

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

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

The November birth flower is the chrysanthemum which represents happiness, love, longevity and joy.

# Community Connections

North Berwick Coastal

November 2021



'November afternoon' by Ruth Fraser

#### North Berwick Coastal Project Receives Major Lottery Award!

We are absolutely delighted to announce that The National Lottery Community Fund's 'Improving Lives' project has recognised North Berwick Coastal Community Connections (NBCCC) with a major funding award of £195,000 over three years, taking the project to a new level of security and expanded service to the coastal communities.

Robert Burgon, NBCCC Co-Chair said: "We are very pleased that the project has received this support and recognition. There is possibly even more need than ever for a project of this nature as so many people in our community have experienced the long-lasting impact of the pandemic. We look forward to developing our services as we address social isolation and loneliness, across all age groups, in the coastal ward."

Carol commented that "We're absolutely thrilled that funding has been secured. It's been a tough 18 months with many of our members struggling with greater isolation than ever, and new referrals steeply increasing over this time. Now we can plan to reinstate some of our original core face-to-face work, including Scone Café at the Abbey Church Hall, and to reopen our partnership activities with many other community groups. This includes a Compassionate Neighbours project to support people with a terminal diagnosis, in partnership with North Berwick Compassionate Communities. We'll also be able to sustain our newer one-to-one services, with befriending and Buddy Walks for the most vulnerable members, led by Lisa Brownlie, our wonderful Befriending Coordinator. We're hoping to recruit a third team member for administration and communications tasks. We held our AGM on 29th September and appointed several brilliant new trustees, Becky Everett, Liz Weir, and Donna McArdle. They will join existing trustees, Robert Burgon and Bill Brown. So we're going from strength to strength. This is mostly thanks to the incredible dedication of over 40 current volunteers who deliver all these vital services."

Last night at Eddie's Music Night, I unzipped the ukulele case and sang a song in memory of my late friend, Jim Hawthorn - a fine musician who played in an early 60s band, the Tonebeats. Then I sang one in honour of the late Andy Brown, the whole town's favourite music teacher, year-round shorts-and-bells wearer.

Today I'll be making oatcakes always in honour of my late Mum.

Last week, I conducted a funeral in beautiful Binning Wood (I know, an unusual hobby), and encouraged those present to think of ways they could commemorate their lost friend in their daily lives.

So how do we bring the departed folk to mind? For churchgoers, there are services around All Saints and All Souls, on 1 and 2 November. These are intertwined with the ancient roots of our Hallowe'en traditions. It can be incredibly powerful to say prayers for those we've lost, light candles and sing we

contemplate what they meant to us. You feel part of the whole community



of those who grieve and may even feel reconnected with those you lost, in a profound way. In Mexico, they celebrate the Day of the Dead with picnics at the graves of ancestors, placing candles and flowers, tending the graves. But such customs exist in many countries: Gaijatra is celebrated in Nepal, and is a Hindu tradition. It is known as the "festival of cows," as cows are considered to be holy and to help guide the recently deceased.

Even here in Scotland, we would once have carried out similar practices – such as setting a place at the table to welcome the spirit of the dead family member, or (as mentioned last month) carving a tumshie lantern for the window, so they could see their way back.

Grieving can often be a very matter private in modern western society, which understandable when we feel overcome with the loss. But there is great power in feeling part of a larger community when it comes to such a universal emotion. Festivals are one way processing that.

But our discomfort with the subject may make us avoid those who remind us of our own mortality. And for those facing their own death, if diagnosed with a terminal illness, there is (for most, not all) a profound need not to be forgotten or hidden away, however awkward the rest of us may feel when we encounter the dying or newly bereaved.

Community Connections has worked with many members who

are in one or other of these situations, so we know that death and dying are major factors in isolation. It doesn't need to be that way. That's why we included a partnership with North Berwick Compassionate Community in our Lottery application. Now we can take that forward, with Compassionate Neighbours. offers emotional and social support to local people who may be lonely or socially isolated and have a life-limiting condition. Stay tuned for more on that soon, and see Deborah's article in this issue.

