of this pandemic rather reminds me of a scriptural parallel. Noah was 'locked-up' in the ark for 150 days; an ark he built by faith and obedience to God. To think that he shared that ark with wild beasts (including clean and unclean animals), without any of them throwing the others overboard out of intolerance, is simply amazing. They all had to bear with one another as they endured the devastation of the flood. But they were saved by that ark. Lots of lessons to be learned I dare say, especially for many of us who may feel they have been forced to spend more time in close contact with our family members, with no way of escape! Yet, the rains stopped after a while, and flood subsided after a while. And the Ark came to rest, after a while. And everyone had to disembark and go on with their lives, renewing the earth as God intended.

Having been through the lockdown, I suspect we could share some of the relief of being able to be outdoors again. Perhaps even more for us: to have space, and reconnect with friends and family; and colleagues; and life; in many more ways than before. It would seem that the whole world has been holding their breath for this moment, and now it feels like we can breathe again. This is good.

It is therefore with a breath of fresh air, that we delightfully announce that Vinespring Church will return to our on-site face to face meetings from **Sunday 29th of August**, **at the Aboyne and Banchory Suites in the Holiday Inn Hotel, Westhill**. We continue to be grateful to the management and staff at the Hotel for a great relationship which we have enjoyed over the last seven years, and are happy to continue in.

So, as you enjoy your summer, whatever activities you may choose to engage with throughout this season, we look forward to welcoming you at our meetings. As many as are seeking and searching, those who would like to explore the Christian faith, or revive their old flames of love for God; or you just want the company or connection – ALL are welcome to join us every Sunday at 11am.

For more information, please visit our website or social media: www.vinespringchurch. co.uk or facebook.com/vinespringchurch.

Blessings

**Team Vinespring** 

#### 1st Skene Girls' Brigade

When writing this article I can confirm that we have had notice of authorisation from Girls' Brigade Scotland that we can restart in person meetings once more, subject to the correct procedures and Risk Assessments being in place and approved by them.

We are in the process of doing these checks and assessments and aim to have an Enrolment and Fun Evening as soon as these have all been approved but no sooner than Monday 23rd August. This will be held on a Monday at 6pm in Trinity Church and the confirmed date will be updated on our 1St Skene Girls' Brigade Facebook page prior to the date, together with information and advice for Parents/Carers and Girls.

Any enquiries please call (Captain) Fiona Cumming on 07792 471199.



#### **Westhill Golf Club**

Ever since we were able to declare the end of winter (approximately May in this bizarre year!) it has been a great time to be a golfer. The shorts are on and the course is in excellent condition. This is made possible thanks to the tremendous work of our greens team. So let me extend a massive thank you to them for their hard work and constant enthusiasm! The pandemic has been tough for many

sectors but golf (and other outdoor sports) have been granted a new lease of life. With this renewed enthusiasm for our wonderful sport, we have been able to welcome in excess of 150 new members to the club across all categories.

Across the summer Westhill Golf Club has been able to support some very worthy charitable causes. On the 21st June, we had a bunch of golfers take part in a summer solstice challenge where competitors play 72 holes in a single day. We began at 4am and finished around 8pm and all walked in excess of 40 kilometres. From first-hand experience I can tell you it hurt a lot, but it was worth it in order to raise funds for Charlie House. Later in the summer our Ladies section will be raising money as part of a Breast Cancer Now Golf Day.

We have also had a busy summer for our junior golf section. Our membership numbers are flourishing and the sunny weather has encouraged lots of young golfers out onto the course. We held a 'Flag Event' in June, with 4 juniors qualifying to play at the Paul Lawrie Golf Centre. Over the summer, we have been organising and practicing for our 'GolfSixes' inter-club matches; these games are aimed at our younger players who are just starting to play. Our older juniors have also had a good season and been able to play several home and away matches. We recently became one of the first clubs in Scotland to be awarded the new 'SafeGolf' accreditation by Scottish Golf. It shows we have achieved the required standards and are following the good practice guidelines for safeguarding our junior members.

It's nice to see that lots of residents are making use of the Westhill Orbital Trail which passes through the golf course. Please be aware that we routinely operate machinery on the course so please keep your eyes and ears open for your own safety.

Alan McCue Club Captain











#### Tax on Rental Properties

If you're renting out a property then it's important to make sure you are claiming all the legitimate expenses you can so as to minimise your tax bill each year. It is important to file accurately and on time to avoid any penalties and interest.

Most of the time, when people do not fill out a tax return for a property, it is because they are making a financial loss and think a return doesn't need done. This unfortunately isn't the case and it may be that a taxable event still occurs. There are many common misunderstandings about what can be claimed Even in the case where no tax is due because of a loss a return should be filed so you are able to utilise or/and record those losses. Filing can also prevent an HMRC inspection as they will know a property is being let but don't know if it's profitable or not.

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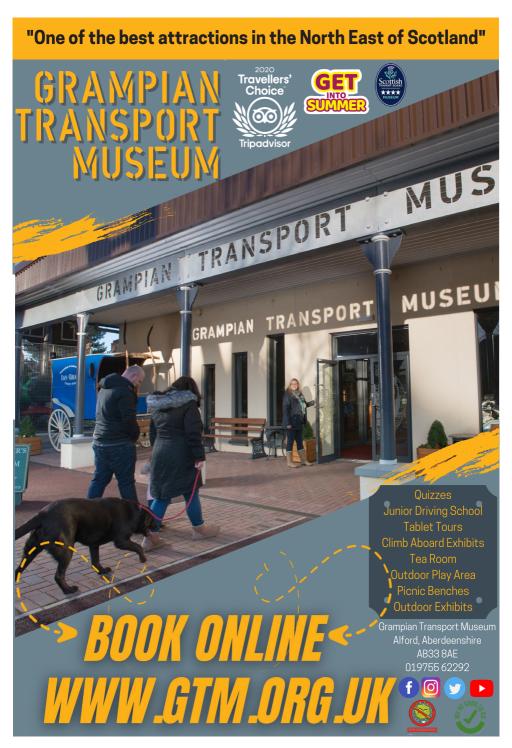
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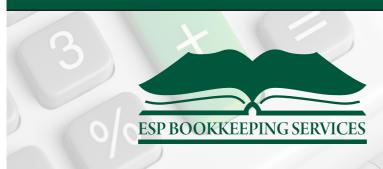
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#### **Environment and Litter Projects in Westhill**



Our fortnightly, organised Litter Picks have continued to help maintain Westhill in a reasonably tidy condition. This summer, we have been very pleased to welcome a number of new volunteers, who have helped us to make possible collecting in the areas further from the town centre. Our colleagues in the Rotary Club, who pick on the same day, have been able to do splendid work in clearing Carnie Woods and other outer regions of Westhill. Simply dropping a piece of litter can have a much longer lasting impact than might be imagined. From the table below, you will see how long it may take for items to decompose if not lifted. Our efforts to address the inadequate litter bins in Denman Park are still ongoing. Aberdeenshire

Council Officers have now been attempting to resolve the problem but the first effort, with larger bins could not be implemented when it was found that the collection vehicles required for emptying could not operate in the locations. We still propose to install a "publicly accessible litter kit collecting box" in the shopping centre. However, we would prefer to obtain feedback on how successful a similar box has

