



Community Connections

North Berwick Coastal

April 2021

To our members and volunteers having a birthday this month, we wish you a very

HAPPY

BIRTHDAY

The daisy and sweet pea are the birth flowers for April



Rory and Anna send you this drawing with birthday wishes

Happy Easter



We would like to wish you all a very **HAPPY EASTER** from everyone at Community Connections.

Our team is growing and changing. We are delighted to introduce Bill Brown as the new Treasurer and we are currently looking for a Trustee to support the Safeguarding role of the project. Last month our new Befriending Co-ordinator was busy delivering volunteer training along with Carol, meaning the project has welcomed new volunteers, we are delighted. One final change for this month is that Lisa McClure and Robert Burgon have decided to Co-Chair, which will be incredibly beneficial for taking the project forward. Its all go!

Since Christmas each newsletter has aimed to raise a little more hope, celebrate a little more light and get us all a little more connected online and safely face to face. As restrictions continue to ease we are here to

support you to make the most of the better weather and freedom, as Government guidance allow. **So how can we help you?** Can we chum you along to something you are interested in? Or would you like us to arrange a Coffee Connection, Buddy Walk or a weekly catch up with one of our volunteers? Just get in touch with us, it's what we are here for (details last page).

WE NEED YOUR HELP - please help us to improve the project by completing the survey included in the envelope and sending it back in the stamped addressed envelope (or see link in email if reading this online). Best wishes, Emma (Newsletter Editor)

Introducing our new Treasurer, Bill Brown

Hi, I'm Bill Brown, the newly appointed Treasurer for the charity.

I have recently retired to North Berwick after a long career in financial services - project and change management for a number of financial institutions, small businesses and charities including Citizens Advice Scotland. I want to be able to give back some of this experience and knowledge to help the Board manage the charity and make it run as smoothly as possible, without you even knowing we are there!

I am looking forward to all that North Berwick offers - the beaches, the sea, the flat (mostly) quiet roads for cycling, the friendliness of the people and the community spirit, which we have already appreciated in the short time here.

I am also very keen to start this new role and to meeting you all (and the other members of the Board!) when we are allowed to. Not long now! Stay safe.



The Northern Lights by Neil McClure



The northern lights or aurora borealis is a natural light display in northern latitude regions around the Arctic. It is also seen in the Antarctic, where it is known as the aurora australis.

Auroras are the result of disturbances in the upper levels of the earth's atmosphere when it is hit by the sun's solar wind, which causes ionisation and excitation of particles in the atmosphere resulting in the emission of light of varying colour and complexity.

The long winter nights in Autumn and Winter are the best time of the year to see the aurora but it is also important that the sky is clear of clouds and there is limited light in the night sky, whether man made or from the moon.

If all the other conditions are good, looking north



over the sea is a good way to avoid light pollution, hence the coast line of East Lothian is an ideal location but going further north increases the chance of spotting the 'Mirrie Dancers', as they are known in Shetland. Some people travel to Iceland and Norway to see spectacular displays of the aurora.

To the naked eye, the aurora will appear as a pale white shimmering light in the northern sky, often forming an arc. If there is a high level of solar activity, then rays or towers that project up into the sky may also be visible to the eye, but in the southern part of Scotland the aurora is most regularly captured through a long exposure on the camera, as in these photos from March 14.

Very rarely, there will be a major solar storm and if all other conditions are right, then the aurora may show with a green colour and stretch much fur-

ther into the sky, to the point where it is visible directly above East Lothian.

Capturing such events has become a lot easier with technology and social media which can tell people if the aurora is active and the level of storm activity.

Not everyone wants to go out into a very cold night in the middle of winter and wait for hours to try and capture the aurora, but if you have access to a computer or tablet, you can check this webcam in Shetland, where the aurora is often seen as a green glow in the sky on clear winter nights.

[https://
www.shetlandwebcams.com/
cliff-cam-3/](https://www.shetlandwebcams.com/cliff-cam-3/)

Cartoon Adventures with Carol Stobie

Hands up who remembers the Giles annuals?

I always loved cartoons. Giles, The Broons and Oor Wullie annuals crossed the Atlantic each Christmas throughout the sixties, reaching my family in Newfoundland, from Auntie Helen, who worked for the Thomson family. American favourites included the poignant Peanuts cartoons. There's plenty of insight into mental health issues there, with Lucy setting up her stall as psychiatrist ("Five cents, please!") and poor, worried Charlie Brown feeling ever the mocked outsider.