Meantime, let me recommend a wonderful resource for anyone pondering how we can learn to talk about death more easily as a society. The <u>Good Life, Good Death, Good Grief</u> website has a wealth of materials and ideas. Its intention is 'to create a Scotland where everyone knows how to help when someone is dying or grieving.' Does that sound like something you'd like to be part of? We will be - please join us.

And in November, why not create or revive your own ritual for remembering someone you've lost - perhaps it's baking their special recipe, singing or listening to their favourite song or walking in that special place - or lighting that candle for them some evening? We're with you on that,

and we'll see you soon.

Carol Stobie(Project Officer)



## Befriending Update - Lisa Brownlie

We are so delighted to share our news with you all about the lottery funding, and we are really looking forward to continuing with the work we are doing.

It really is a time for us to celebrate this fantastic news!

As a result of this, I am working more hours which will allow me to coordinate all the 1:1 work we offer. This includes Befriending and Buddy Walks. Carol currently coordinates

Buddy Walks and over the next few weeks, we will work closely together to ensure a smooth transition from Carol to myself.

I am really looking forward to this and to working with both volunteers and members. It's a really exciting time to be part of this project.



# Welcome along to the Gullane Scone Café

Due to all the restrictions of Covid, some of us have stopped going out very much and feel that we are losing connections with other people in the village of Gullane. We need to meet like-minded folk and make new friendships. One way to do this would be to come along to the **Scone Café** being held in the Gullane Day Centre on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of October and thereafter every two weeks.

The Day Centre staff have kindly allowed us to use this comfortable and well-equipped facility while the Day Centre is empty on a Saturday morning between 10.30am and 12noon. Tea, coffee and other drinks, as well as scones and biscuits, will be provided so that people can relax and get to know each other. There will be volunteers on hand as well to welcome and introduce other guests. Thanks to the



generous support from 'Cherish', our local Gullane café, we will be able to supply our guests with their delicious scones.

We are looking for more volunteers to help as well as suggestions of guests who might benefit by coming. If you

know of anyone who might appreciate attending our **Gullane Scone Café** or you would like to join as a volunteer please contact **Margaret McSorley** on 07907999967 or email margaret4mcsorley@gmail.com

# Learn to practice Mindfulness for better health and a calmer mind

"Really enjoyed the class...gentle and life changing!"

Beginners group 6 week block starts Tuesday 2nd of November Weekly from 1pm-2pm Venue: Bleachingfield Centre, Dunbar \*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Intermediate group 6 week block via ZOOM starts Friday 5th November 4.30-5.30pm

Join us for £3 per session

To book your place, please contact Joyce via email: joycemindfulness@gmail.com
Or phone 07910 962324



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#### Community Connections - where are we now?

After 18 months of working mainly from home, we can now be found in many places! Community Connections now has several locations where we can meet folk face-to-face.

#### Scone Café - the return of!

Our legendary Scone Café is back from 10 November, at the new time of **Wednesday 1-3 pm**, in the same venue - **Abbey Church Hall**. These small-scale, friendly gatherings are 'just us', and feature Dorothy's scones, coffee, and tea, chats, making new friendships, card games for those who care to. Occasional guest speakers and optional workshop activities. It's free, dog-friendly, run by volunteers just for Community Connections folk who'd like more company and conversation in their lives. Please contact Carol if you'd like to come along.

#### Coffee Connections - still going strong!

We continue our wee meet-ups with our friendly volunteers over coffee at the **Seabird Centre Café** on **Tuesday** at the new time of **2-3 pm** in view of darker afternoons and earlier closing! Seabird Centre is dog-friendly.



**St Andrew Blackadder Church**, **North Berwick**: We're booking Room 1 for wee meetings and one to ones with members on Thursday mornings, for good reason. We would love to meet you there for soup and scone lunch and introduce you to other friendly folk who go along - yes, the legendary Beacon lunches are returning (11am - 1pm Thursdays)! Contact Carol if you want to meet up there.

**North Berwick Rugby Club**: We're starting to use this wonderful space on a Tuesday for team meetings, volunteer training, planning, and more. It's handy for the Glen, Lime Grove, Lochbridge Rd, Tantallon Court, etc.