#### **How Long does Litter Last?** Fag Butts 1-5 years Fruit Peel 2 years Chewing Gum 7 years Fast Food Packaging 10 years Plastic Bags 20 years Disposable Drink Cups 30 years Aluminium Cans 50 years Crisp Packets 80 years Glass Bottles 1 million years

Forever



been when it was installed at Banchory. We have so far failed to get any response to our queries. If anyone can provide us with a contact, it would be well appreciated. Our hopes to get the Denman Ponds cleared out this year have had to be stalled, as we failed to qualify for a council grant to fund the work. Council Officers have had a survey carried out and we will attempt to win funds to get the work done next year. A similar failure to secure funds has meant that our plans to create a Community/Wildlife Garden have also had to be put on hold. The good news is that funds have been found to repair and improve Paths through the Denman Woods and Moss. Quotes for the work are currently being explored. The Contractors will use part of the Tennis Court Car Park as a storage area while the work is being undertaken. Because of the pressure of other works, the Bee Bomb Seeds have been a bit late in being sown, but they are now sown around the grounds near the Medical Practice and at the start of the Orbital Trail. We hope that you will have enjoyed seeing the hanging flower baskets and barrels planted on the Holiday Inn Roundabout and at the Wild Boar Sculptures. We should all appreciate that these were created and maintained by two volunteers in the Community Council and our friends in Rotary. We are sure that they make a great floral entry to the centre of our town and are an example of what can be achieved by the dedicated work of volunteers.

Plastic Bottles

Our dates for Litter Picks in 2021 are: 11th and 25th September, 9th and 23rd October, 13th and 27th November.

All our picks start at 10.00 and last one hour. All kit, apart from gloves will be supplied and all are welcome to join in.

For further information, or if your group may be interested in borrowing our Litter Picking Kit, please contact: Raymond Swaffield, email <a href="mailto:swaffies@talktalk.net">swaffies@talktalk.net</a> or Ken Stewart, email <a href="mailto:kennethstewart@talktalk.net">kennethstewart@talktalk.net</a>.

#### The Milne Hall, Kirkton of Skene

We would like to take this opportunity to let everyone know that the new facilities are now complete at the hall. The overall work includes the first phase, creating The Mary Gray Meeting Room, which was finished earlier, and now phase 2 which is an enlarged kitchen with a multifunction space for uses linked to the kitchen or small meetings. All of this also allows more flexibility to the total use of the hall.



It has taken several years to raise the required money to do this. Among all of the Committee Members and others who worked to achieve this we must thank Alan Reid who found and worked with a number of groups to obtain grant funding. These included Robertson Trust, Garfield Weston Foundation, Developer Obligation through Aberdeenshire Council, Adapt & Thrive Fund (Scottish Government) and National Lottery Community Fund.

Much praise must be given to our contractor, R. Davidson, who have done a fantastic job in these difficult times working with all concerned and producing a superb facility.

We continue to invite people to join our committee of volunteers to help with management, continuing projects and events.

Please see our Facebook page for more up to date information, etc.

The Milne Hall Management Committee

#### **Westhill Senior Citizens Group**

We hope that you all enjoyed your afternoon tea box on 16th June. Hopefully you will be feeling more confident getting out and about, back to some sort of normality and that you have been able to meet up with friends and family.

We are hoping to restart our Seniors meetings on Thursday 2nd September in the hall at the back of Trinity Church at 2pm. We are waiting on guidance from the Church as to what we are permitted and will let you know nearer the time.

We usually meet for a couple of hours every fortnight on a Thursday – we organise entertainment and have some refreshments. In the past the cost has been a one off annual payment of £6 and £3 per session (which covers the hall hire, entertainment and refreshments) but this may be reviewed once we receive guidance from the Church. We have a Christmas party.

Contact Heather Cook for further information – *heathercook@tiscali.co.uk* telephone 01224 741194.



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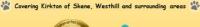
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#### Westhill Orbital Trail - Connecting to the Countryside

Jesthill Orbitor It Only a year after conceiving the project and applying for funding, the project team is pleased to report that the Westhill Orbital Trail is now officially open. The final waymarker posts were installed on 9th July. A route map can be found as a tear-out on the next page, but if you would prefer a digital copy, please go to one of the following links: https://www. aberdeenshire.gov.uk/roads-andtravel/transportation/cycling/commuterroutes/ or https://westhillelrick.org/westhill-orbital-trail/. This website also has the route description.

The Orbital Trail is now a community asset for all the community to use and enjoy. As you will see from the map, most households in Westhill are no more than 800m/half a mile or so from their nearest point of access.

The Trail measures roughly 12km/7.5 miles and will take however long that normally takes you to walk or run. But of course, it doesn't always have to be walked at speed or in one go. There are lots of places to rest, take in the scenery or just simply observe nature. Soon you may also find orienteering markers on some of the posts following recent discussions with the Scouts and Aberdeenshire Council and it is our aim to update the map at a later date with points of historical interest.

As I said last time, although much of the route is on tarred surfaces, there are four sections on rougher terrain, so please take care and select appropriate footwear. Note too that some sections are on private tracks and roads or link to private tracks and roads so please observe the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. The "statutory right of responsible public access to land" in Scotland means:

- · Taking responsibility for your own actions
- · Respecting people's privacy and peace of mind
- Helping land managers [farms and golf courses in this context] to work safely and effectively
- Caring for the environment
- · Keeping dogs under proper control

Also, please ensure that you take all litter home with you rather than leave it for others.

WECC's role from here on will be, with the continuing assistance of volunteers, to take on the upkeep of the trail, particularly pruning, strimming and litter picking, so please report any issues you come across; and if you would like to volunteer to help with its future upkeep please contact the WECC secretary at weccsecretx@gmail.com.

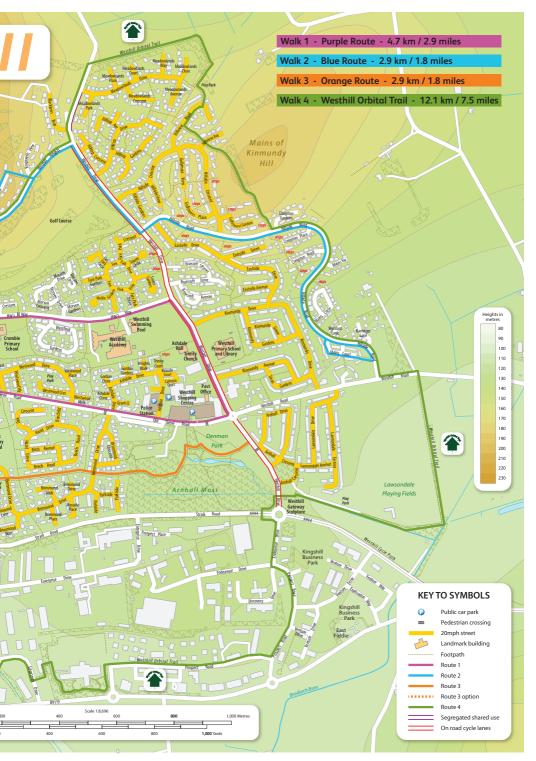
I would like to take this opportunity to thank once again all those who helped turn an idea into a new community outdoor resource, especially our local councillors and Aberdeenshire Council officials who respectively supported and provided the funding and access to council land. We also had great support from Westhill Golf Club, Lawsondale Sports Trust, Westhill Men's Shed, Stewart Milne Homes, INEOS FPS, Carnie Woods Ranger and a host of volunteers including Rotarians, Members of Westhill Voluntary Action and non-affiliated individuals who helped out with pruning, path clearing and litter picking at Lawsondale Woods and the Golf Club, effectively transforming these rough woodlands into a usable community amenity.