Later, I loved the cleverness of Frenchwoman Claire Bret  cher and the Guardian's Posy Sim-

monds, who could capture our messy interactions in a frame or two. As a community worker, I recognised a lot about 'Claire in the Community' (Harry Venning). My Dad also dabbled. Cousin Donald was a professional cartoonist. I grew up trying to draw, on and off, inspired by all these geniuses, but then gave up for years.

Why get back to it so avidly in the past year, though? I think it's another of my mental self-help strategies, like the joys of jigsaws, of which I've written before. It's a quiet space where I sit down each Sunday, Classic FM on the radio, and try to come up with a picture that might do for a birthday card, or maybe our Christmas alternative Round Robin, or - why not

here? It's one way to depict life as it is just now, or portray some situations we all recognise - to satirise, crystallise or commemorate - and I don't have to get the subject to complete a Permission Slip (so far).

Turns out there's lots of evidence of how drawing, painting (or any sort of making marks on paper, canvas etc) helps us get calm and gain perspective (or a laugh). So here's one of my wee efforts, just for you lot, encapsulating my occasional sense of sheer screen-overwhelm. Now, go grab your pencils!

Carol Stobie, Project Officer



Snowdrops by Alex Hutchison



Cartoon by Carol Stobie

Best wishes to Jean from the everyone at Community Connections

We would like to thank Jean, our Safeguarding Trustee, who has decided to step down from the Board. Jean's expertise, as a retired social worker, has helped the project in developing the safeguarding policies and PVG strategy, which are fundamental to this project. Jean, worked alongside Elaine and Carol to develop the Befriender Coordinator role and recruitment process. Jean also supported Robert with writing the Constitution, which allowed the project to gain charitable status. Most importantly Jean has been an incredibly supportive Trustee and will be hugely missed and a massive loss to the Board.

We wish Jean all the best.

What is your Desert Island favourite piece of music?

I suspect that very few readers of this Newsletter might have the opportunity to make an appearance on Radio 4's "Desert Island Discs". That does not mean that we don't have favourite pieces of music, just that most of us won't be able to share them with radio listeners.

I was intrigued to hear on the news recently that former Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, had compiled his list of music which would have formed the basis for his selections on the programme - had he ever been invited to appear! (His wife, Mary, who was quite well known in her own right as a poet, did appear on the programme). Mr Wilson's list (which contained more than the 8 pieces required by the programme) had been found in a box of his papers which had been bought at auction.

This got me thinking that it would be nice to hear what pieces would appear on the request lists of NBCCC members and volunteers. If you had to choose just one piece of music (which could be played time and time if you were ever stranded on a desert island) what would be it be? Then, could you tell us in just a few sentences, why you have made your choice?

Contributions should be submitted to our Newsletter Editor, Emma (contact details P12). We hope to publish a few contributions in future Newsletters.

Robert



Family Tree by Margaret Purves

I have a problem ...do I BELONG to North Berwick or not? I attended the High School from 1960 to 63, The following year my parents, young sister and myself moved here. We lived here for around 12 years (until I got married) BUT my Granny (although born at Lawhead farm parish of Whitekirk and Tynninghame) grew up here, from roughly 1885 till she got married and moved to Macmerry.

Tracing my family tree I find a 9 times direct ancestor born here in North Berwick in 1672, The general consensus would be I DO NOT BELONG HERE, but how many can go back to 1672?

Family trees are very interesting but you MUST be broad minded !

New Community Links Worker for North Berwick and Gullane



Hi, my name is Tara Broadfoot and I'm your new Community Link Worker from **We Are With You**. Based in both the North Berwick and Gullane Medical Practices, I work 15 hours per week across Gullane every Wednesday and North Berwick every Thursday and Friday.

I can offer you a safe space to talk about issues that are stopping you living well and time to explore what changes and support you might need to help improve your health and well-being. All at your local surgery. I can also accompany you to attend the places you want to be, helping you connect with community resources (e.g. Welfare Advice / Mental Health Resources), services (e.g. Benefit applications / Housing problems / Befriending / Trauma) and groups (e.g. Walking / Men's Shed / Art Therapy) helping you resume a regular daily routine, make better life decisions and feel less isolated.