Fantastic night at October's Music Night

#### **Volunteer Induction/Refresher Training**

All volunteers, both new and vintage, are warmly invited to our **Volunteer Zoom Training on Thursday 11 November, 6.30-7.30 pm.** This replaces our monthly gathering for now - so many new things are happening and we want to help you find the right fit for your involvement. At this and future training, we'll update you on our latest plans, refresh your knowledge/introduce you to our guidelines on how to maximise opportunities for local engagement and friendships for our members - while keeping everyone safe.

#### Is Dirleton's Market on the Green a Covid Recovery Project?

This time last year many of the activities that Dirleton Good Neighbours had been involved in could not happen. We could not hold our popular monthly Lunch Hub, exercise classes, and group walks, were not happening and any indoor meet-ups involved 'bubbles'.



But some outdoor events were happening, and the Haddington Farmer's

Market was taking place and became a model for a cautious attempt at a Christmas Market in the back courtyard of the Castle Inn. We consulted with the Council who were very supportive but also very firm on what could and could not be done. A village resident offered their Shetland pony for children to pat, but this was ruled out as creating 'an event' rather than a market. But we went ahead with lots of sanitiser, a one-way system and strict distancing. It rained and by the end, visitors and stallholders were cold and soggy but also so happy to have been able to get out and about and see each other again. So a very positive start!

Emboldened by this success, we set up a Steering Group to create Dirleton Market on the Green, applied successfully for a grant from Scotland Love Local, and started an obsession with gazebos. Dirleton is blessed with a beautiful village Green and our plans centred on using this space for the Market. Our Kirk Hall is quite small and has been shut by Covid until very recently. But Scottish weather is not often very kind and so our stallholders on the Green need shelter. We were able to borrow some gazebos belonging to our local Fete and Games but these were lightweight and always in danger of taking off Mary Poppins style with a stallholder beneath or providing an unexpected shower bath if it rained. So over this year and three Markets so far, and two more planned in the run-up to Christmas, we have gradually managed to bring together a full complement of sturdy, weather-proof gazebos with grant support from the Area Partnership and the Lottery.

This means we can now concentrate on developing the community aspects of Dirleton Market on the Green. From the beginning, we have encouraged local organisations to take a stall for fundraising, and we are very proud of the support we have been able to give them and the significant amounts they have raised for their causes. But a Market depends on its visitors and they want to come and be tempted to spend money. Our emphasis here is very much on local businesses and supporting those who are starting out. It has been gratifying to see small businesses that started up in lockdown, blossom and develop in confidence in our Markets. We also want to involve all generations of our community in the Market. Last time, our local farmer donated a wooden skip of potatoes, and children from the primary school created an impressive marketing opportunity selling these to visitors. They loved their involvement. We plan to extend this into helping them make a social enterprise using the apples from their own orchard in Dirleton.

So do come along before Christmas – Sunday November 7<sup>th</sup> for mostly gifts, and December 12<sup>th</sup> with an emphasis on festive food and drink.

- Anne Orr, on behalf of the Steering Group, Dirleton Market on the Green.



I saw the Bass Rock today Sits in the Forth No movement Boats sail by And the sky The sky all day

Everyday different
A painted picture of beauty
My duty to report
What I see only me walking the golf course
The sea never stops passing by.

- A poem by Cilya 20/7/19

In Carol's article, she mentions how excited we are to have the Compassionate Community objectives included in the Community Connections lottery bid. The success of the bid means that the work will be sustainable and integrated into Community Connections.

The work around death, dying, and grief started in North Berwick in 2015 with a small event for Absent Friends week. We showed a film called 'Seven Songs for a Long Life.' In 2019 we submitted a proposal to become one of the five Compassionate Communities in Scotland.