Finally it has been hugely inspiring for me to see so many people and parties coming together in this way; to deliver this valuable community asset which hopefully will serve the residents of Westhill for generations to come.

A Gordon Prentice

E: prenticeg.wecc@gmail.com







#### 875 (Westhill) Squadron



Finally, after a period of sixteen months, in June we were able to resume face-to-face training and twice weekly parade nights albeit, with a number of restrictions and protective measures in place. This was much welcome news to our cadets who, up to now, had only been able to meet virtually.

Initially, due to the restriction on numbers we could have attending at the squadron, we had to split the squadron in half with one group of cadets parading on a Monday night and the other group on a Wednesday night. As restrictions have been eased, we've been able to have both groups of cadets parading together.

While we have been able to return to holding our usual parade nights, work is ongoing by Headquarters Air Cadets to allow other activities such as camps, flying and gliding and adventure training to resume. These activities will only be able to go ahead if restrictions allow and if measures can be put in place to protect both the staff and cadets. Hopefully we will see some camps take place during the October school holidays.

Also in June, it was announced that Cadet Warrant Officer Lauren McIntosh was appointed as the Lord Lieutenant's Cadet for Aberdeenshire for a further year. Hopefully, as restrictions are eased, CWO McIntosh will be able to accompany the Lord Lieutenant on his official engagements.

Later that month, CWO McIntosh attended along with the Lord Lieutenant for Aberdeenshire, the flag raising ceremony in the grounds of Aberdeenshire Council Headquarters at Woodhill House,



Aberdeen, to mark the start of Armed Forces Week. Normally the cadets would join cadets from squadrons within Aberdeen city and Aberdeenshire, in the Armed Forces Day parade in Aberdeen but like most events, it was cancelled.

Since the start of the year, three members of uniform staff have left the squadron to either pursue their long-time ambition of joining the Royal Air Force or have moved out of the area for work reasons. This has left the squadron short of staff with just one Officer and two Civilian Instructors which is not ideal with having almost 30 cadets. We are looking for people to join us as staff either as a Civilian Instructor, Senior Non-Commissioned Officer (SNCO) or Officer. You don't need to have a military background, just an interest in working with young people. We particularly welcome anyone who have skills or interests that maybe of use to the cadets and the squadron, such as STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics), sports or outdoor activities.

There are several roles that staff can undertake such as unit administration, Training Officer – preparing training programs and maintaining cadet training records, Duke of Edinburgh's Award, shooting and adventure training. Full training is provided and there are a number of courses available to staff in which they can gain nationally recognised qualifications.

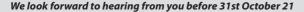
If anyone is interested in joining the squadron as a member of staff, please email oc.875@rafac. mod.gov.uk for more information.



Bothy 57's ambition is to create a welcoming outside shelter on the neighbouring site of a former garage

We anticipate that you will enjoy a weekly ice cream and coffee at this Kirkton of Skene destination, along the footpath from Westhill and Elrick. So, if you have any suggestions or comments on the idea of an outside shelter, please

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Bothy 57's beverages, home-made soup, hot food, scrumptious home bakes, soft drinks and ice cream are served from the door. Also, Jill and Steve look forward to sharing a warm inside welcome now we are serving at tables in the cafe again.

## Open Tuesday to Sunday, 6 days a week All are welcome

Working with the Echt and Skene Community Council, we attempt to mitigate the occasional flooding at 3 places on the footpath to Westhill. We're making some progress. However, we prioritise a result if more people can *log any flooding on https://online.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/apps/roadfaults/* thank you. Generally, if anyone would like to get involved with this then please email *contact@echtandskenecc.co.uk.* 











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#### You need to have the following:

- One smoke alarm installed in the room most frequently used for general daytime living purposes.
- One smoke alarm in every circulation space on each storey, such as hallway and landing.
- One heat alarm installed in every kitchen.
- All fire alarms are to be ceiling mounted and must be **interlinked**.
- Carbon monoxide detectors are to be fitted where there are carbon fuelled appliances (such as boilers, fires, open fires, heaters, stoves or a flue).

#### The Regulations come into effect in February 2022.

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#### **SKENE MEDICAL GROUP**

Hopefully we are all enjoying the gradual reduction in Covid related restrictions and feel that life looks like its heading back to normal. The doctors and staff at the practice would like to thank everyone for their patience and understanding with regard to the ongoing disruption to our pre-Covid service. You may be aware following the First Minister's recent update that 2 metre indoor social distancing is to remain within healthcare settings and that masks continue to be mandatory apart from those patients who may be exempt.

For this reason, we would continue to ask patients to make initial contact with the surgery by telephone and we will continue to operate with a restricted maximum number of patients in the waiting room.

Since we stopped using the eConsult platform, the current "hybrid" system of telephone and face to face appointments seems to have improved the situation for both patients and staff alike. It's not perfect but has allowed us to begin the process of getting back to a more normal service.

One plea we would like to make would be to those patients who are unable to attend their prebooked appointments. We are still experiencing a number of non-attendances and, more than ever, these have an impact on overall appointment availability. Please let us know if you can't make it and we may then offer the slot to another patient.

Primary care still faces huge challenges caused by the pandemic. Before Covid there was already significant pressure on general practice and this has been increased due to a number of factors. We are dealing with a large volume of patients who have possible Covid related symptoms. This not only creates a volume of work but also the challenges associated with managing a relatively new clinical "syndrome" where the evidence is continually evolving.

Secondary care services face a huge backlog and this, in turn, increases practice workload as patients require ongoing input for their symptoms while waiting to be seen at hospital clinics. We are typically unable to influence your hospital waiting time but would always be very happy to reassess the clinical situation if your symptoms change significantly between referral and being seen at the hospital.

We are working hard to re-establish our core services, including follow up appointments for chronic disease. We have been unable to re-start our "enhanced services" such as minor surgery and joint injections simply due to a lack of capacity. Hopefully it will be possible to re-start soon, but the level of activity will be determined by the ongoing demand for acute appointments. It's impossible to predict exactly when...the second and third waves put paid to our previous predictions!

Finally, we would encourage everyone to take up the offer of Covid vaccination. The success of the programme has definitely paved the way for easing of restrictions and has reduced hospital admissions and deaths despite the very high case numbers that we have seen recently.

It seems incredible but this year's flu and Covid 3rd dose programme will be rolled out in the coming months. This will be delivered centrally by NHS Grampian and patients in the target cohorts will be notified by NHSG regarding the arrangements in due course.

Hopefully, by the time we write our next article, the timescales around the NHS and practice recovery plans will be clearer and we won't have had another Covid related spanner in the works.