If you would like to be referred ask your GP, practice nurse or receptionist. They will explain how you make an appointment. I can see you at your GP practice and when lockdown eases via a community venue if that is easier.



pARTicipate North Berwick recently posted on social media this gorgeous picture of the mural beside the phone booths on the High Street.

Artist George Donald RSA, completed the mural with the addition of the geese. pARTicipate invite you to go and have a look.



Fringe by the Sea has announced preliminary plans for its return this summer with support from partners North Berwick Trust, Belhaven Brewery and DC Thomson Media.

In a dynamic new approach for 2021, the festival will be focusing on a programme that deepens community engagement, aids local economic recovery from the pandemic and ensures performances with live audiences take place in Covid-secure environments.

In addition, world class talent from Scotland and beyond will again be heading to North Berwick to put smiles on faces over the ten day multi-arts festival which runs from 6th to 15th August.

The theme of 'open arms, open spaces, open minds' will see the festival explore a number of exciting new commission-based projects that will involve diverse groups within our community to create content for the not-for-profit festival – a move that sees a shift from just providing access to creative arts to enabling participation and deeper engagement.

Tying in to Scotland's Year of Coasts and Waters, another strand will see the festival shine a spotlight on the county's rich natural environment.

Volunteers are a huge part of the festival - if you are interested in the volunteer programme, please email julia@fringebythesea.com. Find out more and stay tuned for further details on the participatory activity at www.fringebythesea.com.



FACE COVERINGS



AVOID CROWDS



CLEAN HANDS



TWO METRES



SELF-ISOLATE

April Wildlife Watch by Ruth Fraser

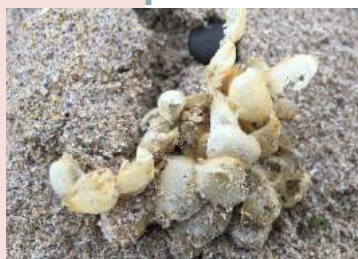
The month of April brings hope – the weather is warmer, days are longer, flowers are blooming, tree buds are sprouting, and birds are singing. It's a great time to explore our local wildlife spots to see lots of signs of Spring...



Wood anemone

Spring flowers - During April Spring flowers bring a welcome burst of colour; crocuses, daffodils, bluebells, and these beautiful wood anemones. The wood anemone is named after the Greek wind god, Anemos, who sent anemones in early spring to herald his arrival. This legend gives the flower its other common name of 'Windflower'. A walk through the Lodge is a great place to spot lots of flowers in bloom. Or for a burst of yellow (and a fragrant scent of coconut!) gorse can be spotted during a walk around the base of the Law. Gorse provides a great habitat for nesting birds and the bright flowers provide an important nectar source for bees and butterflies.

Did you know? Common gorse was once used as a colourant for painting Easter eggs!



Common whelk egg cases

Common whelk - Keep your eyes peeled for what looks like a lump of bubble wrap washed up on the beach. These puffy white balls are the empty egg cases of the common whelk. The snails lay eggs on the seabed. By the time we see them on the shore, tiny snails have long-since hatched. In the past, the egg cases were used by sailors as wash balls!

Other Top Spots: boxing hares in fields, emerging butterflies and the first puffsins have returned to Craighleith!

Discover more: Watch the Scottish Seabird Centre's Meet the Scientist online talk with David Steel 'Life on the Isle of May'. The link is [here](#) and the talk is just under an hour.

Date for your dairy: Join over 1 billion participants around the world and take action on April 22nd for Earth Day 2021. <https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-2021/>

Get snapping: please send any photos of April wildlife that you capture for us to share in the May edition to newsletter@nbc-communityconnections.org

Wildlife Anagrams

EAMNOEN
DARYILBD
WETIKATKI
LULEBBLE
SERGO
Answers P8



Pictures by North Berwick Youth Project... full story on p7

North Berwick Youth Project

North Berwick Youth Project have been taking a group of young people from North Berwick High School down to Herbspace twice a week as part of the John Muir Award.

The young people have been working extremely hard transforming the courtyard at the Abbey care home for all of the residents. So far, they have done a fantastic job at clearing the courtyard, painting the planters and planting lots of lovely plants and flowers!

The next step for them is to paint tiles ready to be made into a mural for the courtyard.