My involvement in dying, death and grief has been shaped by a number of issues: personal loss, working as а volunteer bereavement counsellor, conducting research in ICU where the nurses felt it was for some people the wrong place to die when the prognosis was inevitable. I also remember a TED talk where a woman regretted spending so much energy trying to find a cure for her husband that she forgot to say goodbye to him and to prepare herself and her family for his dying process. The over-medicalisation of dying has led us to forget many of the traditions and skills that our grandmothers would have known to be able to support someone with the issues they face relating to death, dying, and bereavement. Of course, we value pain relief and good medical and nursing care but

we have perhaps forgotten how to just be alongside someone with non-medical support and care. We have a real chance in North Berwick to become a community that is confident and more comfortable about talking to and supporting each other with issues we will all face during dying, death, and bereavement.

2021 has been a very busy year for the North Berwick Compassionate Community project. If you remember our project had two key threads: the Big Conversation Thread and the Support Thread.

#### The Big Conversation Thread

At the end of last year, we decided to experiment with Armchair Chats on zoom with the intention of creating a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere whereby people could chat from their armchairs during the winter evenings. We arranged for four chats once a month. In February we provided the community with an update on the project and entertained people with poetry and music. The use of poetry and prose and music was really effective in creating an atmosphere that supported the deep chats about difficult issues by providing some light Although, often the readings and poetry also focused on the topics of death and dying and grief, it was uplifting. Once we had discovered this format we used it for every Armchair Chat. The Armchair Chats led us into the Fringe by the Sea events. We were thrilled by the



attendance. Alongside these events, we held an emotional and

wellbeing master class led by Alan Mclean, and a local art group pARTicipate supported us by making an art display in the old phone box.



#### **Support Thread**

This was the part of the project that we felt was going to be the most challenging. But by chance, St Columba's Hospice was developing Compassionate а Neighbour project and we negotiated to be one of the pilot areas. Compassionate Neighbours offer support to those facing a lifelimiting illness and offer the practical and emotional support that a good neighbour might offer. Currently, six local people have been trained by the hospice and they have also undertaken the EASE training (End of Life Skills for Everyone). Two of the core group became EASE training facilitators and ran the local course for North Berwick. The training is designed to enable people to be more comfortable and confident supporting family and community members with issues they face during death, dying, and grief.

- Dr Deborah Ritchie









# **November Wildlife Watch by Ruth Fraser**

There might be a chill in the air now, however there's certainly still a lot of wildlife to look out for during the month of November...

#### **Grey seals**



Most animals raise their young in the spring, but grey seals give birth in the late-autumn and winter. After a summer of catching fish, the females are in great shape to feed their young. Pups are born with soft white fur, an adaptation from the ice age when they would have been born on snow! The Scottish Seabird Centre recently caught amazing footage of a pup being born on Craigleith! They remain on land, where their mothers feed them, for up to 21 days. The milk consists of 60% fat, so pups grow very quickly, gaining about 2kg in weight each day.

#### **Oystercatchers**



Oystercatchers are a great shore bird to spot all year round, with their distinctive black and white colouration, long legs and striking orange bills. Here in the UK, the main diet of the oystercatcher seldom involves oysters! They predominantly eat cockles and mussels. Look out for them in groups along the shoreline.

Wildlife Anagrams

DRADE

THAHEER

URSEGO

**FBUINLCLH** 

FCISUTEHTL

(answers on page 11)

Scottish

Get snapping: please send any photos of November wildlife you capture, for us to share in the December edition.

#### Scottish Seabird Centre Events - book via website www.seabird.org/events

#### Film Screening

Sunday 14 November 2021, 4 pm to 6 pm. £6, Suitable for age 8+

A stunning new archive documentary, directed by Emily Munro, looks for the roots of the climate crisis in Scotland's post-war history.



Friday 5 November, 10 am to 11.30 am, £7.50. Suitable for adults, age 16+ Join our Conservation Officer for a relaxing 1-hour wildlife walk along the coast to find out more about the seabirds, shorebirds, and cetaceans that can be spotted during the summer and autumn months. Then head into our Learning Hub for a talk about climate change and how this is impacting marine wildlife, habitats, and communities around the world.



#### **Coastal Wildlife Walk**

Friday 26 November, 11 am to 12.30 pm, free but booking essential.

Join our Conservation Officer for a relaxing 1.5-hour wildlife walk along the coast to find out more about the seabirds, shorebirds, and cetaceans that can be spotted around Scotland.