Kind Regards, All at Skene Medical Group

#### **WESTHILL BOWLING CLUB**

Here we are in August, approaching the business end of the bowling season where the accolades and prizes are handed out. It is perhaps a little too early to report on the achievements or otherwise of the season. We are only at the

semi final stage of our club competitions so no congratulations to any winners yet but well done to those still with a chance of winning and commiserations to those who have been knocked out earlier.

I can report that we have not managed to reclaim our Bon Accord fours league title. With one round of games left we cannot catch the leaders, Whitehall, but have the chance to finish as runner up with a positive result in our final match.

With regard to our performance in other district competitions we have semi finals to look forward to in the Top 10, where we face Seafield in the semi-final and the seniors Top 9 where we face Culter in the semi-final having previously defeated Stonehaven and Northern. The most pleasing thing about our success in this competition is that we have encouraged and introduced newer players into the team who have not let us down.

We also have the new Top 5 singles competition to look forward to where our hopes are high that five of our strongest players can lift the inaugural trophy.

Unfortunately, the relaxation of the Covid rules have come too late for us to arrange our annual open fours competition where we would expect to welcome approximately 100 guests. This is normally a major source of income for us that we will not have had for the last two years. But we are planning for a fund raising event in October to compensate for some of the lost income. Our increasing membership and consequent higher fee income has helped us balance the books.

From the above you would be right to think that so far we have had a full and successful bowling season after a slightly delayed start.

There is no doubt that we have had issues with the green. Those of you who walk past will have noticed the bare patches that have stubbornly refused to fill in. Who would have thought that it would have been so hard to make grass grow given the effort that the green keeping team put in. However, we are now seeing an improvement and a big effort by members at the end of the playing season to core and reseed the green will hopefully improve matters for season 2022

We have had the benefit of our watering system now being fully up and running and that has helped the green during the hot dry July. An added and unexpected benefit during the hot spell was that it could be used as a child cooling facility. We are considering this to the wider Westhill community as a 'PAY FOR A SPRAY' facility in summer 2022 should we be have a spell of Mediterranean type weather.

We are always looking for new members. Whilst this season will soon be at an end If



you want to try bowling with a view to joining us please contact the club president by email <code>robert.mutch@btinternet.com</code> or telephone 07562 696193.



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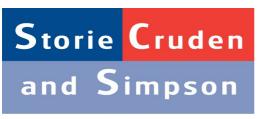
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#### **Volunteering Opportunities in Westhill**

Many organisations and clubs in Westhill rely on volunteers to sustain their activities. Below is details of some of these groups and how volunteers can get involved. If you would like to add your group in the next Bulletin contact <code>westhill.bulletin@gmail.com</code>. This list is also updated at <code>https://westhillelrick.org/volunteering</code>.

Rotary – Westhill and District – Rotary is open to Community Minded people 18+. They participate in social and community based activities supporting Charities and worthy causes: Local, National and International. Currently meeting alternate Thursdays by Zoom. Returning to weekly Thursday 6.15pm at Holiday Inn, Westhill Drive. Contact John Glascodine, secretary@westhill.rotary1010.org, 07977 059152. https://www.rotary-ribi.org/clubs/homepage.php?ClubID=1524. Article on page 8.

South West Aberdeenshire Citizens Advice Bureau – SWACAB delivers an Advice and Information service and practical assistance and advocacy on issues of concern for local residents. The service is delivered by phone, email, video-calling, helpline, webchat and face-to-face. There are many volunteer roles: including adviser, wide range of administrator roles, Board member, fund raiser, social policy. Volunteers are supported and trained by specialist staff, using an accredited programme to use individual skills and life experience and to provide/improve other skills for employability and work experience. Office hours are weekdays with plans to extend to an evening or weekend service. Contact Eveline Crossan, enquiries@swacab.org.uk, 01224 747714, www.swacab.org.uk. Article on page 86.

**SensationALL** (based at Old School on Westhill Drive) – SensationALL provides services for children and adults with complex conditions and disabilities. We are here for ALL ages, ALL conditions and ALL members of the family. Our inclusive support groups, activities and play sessions improve sensory processing, communication, learning, self-regulation, emotional awareness and general development. We are currently operating virtually therefore have reduced volunteering opportunities. However, we are in need of help with Facilities Maintenance, Gardening and DIY/Handyman. As soon as inperson activities restart we will require volunteers to help in our sessions. Register your interest now to be contacted when opportunities are available. Contact Service Co-ordinator Sofie Colvin, *info@sensationall.org.uk*, 01224 746699. www.sensationall.org.uk.

Westhill Men's Shed (based at the old library behind swimming pool) – Men Shed members make, repair and sell everything from DIY tools to garden benches and garden equipment. You meet others, have a chat and solve the world's problems over a cup of tea. You don't have to work in the workshops but if you can you get the satisfaction of making something and keeping the lights on. Open to men and women over 18. Contact the secretary Nick Pilbeam, contact@westhillmensshed.co.uk. 07745 829750. www.westhillmensshed.co.uk. Article on page 18.

**WECC Litter Picking Group** – Westhill and Elrick Community Council organise Litter Picking in Westhill and surrounding areas on the 2nd and 4th Saturday each month at 10am for 1 hour, equipment provided. Anyone can participate. Meet at Westhill Tennis Court Car Park. Contact Raymond Swaffield, *swaffies@talktalk.net*. Article on page 41.

**Westhill Scout Group** – We provide scouting activities to local children aged between 6 and 18 years. Looking for adult volunteers to help us with delivering a fun and varied programme of outdoor and indoor activities that help give #SkillsForLife. We welcome crafters, fire-lighters, tidy-uppers, book-keepers, activity planners, administrators, groundsmen and helpers. Try our 'Taster sessions' in the "Four Week Challenge" Contact Group Scout Leader Chris Pinnell or Deputy Chair Bruce Christie. *joinus@1stwesthillscouts.co.uk. https://www.1stwesthillscouts.co.uk.* Article on page 89.

**Girlguiding Westhill** – Girlguiding helps members discover their full potential by having fun and enjoying new adventures. There are four sections – Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers. Adult Volunteers 18+. Contact District Commissioners Alison Smith and Caroline Gray. <a href="west-tildeometa-to-united-register-your-interest">west-tildeometa-to-united-register-your-interest</a>. Article on page 30.

**Westhill Voluntary Action** – The Westhill Winter Resilience Facebook page, set up by Dave Cowie in December 2020, has been renamed Westhill Voluntary Action and is followed by over 1800 residents. If any group in the Westhill area needs more volunteers for a project or task they can post a request on this page.

#### **WECC COMMUNITY SUPPORT FUND**

Westhill & Elrick Community Council has 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.

WECC started to give donations in 2011 and since then a total of around £36,000 has been donated to a wide range of groups. See <a href="https://westhillelrick.org/people-make-a-place/donations/">https://westhillelrick.org/people-make-a-place/donations/</a> for Guidance Notes and the Application form or contact <a href="mailto:treasurerwecc@gmail.com">treasurerwecc@gmail.com</a>.

The next round of donations will be made in October 2021. Closing date for applications is 8th October.