The young people are learning more and more about gardening each week as well as identifying plants and birds.

As a reward for their hard work, each session ends with a fire pit where they make s'mores and hot chocolate. The young people have already been receiving lots of lovely feedback from the Abbey staff and they can't wait to see the residents faces when they see the courtyard transformation!

Beth Smith, Youth Worker



Wildlife Watch finds...

(Bottom left clockwise)

Robina's daughter found a Wee Beastie

Emma ALMOST found herself swimming with dolphins. It would have been a dream come true. They were spotted in the shallows on East Beach after a sea swim.

Rory, P5, found frogs spawn while climbing North Berwick Law with his buddy Tom.

Robina's friend had a visitor to her back door.

Beautiful flower wall

by Alex Hutchison



Renewal and Compassion by Deborah Ritchie

I don't know about you but my sense of 'wintering' is over. This morning I was up and out walking before the Today programme had finished! Usually I refuse to get up until the 9am pips. It is my winter survival strategy. But the sun has been nudging me awake these past few mornings. Two words have also been nudging me to think about the spring: *renewal* and *compassion*.

Renewal reminds me that although the winter is dying we can build upon the old structures of the past, like geraniums. This time of year gives us the opportunity to transform the past into something new and flourishing and beautiful. Sometimes I have let my past limit me rather than seeing the opportunity to build upon my wisdom of pain, suffering and joy. We all have an inner wisdom that we have created over the years of our lives. And many of us just don't recognise or share our own wisdom.

This brings me to the second word *compassion*. *Compassion* I think is the ability to walk alongside another person and to empathise with them. It is the ability to imagine the experience of the other person and to listen well to their story. North Berwick was chosen to be one of five Compassionate Communities in Scotland at the end of 2019. The project has two threads. First we aim to create events to encourage the Big Conversations about dying, death and grief so that we can become a community with a culture that is able to support people who are bereaved and or have a terminal diagnosis with confidence. Conversations you might consider to be dismal and depressing but the longer that I am involved in this issue the more life affirming and precious these conversations can be for us. Many of us choose not to think about death until it literally stares us in the face. According to Dying Matters, 81% in the UK have not written down any preferences about their own death, and only a quarter of men and just over a third of women have told anyone about the funeral arrangements they would like to have. Nearly two-thirds have not written a will, including a quarter of over-65s. Two out of three people would like to die at home and 90% of those dying in a hospital would rather be at home. Yet half of us will probably die in a hospital or care home. Happily the tide is slowly turning and many more people are talking openly about death and

their own mortality and are determined to make it a better experience for themselves and their loved ones. Many of the skills and knowledge that we used to have within communities are now lost as death has become more medicalised. When our final days come most of us are not sure what to expect, but if we have the big conversations we will feel more empowered to make our wishes known and to receive the best possible care for our body, mind and spirit. We now have the opportunity as a North Berwick community to start changing our culture.



Our second project thread is to develop a community support hub for individuals and families who are coping with a terminal diagnosis. I am so excited to announce that we have begun to collaborate with St Columba's Hospice to set up a local Compassionate Neighbour hub. We have started the training this month with the hospice and they will help us to set up a structure to match compassionate neighbours with people who need the support that a neighbour might provide. If anyone is interested in becoming a compassionate neighbour please do contact me deborah.ritchie@me.com.

Wildlife Anagram Answers: 1 Anemone, 2 Ladybird, 3 Kittiwake, 4 Bluebell, 5 Gorse

Armchair Chats

March 30th at 7pm- Isla Aitken- local author followed by Dorothy Kellas a local solicitor on the legal issues concerning death and dying such as power of attorney and wills and care costs and wishes.

April 27th at 7pm Soul Midwife Jude Meryl- soul midwives offer support during the dying process to sit with the dying and soften the process. Many soul midwives will support a person from the point of diagnosis, through to death and grief. It is way of holding the space in a loving and caring way and is one of the most precious gifts we can share with one another.