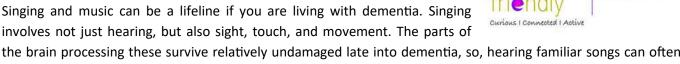
Those of you who attended the Scone Café before lockdown will remember Sarah Findlay, if not by name, then by sight. I am sorry to tell you that she died on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> September. She had been having a series of falls



for no reason the doctors could discover, and latterly was breaking bones in her falls, so she was in considerable pain. She was such a lively, cheerful and friendly member of the Scone Café, which she attended regularly almost from its outset, so I am sure you will have some happy memories of her company. For me, she was a very good friend, and we did everything together after she came to North Berwick in March 2019 — so I am sad for my loss, but happy for her release. I dreamed that she came and told me how happy she was in heaven, with her husband and her parents, and old friends. I am sure that is true, and I thank the Lord for it, so I look forward to meeting her again one day.

- Barbara Reid

# A Truly Memorable Seaside Song





bring feelings and memories to life as vividly as ever.

Since March 2021 Dementia Friendly Fast Lothian (DEFL) has been delivering a singing project for residents within

Since March 2021 Dementia Friendly East Lothian (DFEL) has been delivering a singing project for residents within care homes, sheltered housing, and the wider community; financially supported by the North Berwick Trust with gifts-in-kind from professional organisations.

On a monthly basis, local performers sang six well-known songs, around a timely theme, professionally recorded, edited, and uploaded onto our YouTube channel, with song sheets provided. A full package of singing entertainment is available at any time of the day or night. We had six performances in total, ending with, what can only be described as, 'A Truly Memorable Seaside Song'.



So, what makes a truly memorable seaside song? The short answer is that the lyrics of the song are **quite literally** from the memories that we gathered from the North Berwick community, residents of care homes, and the North Berwick Day Centre. We approached care and sheltered housing facilities to ask their activity coordinator or house manager to engage with the residents and ask them to share their memories of the sea and the seaside. This project was very successful in two ways. It gave a focus for those in care settings and it allowed everyone to go back to those early memories of the seaside. We collected beautiful stories and even some poetry.

We then engaged with a local songwriter, Penny Stone, who took all the stories and memories and curated a song, which is a beautiful melody created to be part of the singalong programme. The song has two versions; in the first Penny teaches the chorus and one verse, and the second the full song with three verses and a chorus.

All our performances were fabulous, and the truly memorable seaside song is especially touching because it came from our community. Please share this song as widely as possible.

Link to songs – <a href="https://www.celebrating-communities.org/seaside-singers">https://www.celebrating-communities.org/seaside-singers</a>
Link to DFEL – <a href="Dementia Friendly – Curious">Dementia Friendly – Curious</a>, <a href="Connected">Connected</a>, <a href="Active (dfel.org.uk)</a>
Link to Penny Stone – <a href="Penny Stone">Penny Stone – Sing Louder Than Guns</a>

# The Herbert Protocol - Important Information

What is the Herbert Protocol?

The protocol is a form which family members or carers complete for a person living with dementia or at risk of going missing. The form is available to download from Police Scotland's website:

https://www.scotland.police.uk/what-s-happening/missing-persons/the-herbert-protocol/



It provides personal details, medical history, significant locations and information about previous incidents of going missing.

The protocol can be printed out and stored in a safe, easily accessible place in the person's home or kept by a family member electronically. It is important to keep the protocol updated. It enables police officers to quickly obtain vital information about vulnerable people who have been reported missing.

Since 2017 the Herbert Protocol has been used many times to help police and other agencies quickly and safely locate missing people who have dementia. The scheme was rolled out nationwide on 21st September, 2021.

# **New Way To Avoid Financial Fraud**

A new way to avoid financial fraud has just been launched. A secure and easy-to-remember phone number to contact your bank on in order to avoid painful scams. This could prove to be the safest way for many to contact with your provider if you have suspicions and concerns about your accounts, or even if you are struggling to find a customer services number.