#### **Skene Committee of Macmillan Cancer Support**



#### **World's Biggest Coffee Morning September 2021**

#### Host a Coffee Morning

This has been a challenging year for fundraising and thank you to all that have donated so generously to MacMillan. We would normally hold our Coffee Morning in Lyne of Skene Hall at the end of September, however due to covid restrictions this will not be possible.

We are therefore planning a coffee morning with a difference and would ask you to watch out for Posters and our Facebook Page (Skene Fundraising Committee-Macmillan Cancer Support) advertising our event. Our event will help you to host your own coffee morning.

Fundraising for



Charity No SCO039907 **Alison Troup – 07974 790765** 

#### **BILL'S GARDENING CORNER**

I can't believe it, where has the time gone? Now look forward to the lovely autumn colours – gold, red, brown, yellow; knowing that again another season is before us. So best foot forward and enjoy it.

Start collecting seeds from plants that you want to sow next year. Lay them on a sheet of paper or a cloth for a day to dry out a bit, then put them in a paper bag and give them a shake every day to keep them dry and stop them from sticking.

If you are growing tomatoes it is a good tip to put a banana skin on the bush to help ripening, or dig a cut banana into the soil.

We hear a lot about climate change. It seems to be coming sooner than we thought, but all we can do is look after our little bit of the planet and take care of our gardens.

Enjoy your garden, whatever the weather, even if it's only pots and other containers.

Bill Loudon

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#### **Westhill Tennis Club**

We have had a great summer at the courts with a record level of membership at Denman Park. It has been brilliant to see the refurbished courts being utilised and we hope our new members have enjoyed the facilities, which were freshened up in late May. It has made a real difference to the quality of the surface and we are very thankful to Westhill & Elrick Community Council for its valuable donation towards this work.

Our coaching also returned over the summer and was as popular as ever while our social tennis sessions for adults are back on Mondays from 7pm and Saturdays from 2pm.



Our men and ladies have returned to action this season in the North East of Scotland Summer Leagues. With just a few fixtures remaining, our men's A team was in with a shot of promotion from Division 2 while the B team, in its first season back in the league, was on course to top Division 5 and seal promotion. The ladies' side was also in the hunt for promotion from Division 4 at the time of writing after a positive season.

#### Fees

We have recently reduced membership fees. Our half-year rates are: Adult - £40, Family - £80, Couple - £70, Student - £20, Junior - £15, Child - £8.

Packages can be found at: https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/WesthillLawnTennisClub/Membership/Join Benefits of membership include:

- · Free court time for members with online booking sheet
- · Social tennis sessions for adults on Mondays from 7pm and Saturdays from 2pm
- Coaching opportunities for all members and organised coaching sessions for minis and juniors from a qualified coach
- · Entry to the Wimbledon Ticket Ballot
- · Social events throughout the season

Email: westhilltennisclub@outlook.com Facebook: www.facebook.com/westhilltennisclub
Website: www.clubspark.lta.org.uk/WesthillLawnTennisClub
Coaching: Vikki Paterson vikkipaterson@hotmail.com

Enjoy your tennis!



#### **Tax Planning**

With the new tax year starting on 6 April 2021, now is the time to review your personal tax, to make sure all tax reliefs and allowances available have been utilised in the current tax year. It is also an ideal opportunity to take a wider review of your circumstances and plan for the year ahead. Tax never requires a one size fits all approach as each taxpayer and each year will be different. Planning properly going forward can have a dramatic effect on your personal finances.

Tax planning is the process of organising your finances so that you don't pay more tax than is necessary whereas tax avoidance on the other hand, typically involves reducing your tax bill via some form of investment scheme.

Common end of tax year planning includes but is not restricted to utilising capital gains tax allowances, ISA allowances, pension allowances, dividend allowances, transfer of marriage allowance, inheritance tax and charitable gifting to name but a few.

If you require advice or guidance on tax planning as we reach the end of the tax year or indeed for the year ahead, please do not hesitate to contact our team. We can provide a comprehensive review, tailored to individual needs and circumstances.

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The Scouthall Playgroup is a very well-established Playgroup within the Westhill community.

For over 30 years we have provided fee paying and funded Early Learning and Childcare places for children aged 2.5 to 4.5. We have a mature and dedicated

staff team who provide a secure and stimulating environment for children to play and learn both indoors and out. Our aim is to create an inclusive, family orientated, welcoming and supportive environment in which children feel happy, safe and secure.

The Playgroup is committed to offering children a well-supported first step away from home to begin their educational journey with daily sessions of 3 hours 20 minutes. We have limited full year places still available for children in their antipreschool year and may be able to accommodate some younger children too.

For further information please contact us at: Scouthallplaygroup@gmail.com







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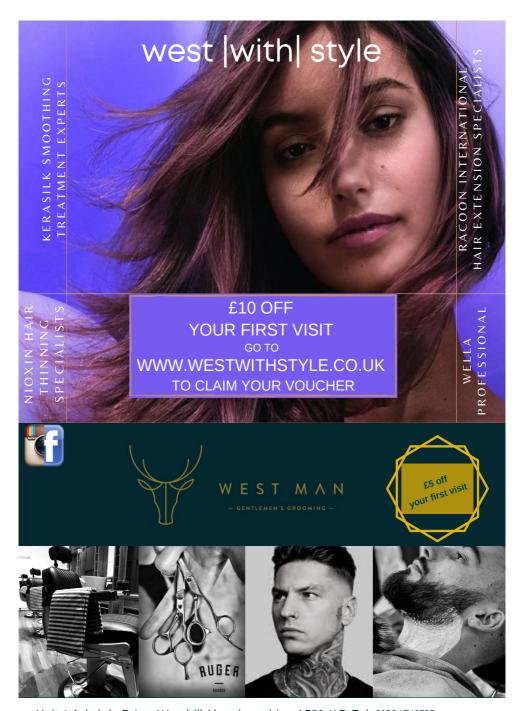
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#### Success for Local Lass

Westhill resident Amanda-Jane Taylor has become an International success during lockdown.

**Aj McLovely**, as she is known (name chosen by fans), has worked tirelessly during lockdowns, bringing live music, themed nights and chat shows to Facebook to multiple thousands worldwide. It has seen her own music page rocket to almost 5000 followers and she now features on You Tube and her own website.

She has appeared on countless charity lives including Pride Glasgow 2021, Archie Foundation, Dundee Bairns, Dyce Juniors Football Club, DASA, etc., as well as singing on



live sites, from her own and many other live pages worldwide and has appeared on **The Kilted Chef's Live @5**. Amanda-Jane has also raised funds for both **SAMH** and **The Mental Health Foundation** on her own page.

Her openness regarding mental health issues, has seen her music shows grow and grow in popularity, with her intoxicating giggle, chatting to people live between songs.

Aj is a songwriter in her own right and band member, performing locally before lockdown, and has recently been collaborating with several musicians worldwide releasing three singles in quick succession.

Her fourth single, **Breathe**, which she has written both the song and lyrics to, features Dennis Douglas, **Aberdeen Wedding Pianist**. This beautiful and emotional song about losing someone close was released the first week in August.

Previous singles **Hold On** with guitarist Kevin Buchan, which she wrote about mental health, during a period when she was struggling to deal with several life changing issues in her personal life, including the loss of her dad and marriage breakdown. **Born To Make A Difference** collaborating with Richard Barriball and **Bleeding Heart** with Angelo K with video from Slains Castle, all feature on most music platforms including Spotify. Amazon Music and iTunes.