May 25th Dr Kathryn Mannix is a palliative care doctor and has written the most wonderful book called 'With the End in Mind.' The cover says '*Any reader will come away with the wish that they will be cared for at the very end by someone with Mannix's imaginative sympathy and matte of fact generosity of perception. Read this book and you will be better prepared for life as well as death*'

So please do come and join us and the instructions for registering for the armchair chats will be on the North Berwick Health and Wellbeing Association website: www.northberwickhealthandwellbeing.co.uk



North Berwick in Bloom - Tulip Festival by Libby Morris

For our 10th Tulip Festival in 2021, over forty different varieties of tulips were planted all over the town in flower beds and planters last November. Early varieties start flowering in March with mid and late varieties following right through to the end of May.

Most wild tulips originated in central Asia where they were cultivated by the Ottomans. Tulips were introduced into Europe in the 16th century, brought by the traders who sold exotic items from Asia and Africa. The large colourful flowers became a luxury item which changed hands for huge sums of money. Many of these were bred in the Netherlands where one of the most colourful type of tulips is the Rembrandt variety. Rembrandt was an artist who was born in the city of Leiden where tulip growing began in Holland. The brightly striped tulips were very popular, and demand exceeded supply, leading to 'Tulip mania' where fortunes were made and lost overnight.

The market for tulips collapsed when an outbreak of Plague prevented buyers and sellers from meeting in the city of Harlem for a bulb auction. Other auctions were also cancelled, prices crashed, and speculators were ruined.

Luckily, we can enjoy all the different varieties today for a much more modest price, and all of our varieties are sourced from the Netherlands. When the flowers are finished, we will lift the bulbs out of the containers and bag them up, to give away at our plant sale at the end of May. All the money raised goes to buy more tulip bulbs for next year's festival and the old bulbs can be planted under trees or in your own garden.

Pictures 1) Black Hero – double late peony flowered tulip, 2 Tulip planter in front of the Abbey church last spring, 3 Pinocchio – Kaufmanniana tulips in a boat at Bank Street, 4 Willem van Oranje – double early tulip and 5 Dreaming Maid and purple violas at the station





Welcome back to Beach Wheelchairs! As per the Government guidance, Beach Wheelchairs are delighted to be allowed to open from 2 April to customers in East Lothian and from 26th April to customers from other council areas in Scotland.

Please phone 03001112112 to book or email us at info@beachwheelchairs.org

Volunteer with us? We are volunteer run. If you would like to find out more about volunteering with us please contact us using either phone or email as above

 Carers of East Lothian supports all adults in a caring situation in East Lothian to get information and services to help their individual caring role, enhance their own wellbeing, and strengthen their collective voice to improve services.

If you provide support to a relative, friend or neighbour who could not manage otherwise because they are frail, have a long term illness or disability, then there are many ways you can get support.

To register with us and find out more please phone 0131 6650135, here's a link to our website <https://coel.org.uk/>

Easter fun across the coastal area

North Berwick and the Villages have been promoting what they are planning to do to bring a bit of Easter cheer over the Easter Break.

Keen an eye out for the Law Primary PTA Easter trail around the centre of North Berwick.

 Law Primary PTA
Easter Fun 2021 
Friday 2nd – Friday 9th April

Easter Trail

Count the bunnies to be in with a chance to win a family hamper worth over £300! Collect a fun Easter activity pack at end of trail*

Spring Art Competition

Enter to win a chocolate Easter egg!

Easter Pebbles

Add your decorated pebble halfway round the trail.

Free entry
Donations welcome and will support the school



*while supplies last

Law Primary PTA Charity Number SC045700



Following the hugely successful scarecrows trail in Dirleton, the **Dirleton Good Neighbours** are encouraging the village to create Easter displays and characters in their gardens and around the village. If you are out for a walk keen an eye out for your favourite.



ABERLADY'S DISPLAY of HAPPY BIRDS



To cheer up the people of Aberlady there will be a display of a variety of hand crafted birds placed around the village. Keep looking out for these in the coming days.

They may have a label attached!

We ask that you leave these birds in place for others to enjoy as more will be flying in to join them in the next few weeks.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO TAKE PART?

Let's try and make as many birds as possible out of anything you have at home to decorate your own space, either garden, window or fence. Recycle what you can to withstand the weather.
Let's cheer up everybody as we emerge from this pandemic.

Take pictures, spread the word!

Post on Aberlady Craft Group's Facebook page



The **Aberlady Crafters** are encouraging the village to make and enjoy the display of crafted birds. What a wonderful idea.

Creative Ideas to Connect the Community.

It is wonderful to see ideas across the coastal villages and North Berwick.