Stop Scams UK and Global Cyber Alliance have launched the UK-wide 159 call service, which is designed to guarantee consumers a safe route to contacting their banks. The scheme is urging people to "stop, hang up and call 159" to check calls are for real. The idea is to help those who believe they have been contacted by scammers claiming to be their bank, or by fraudsters who encourage them to transfer money.

#### Call 159 if you encounter the following:

- Someone contacts you claiming to be from your bank even if they do not seem suspicious.
- You are contacted by someone claiming to be an authority figure (such as the police) and told to transfer money – even if the request seems genuine.
- You receive a call about a financial matter and it appears suspicious.



We have had a very busy, but exciting month, here at NBYP. Some of the highlights include planning for our October Holiday Programme and speaking at the National Youth Work Conference.

We ran our October Holiday Programme for S1-S6 pupils which included a fun-filled week of different activities,



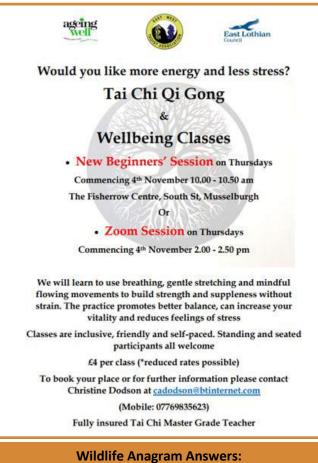
#### **NORTH BERWICK YOUTH PROJECT**

such as a trip to Edinburgh Dungeons, a tour of the spooky Vaults in Edinburgh, a cinema trip, baking and movie day, and an arts and crafts day where we also visited Fingers and Thumbs for some pottery painting. Both staff and young people really enjoyed the holiday programme!



Lauren, Project Manager, and Beth, lead youth worker, were invited to speak at the National Youth Work Conference 2021: Our Climate Emergency – Youth Work's Role in Climate Justice for People and Planet. They co-delivered an online workshop with Amy Calder from YouthLink Scotland. This workshop was based around a Youth-led project, 'On Our Wave Length', that ran at NBYP pre-COVID-19. Lauren and Beth spoke about running the project, as well as the benefits and challenges, the impact this had on the young people, and working in partnership with organisations such as The Scottish Seabird Centre and Greenpeace.





Adder Heather Grouse Bullfinch Cuttlefish

# North Berwick Coastal Community Connections - our current services

In other thrilling news, we are proud to announce that our very own **Community Connection website** is to be launched in November. We are working with Andy Goodall of New Media Bureau to create an accessible, engaging site that will allow web users to get in touch with us, make referrals, apply to be volunteers and find out the latest news and events. Soon after that, we will even venture onto our own social media - don't say we're not cutting edge! See you there on: www.nbc-communityconnections.org



Community Connections can meet you for coffee, chum you along on a walk and help you make the most of your days this Autumn - in a Covid-safe but very companionable way! Time to venture back to the cafe and reconnect with others, or make new friends? Say the word and we can help. Just contact Carol or Lisa if you'd like some more company, conversations and connections in your life.

#### Current Services Offered:

- \* Volunteer Befriending
- \* Buddy Walks
- \* Coffee Connections
- \* Monthly newsletter
- \* Scone Café drop-in

#### For Befriending or Buddy Walks services:

Contact **Lisa Brownlie**, Befriending Coordinator on Tuesday or Wednesday mornings
Telephone 07862 694842

Email: befrienders@nbc-communityconnections.org

For Gatherings, Coffee Connections, Scone Cafe and drop-ins. Partnership activities and outreach, monthly newsletter subscriptions and Volunteer applications:

Contact Carol Stobie, Project Officer

Telephone 07940 203380

Email: nbc-communityconnections@outlook.co.uk









North Berwick Coastal Community Connections has been funded by the North Berwick Coastal Area Partnership, National Lottery Community Fund, North Berwick Trust & East Lothian Council.



#### December newsletter content request...

We welcome a range of content so please share your stories, your own photos, hobbies, news, as well as any events taking place across North Berwick and the Coastal Villages. Please email Ruth at **newsletter@nbc-communityconnections.org**by the 17<sup>th</sup> of November. Thank you.

Life is a journey to be experienced, not a problem to be solved."

- Winnie The Pooh