In the last year she has featured in interviews for many local, national and international radio shows, newspapers and on television, with her singles now featuring on many radio stations as far as South Africa. USA and Australia.

Amanda-Jane's sheer dedication to her work as a mental health Ambassador and selflessly putting on live gigs free of charge throughout the entire lockdown, all whilst suffering with her extreme mental health issues, has seen her reach the finals in the **Inspiring Aberdeenshire Awards 2021**, Local Hero Courage category. The virtual finals ceremony will take place on 26th August.

The single mum of two boys and dental hygienist in Westhill, was forced to take sick leave because of her anxieties, asthma and breathing issues due to wearing cumbersome stealth masks and PPE.

She receives messages daily from many others suffering from mental health and is helping lift so many people's health problems and anxieties through her shows. Many have confessed that she is helping save their lives during such tough times.

Aj will continue to do live shows on Facebook and bookings are coming in steadily for outdoors and clubs once allowed.

Contact details: Aj McLovely on Facebook www.ajmclovely.co.uk



# JOGSCOTLAND WESTHILL

JogScotland HQ in Edinburah recently ran a campaign to let people know that joining a JogScotland group offers something for everyone. The overall message was that JogScotland is for a whole variety of people – people who think they're too old, too unfit or too big to start running, people who already run but think they'll be too slow, people who started running on their own during lockdown but are now struggling to stay motivated and even people who worry about wearing Lycra running gear!

None of these things are a problem at JogScotland Westhill. We're here to give people the opportunity to run with like-minded, friendly people, to improve their running and hopefully to have fun along the way too. Noone gets left behind, so as long as you can walk briskly for 30 minutes, you'll be able to join our club and if you're already out running you'll find a group to suit. There's a whole range of running experience and abilities, so there really is something for everyone.

We're meeting regularly again every Monday and Thursday at 6.30pm but we still need to operate under Covid restrictions for the time being, so if you'd like to come along and join us, send an email to jogscotlandwesthill@gmail.com and we'll let you know what you need to do.

jogscotland is for... Everyone who's ever thought:
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www.jogscotland.org.uk

jogscotland is for...

Everyone who started jogging in lockdown and is about to give up (or already has!)

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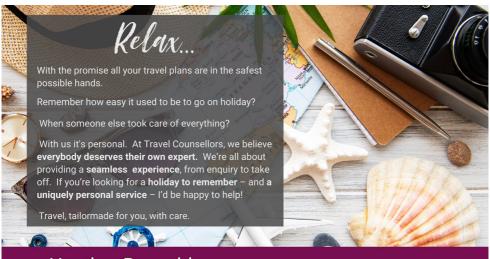






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#### **Services**

Every Sunday at 10.30am – Morning Worship We returned to physical services in March. You can book a place via our website each Thursday.

Our services are all shown online for anyone who can't come along in person.

Please join us on YouTube. Search for Westhill Community Church and you can see all of our online services plus tune in on Sunday for the latest one! We'd love to see you there!

www.westhillcommunitychurch.org



Our café opened in May, with all necessary restrictions and precautions in place. See our Facebook page or church website for more information. Bookings can be made via our website www.westhillcommunitychurch.org

Room Hire – It may be possible to hire our rooms in accordance with any Government guidelines. Please check our website or email bookings@westhillcommunitychurch.org
for more information



If you need assistance of any kind you can contact our team by calling Sandra on 07484 603593 or email sandramcgregor@westhillcommunitychurch.org

Our Food Bank is also open and you can access this by calling the team on 07379 836380 or email foodbank@westhillcommunitychurch.org

We appreciate it's hard to ask for help but please don't suffer in silence. If you need assistance just call. Your call will be treated in confidence with great love and care.

Please check our website for updates and opening hours once the lockdown eases. www.westhillcommunitychurch.org

#### **Youth Activities**

Check on our website or get in touch with our Youth Pastor, Daniel.ferguson@ westhillcommunitychurch.org to find out more!

#### Office Hours

Hours may vary currently. You can call our office on 01224 737380 or email office@westhillcommunitychurch.org

If you are like me these summer days will have stirred up mixed emotions. The warm weather we have recently experienced has been such a blessing. At long last the central heating boiler is enjoying a well-earned rest. and – what joy – the windows can remain open without my having to put on a cardigan! But the joy has come tinged with sadness. News of devastating fires and floods elsewhere has reminded us that the world is still full of suffering. And that suffering is close to home for many of us. Our hearts have been saddened particularly by news of those who, while engaged in happy seaside and lochside activities, have experienced sudden tragedy in the water. It reminds us, if indeed we need reminding, that in the midst of the greatest joy sorrow can strike without warning. It is this awareness that causes me to treasure the following wonderful verse from the New Testament: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God; and the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4: 6-7 NIV-UK). If you read carefully the biblical accounts of the beginning of the Christian Church two things in particular will stand out. The first is the intense and oftentimes horrific suffering that beset them. The second is the extraordinary and unsurpassed joy that they experienced. It seems that they did indeed know what this Bible verse speaks of – an incomprehensible peace that protected their hearts and minds whatever befell them. In our church for many years we have made opportunity for folk to regularly gather together in the early morning for prayer. Sometimes we have been overjoyed when the desires of our hearts have been met. Other times we have mourned when we haven't seen what we prayed for. But I think I speak for all involved when I say that at all times we finish these prayer times with a profound sense of God's peace. So, in the words of the banner on our church building, "Try Praying!". Steve Townsend, Elder



Westhill Photography Club caters to photographers of all standards, living in and around the Westhill area, to meet regularly and develop and share their interest and passion for photography.

We meet at The Westhill Community Church at Broadshade, Old Skene Road, Westhill every second Thursday evening from 7–9pm. We organise photography outings in the weeks in between to enhance photography skills and try out new tips and tricks. We organise a variety of activities including

workshops, talks by guest speakers and critique nights. We hold regular competition nights throughout the year on different subjects where members will have the chance to see their own and other members' work and have them judged.

We endeavour to create an enjoyable and non-judgemental atmosphere where every member feels welcome whatever his/her skill level is. The club encourages members to take part in as many of the activities as possible. The club has members with a

wide range of skills, from beginner to expert, on different subject areas and we encourage members to pass on their skills where possible. The club runs from August to May. During the summer break, members remain connected through Facebook and organise their own group activities.

We are always looking for new members to join the club and we offer taster sessions before anyone becomes a club member. If interested, please contact the club chairman Mamdud Hossain by email mamdud. hossain@gmail.com.















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#### Westhill Walkers

#### Open to all no matter what your age or ability

Sadly, we are still not back to our usual walks programme but have been managing to have either one or two walks on alternate Sundays and have been venturing further afield, although the restrictions on car sharing have complicated matters. Our walks have been restricted to members only and to a maximum of ten on each walk but now that Scotland is in Level 0 we are able to meet in groups of fifteen without socially distancing from other members of the group. This will make chatting during breaks and the sharing of the ielly babies a lot easier!