If you have ideas that you think the local community or Community Connections community might like to get involved in then let us know.

(Contact details on last page)



NEW ANNOUNCEMENT:

Ageing Well are delighted to let you all know that following Scottish Government announcements as of Friday 12th March, adults can take part in outdoor non-contact sports and organised group exercise of up to 15 people. **This means the Health Walks can restart with a Walk Leader, physical distancing will be maintained. Please get in touch to get involved.**

We continue to have lots on offer online too—Pilates, Yoga, Zumba, Singing and Tai Chi, for anyone over 50.

For the full list of online classes and to find out what might suit your interests please visit Ageing Well [website](#) or [Facebook](#) page or you can talk to Parvine Jazayeri, Ageing Well Coordinator on pjazayeri@eastlothian.gov.uk or call 07718 117585



Vintage Vibes Edinburgh announced their big news. There very own Vocal Vibes group have released their

first single called 'Tomorrow', which you can listen to at

www.vintagevibes.org.uk. Vintage Vibes want everyone to help spread the good vibes by sharing #TagforTomorrow with a message saying what you hope tomorrow will bring. So take a selfie (or ask someone to help). You will see mine (Emma) above and Ruth's and Robert's earlier in the newsletter. You can sent your images to georgia@vintagevibes.org.uk or simple share with us for next months newsletter (details on last page).



Hooray!

Following Government guidelines, Rock & Bird hope to be opening up again on 26 April.



Community Connections would like to say thank you to Rock & Bird, for printing our newsletters each month and for the wonderful seasonal colouring in sheet, which was created by a local aspiring illustrator D. Pryke Thomas (Instagram @d.prykethomas)

CRAFT CAFÉ ONLINE

Stay creative and stay connected!

Join us for paper crafts - pictures with quills, simple origami and make a beautiful garland.

Artist-led activities are suitable for beginners & experienced crafters.

All craft materials plus a zoom code to access the Craft Café will be supplied.

THE BRUNTON
THE PLACE TO B

Mondays 2pm
29 March
5 & 12 April
£12 for 3 weeks

Book at www.thebrunton.co.uk or
0131 653 5245 Mon to Fri 10am-3pm

Connecting with friends and family online, one step at a time...

Step one...would being online help you feel more connected - to family, friends, church services, Community Connections Virtual Coffee or accessing your interests? Would you like to try?

Step two - If you speak to us about what you might like to do online we can keep it simple and help you access it or if you need more help we can link you up with the wonderful AbilityNet <https://abilitynet.org.uk/> (free IT support at home—helpline 0800 048 7642 or enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk)

Step three...the technical bit. Do you have access to the internet, a tablet, smart phone or laptop? Let us know if not

Step four - trial and error. Accessing anything online is an ongoing learning curve for everyone; the more we do it, the more familiar it become. Please get in touch

May Newsletter Content – Please send in to Emma by **WEDNESDAY 21 APRIL**

We welcome a range of content so please share your stories, your own photos, hobbies, news, as well as any events cross North Berwick and the Coastal Villages. We would also welcome content that celebrates special occasions.

Please send directly to Emma Papakyriakou at newsletter@nbc-communityconnections.org

If you want Emma to give you a call about a story or idea for the newsletter just send an email or mention to Carol or Lisa when you catch up with them.

North Berwick Coastal Community Connections

Community Connections is here and can help you to make the most of April. If you would like some company we can arrange a one-to-one Buddy Walk with one of our trained volunteers. Or maybe a local friend you've not seen for ages could join you to enjoy the spring flowers in the lodge or a walk to see the North Berwick in Bloom displays or the newly finished painted mural at the phone booths.

If you would like to chat to someone during the week, we can arrange for you to have a weekly chat with one of our lovely volunteers. It's a great way to share stories about your life and interests or how you are doing.

We're planning further Members' Virtual Coffee Calls, to help people get to know each other's faces and gently prepare the ground for an eventual return to gatherings like Scone Café.

Please get in touch with Carol if you would like to build more conversations and connections into your weekly routine. Over March we will continue to offer:

- Phone calls
- Buddy Walks
- Monthly Newsletter
- Virtual Coffee Connections - date to be confirmed
- *Coffee Connections

For more information please contact: Phone: 07940 203380
Email: nbc-communityconnections@outlook.co.uk

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