Walks this summer have included the Old Deeside Railway, Tom's Cairn and the Finzean Estate, the banks of the River Don and Seaton Park, Brown Cow Hill in Strathdon, Balmoral to Lochnagar, and a traverse from Loch Muick to Glen Esk. In addition to club walks, some individual members have been completing their last few munros and David Christie has covered over 1,100 miles whilst training for his charity trek across the Sahara in aid of Maggie's.

We all look forward to normal service being resumed but are still very happy to welcome new members to the club. Keep an eye on our website at <a href="http://www.westhillwalkers.org">http://www.westhillwalkers.org</a> and our Facebook page for updates and photos.



#### **Westhill and District Gardening Club**

As with many local community groups the Gardening Club meetings are still suspended. Hopefully we'll have good news for our members over the next month or so as restrictions are lifted, so keep a look out for an email or newsletter with more information. We hope everyone has enjoyed the sunny weather and their gardens this summer, long may it last.

If anyone would like information about the club please email us at westhillgardenclub@gmail.com.

# SOUTH WEST ABERDEENSHIRE CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU (SWACAB)

Normal service to be resumed as soon as possible...

citizens advice

We are looking forward to seeing clients again, with plans in progress to return to a normal service as soon as we can. Over the last 18 months we have delivered our services by phone, email, webchat and video. While we continue these services, we will be taking small steps to invite specific clients to bureau again, in very small numbers at first. So please bear with us if we don't have a face-to-face appointment slot for you right away; we'll still be here to answer your queries. When you call, we'll ask you how you would like advice and make every effort to deliver it in the way you want.

As well as our generalist service of Benefits, Debt & Money, Housing, Employment, Utilities, Health & Community, Consumer, Legal, Immigration & Asylum, Financial & Charitable support, Family & Relationship, Tax processes and Travel & Holidays, the Bureau provides a range of specialist free advice services that meet local demand:

- The Gambling Support Service: provides training to recognise gambling harms for front-line staff working with families, young people and vulnerable adults; to support money advisers who are dealing with client gambling debts and to provide a pathway to help for those seeking assistance with problem gambling.
- Energy advice: if you've been thinking about changing your energy provider, now is the
  time to do it, to take advantage of fixed term deals. Our advisers can help you save on
  increasing bills and give you advice about keeping your home warm while reducing costs.
- Pensionwise: if you have a defined contribution pension, you're over 50 and are
  considering retirement, call the Pensionwise helpline on 0800 383944 for your free
  appointment with a trained Pensionwise Guidance Officer, who will help you understand
  what your overall financial situation will be when you retire, and talk through your options
  to help you make the right decision.
- Budgeting: our Budgeting Adviser will be pleased to help you maximise your income and take an independent view of your weekly/monthly/annual spend, to avoid insurance and subscription duplication and suggests ways in which you can save money.

**Volunteering opportunities:** while we have been unable to admit members of the public to the bureau, our volunteer training programme has been paused. We are now inviting applications for a limited number of volunteers to train as advisers, administrators and for help with many bureau functions.

**Vacancies:** From time to time we have vacancies in our staff support team. These vacancies are advertised on our website in the "News" section on www.swacab.org.uk. In the near future we will be recruiting an Energy Adviser, an Outreach Officer and a Chief Officer/Manager.

Call us on 01224 747714; email enquiries@swacab.org.uk or contact us through our website www.swacab.org.uk

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Since the last Bulletin our sections enjoyed meeting up outdoors, face to face.

Our Scout sections had fun mountain biking, pioneering, practicing putting up hammocks in trees and sailing at Loch of Skene. Our Cub sections had a productive term completing their Emergency Aid badge and learned to use compasses to navigate their way around a course.

Our two Beaver colonies have also had a great term. Both sections welcomed new Beavers for the first time in over a year, due to covid. Between the two colonies we welcomed 17 new Beavers which is very exciting. Amazon Beavers enjoyed a glorious sunny evening to walk

up Brimmond Hill accompanied by three members of Aberdeen

Mountain Rescue team and Jib, their search and rescue dog. The Beavers have also enjoyed making kites and doing an egg drop challenge by designing and building a device using recycled materials to protect an egg from breaking when dropped from the top of a very tall ladder!





Redwood Beavers enjoyed a campfire at the scout hut, building mini dens at Carnie Woods; they also met ARI nurse, Justine who told them about her job at the hospital. Across the UK, Beaver colonies celebrated 35 years of Beavers. Redwood celebrated with a great evening at Battlegrounds near Banchory and by learning to draw cartoon beavers which were made into bunting for the scout hut.

Congratulations to Tracey Christie, one of Redwood Beavers' Leaders who was presented with her Wood Badge which is the award leaders receive once they have completed their leader training. Sadly, we bid farewell to Alison Donaldson, one of Amazon Beavers' Leaders, who has moved away. We wish Alison and her family all the best for the future.

#### We still need new adult helpers for our sections. Can you help?

Not all volunteers work directly with young people. We're also looking for help with admin, fundraising, finances, operations or governance plus keep everything running smoothly on the ground – helping to tidy up after meetings or sessions, driving or keeping meeting places in tip top condition.

If you would be willing to help, please email Group Scout Leader Chris Pinnell for further information at westhill@gordondistrictscouts.org.uk.

There is currently a waiting list for our sections. To add your child's name to the waiting list please complete the form on our website <a href="https://www.1stwesthillscouts.co.uk/join">https://www.1stwesthillscouts.co.uk/join</a>.

Summer is almost over, and despite pandemic restrictions, for many of our members it's been a good summer for cycling. Pleasant weather and an appetite for exploring new routes off the beaten track has encouraged many to rediscover the joy of the open roads.

Club Ridos – Organised club rides for all members usually start from the Westhill Community Church on Old Skene Road, full details of all rides are posted on our club Facebook page with a summary below.

\*\*Tuesday Evening Social – For all abilities, usually split into smaller groups

\*\*Tuesday Evening Training – For those who like a bit more speed and distance

\*\*Thursday Beginners – For newer cyclists and those who like a more leisurely pace

\*\*Sunday Morning Social – For all abilities (no one gets left behind and always a cafe stop for cake)

\*\*We also have impromptu rides, such as Saturday Social and Friday Cake Run – open to all club members. We are actively looking for new members, why not come along for a "taster's ession, complete beginners and experienced cyclists welcome.

\*\*New Highway Code – better for cyclists? – The Highway Code is set to undergo a shake-up that would give cyclists greater rights, such as being given right of way to undertake cars waiting to turn right. Other proposed changes include drivers would be advised to give priority to cyclists on a roundabout, to give them plenty of room, not attempt to overtake within their lane, and to allow cyclists to move across their path as they travel around the roundabout.

The old Highway Code rules didn't mention road positionings on many drivers wrongly assumed that cyclists should ride close to the kerb, which is often dangerous. The amended rule refers to two basic road positions cyclists should adopt, which many cyclists will recognise as the 'primary' and to let them do so. The group Cycling UK which has championed the cause of cycling for more than 140 years are proposals state that cyclists ride in single file when drivers wish to overtake, and it is safe to let them do so. The grou





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## **Duke of Edinburgh's Award**

#### **WESTHILL OPEN AWARD GROUP**

Contact Katie, Paul and the team of volunteers at WesthillDoE@aol.co.uk or look online at www.WesthillDoE.co.uk

CONGRATULATIONS to our latest Award completions – very well done:



Bronze Award: Erin Anderson, Jason Collie, George Dick, Ethan MacColl, Jack Mateus, Holly Thomson

Certificate of Achievement: Cerys Cox



Silver Award: Mollie Alexander, Jack Chambers, Natasha Lees, Robbie McKenzie, Aaron Reid

Certificate of Achievement: Will Chambers



Gold Certificate of Achievement: Catrina Anderson

As you know, our volunteer group have successfully delivered the Duke of Edinburgh's Award in the Westhill area since 2007. Due to licensing changes between Aberdeenshire Council and DofE Scotland, from the end of August, we are no longer authorised to do so. Meanwhile, for your current Award level, keep adding evidence on **eDofE.org**; keep being creative in deciding your challenges for Volunteering, Physical and Skills sections, and please do submit your programme planners so we – or DofE Aberdeenshire or DofE Scotland – can help you meet all the Award requirements for the different sections. You registered to take part in your DofE Award which you have until your 25th birthday to complete. The DofE Scotland has an obligation to provide the ongoing support you need. You may still be able to start a DofE Award level through uniformed groups such as the Scouts, ATC or BBs. We will continue to support you for as long as we have access to **eDofE.org**.

For now, we have amazing achievements to celebrate with all our participants (and volunteers) who took part in our 8 Bronze Expeditions, 8 Silver Expeditions and 8 Gold Expeditions in our local area this summer in Skene, Midmar, Glen Esk and Tarland areas. We could not have done so without the wonderful people who offered camping access to their own gardens (or large fields). Huge thank you to the Alexander family, Andy & Ruth Martin, Dave & Kathleen Collie, Glen Esk Estate and Simon Sawers. And congratulations to all our participants – local doesn't mean easier – and you found out a lot about what a wonderful area we are so lucky to live in too.

**COMING SOON** – Westhill Open Award Group are in discussion with Youth Scotland and Aberdeenshire Council hoping to bring you **Youth Achievement Awards at Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum levels!** It is all about progressing through those levels from taking part (60 hours), through assisting (90 hours), leading (120 hours) and ultimately, at Platinum Award level, providing peer education (135 hours). Evidence is gathered for submission in a portfolio with peer assessment of activities. It is based on open programmes which our volunteers will help participants to plan-do-review and most importantly show individual progression. We are keen to still offer an expedition element as we know how much participants gain from – and safely enjoy – that experience. So, that's the challenge for our volunteer group and we will keep you informed as plans progress!



#### 1st SKENE BOYS' BRIGADE

The recent easing of Covid regulations will allow the Company greater opportunity of returning to our more traditional meeting formats, there still remains in place some requirements which will challenge how the older boys interact during face-to-face indoor meetings. Since the start of the pandemic, we have been facing and overcoming similar issues so we look forward to starting a new session on Friday 3 September with confidence and building on the positivity of the boys who responded so well to everything we have been through.

One area where the Covid restrictions have significantly impacted on our activities is within the senior boy's work towards Duke of Edinburgh Awards and the Queens Badge. Under normal circumstances, six of them would have completed these at the end of last session and a further six would have been half way through these programmes. That said, given the 'can do' attitude of these boys, we are confident we can catch up with lost time.

At the end of last session Ann Hudson stood down as Office-in-Charge of the Anchor Boys and Rev Stella has taken over that role. Ann has been a Leader in 1st Skene for over 34 years, with the last 25 years in charge of the Anchor Boys. We are very grateful for her dedication and commitment to the boys and the Company over many years and it is nice to have an opportunity to publicly acknowledge this. While Ann will be missing from 'front line leadership', she will be continuing to work in the background supporting the company.

The Boys' Brigade is structured to cater for boys from 5 years to 18 years and in 1st Skene Company, we provide our members with a wide range of sports and activities as they grow and develop within an award scheme building towards the Queens Badge and Duke of Edinburgh Awards. Posts and photographs of many of these activities can be seen on our Facebook page.

We do not have 'Waiting Lists' and new members will be made most welcome on any Friday evening and specific information can be obtained from any of the section leaders below. As mentioned above, we will start the new session on Friday 3 September 2021 with the sections meeting as detailed below.

Section	Age range	Meeting	Point of Contact
Anchor Boys	Primary 1–3	Friday 6.30–8pm Trinity Church Hall	Rev Stella Campbell 01224 745955
Junior Section	Primary 4–6	Friday 6.30–8.30pm Westhill Academy	Neil MacBeath 01330 860226
Company Section	Primary 7 upwards	Friday 7.00–9.30pm Westhill Academy	Donald Struthers 01224 742262

Donald Struthers, Company Captain 01224 742262 • www.1stskenebb.co.uk

#### 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 £15 per day for 1 to 2 days, then £5 per day for each additional day, or £45 for one week. Transportation available at £10 each way.

For more information and to book the scaffold, call David Ritchie on 01224 744058.

#### **USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS**

Aberdeenshire Council	
All Enquiries	0345 6081208
Adult Education Classes	
Air Training Corps	
Ardene House Vets	
Ashdale Hall	
Boys' Brigade	
Childcare	
Breakfast Club; After School	ol
Club; Holiday Club	07770 943723
Schools Out Club	
(Old School House)	01224 465202
Church of Scotland Minister	01224 745955
Citizens Advice Bureau	01224 747714
Community Centre	01224 472874
Community Education	01224 472874
Community Mini-bus	01224 744058
Dentists' Surgery	
Abercrombie Dental Praction	ce,
NHS - Abercrombie Court,	
Prospect Road	01224 745447
Business, Private -	
Ashdale Drive	01224 742513
Westhill Dental Practice,	
Old Skene Road	01224 741339
Arnhall Practice	01224 849484
Doctors' Surgery	01224 849400
Results	01224 849392
Repeat Prescriptions	01224 849393
Electricity Emergency	0800 300999
Gardening Club	01224 748045
Gas Emergency	0800 111999
Golf Club	01224 743361
Girls' Brigade, 1st Skene	07792 471199
Girl Guides	07803 439175
Health & Social Care Office.	01467 537745
Lawsondale Pavilion	01224 742836
Library	01224 472871

Nursery
Bridges 01224 744741
Childcare Info 0800 2983330
Playgroups
Scout Hall01224 742059
Denman01224 743098
Pharmacy, Lloyds – Shops 01224 742742
Pharmacy, Lloyds – Surgery 01224 279489
Police (non emergency)101
Post Office (Shops) 01224 740858
Post Office (Ind Est) 01224 740010
Primary Schools
Crombie01224 472905
Elrick01224 472910
Skene01224 472915
Westhill01224 472900
Secondary School, Academy 01224 087850
Scouts01224 746773
Swimming Pool01224 472872
Tennis Club07913 042446
Trinity Church01224 742512
Veterinary, Town & Country 01224 741685
Water Authority 0845 6018 855
Westdyke Leisure Centre 01224 743098
Westhill Bowling Club 07562 696193
Westhill Community Church 01224 737380
Westhill Men's Shed01224 917345

# Did we get your number right?

# Are you missing from the list?



If you need any changes, why not get in touch by email?

westhill.bulletin@gmail.com

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