



Community Connections

North Berwick Coastal

February 2022

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

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

One of the February birth flowers is the violet, which is a symbol of faithfulness, purity, and goodness.



'Wolf Moon and Bass Rock' by Ruth Fraser

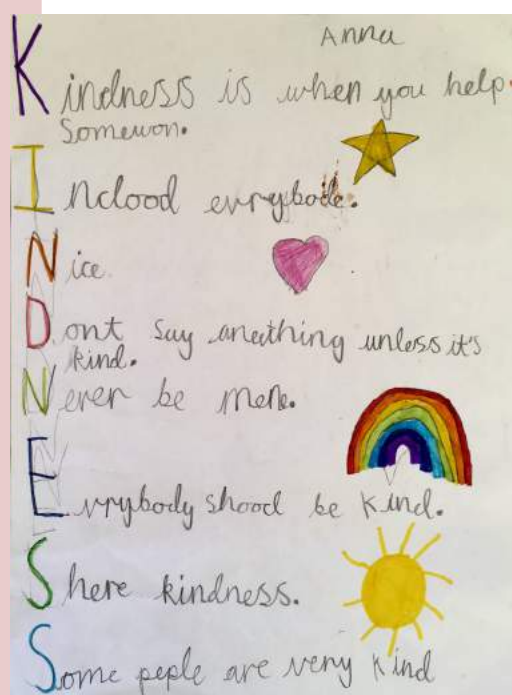
A little kindness goes a long way.

Let's make February a month of kindness. Kindness has never been more needed than it is now. It has been a tough last two years, during which we experienced challenges unlike those we'd ever faced before. As we get through it, it's important to look after each other and ourselves. It doesn't have to be much. As Captain Sir Tom Moore said, something as little as a smile can make a huge difference.

And we feel good when we help others. Scientific research on the biochemistry of the brain shows that a good deed increases the level of dopamine in our brain, which leads to a feeling of elevation. This is why kindness increases our happiness level. Kindness is also contagious, it creates a ripple effect. That's what the 17th of February is all about: **Random Acts of Kindness Day**, a day to celebrate and encourage random acts of kindness. From writing a letter to an old friend or baking some biscuits for a neighbour, to helping someone with their food shopping or picking up some rubbish from the beach. Just a day to celebrate kindness and things that makes us happy.

I was recently going through a box I found in the back of the wardrobe and found this drawing my daughter drew years ago. It made me smile and thought I would share it with you.

- Ruth Fraser



Halfway to Spring, and the Time of Kindness

This month I'll be celebrating [Random Acts of Kindness Day](#) on February 17th. No, not one of my usual folklore-y ones. It's a modern invention - and why not?

But first, I can't resist a reference to earlier times and practices. You may have heard of Candlemas (2nd February) when all church candles were traditionally gathered and blessed; the halfway point between the Winter Solstice and Spring Equinox. Centuries ago, I might have been allowed to carry on celebrating the Christmas season right up to now (still would if I had my way), but modern work practices cruelly dictate the dismantling of my decorations by Epiphany (6th January). I see our orphaned Christmas trees will not be uplifted until 3rd February, so perhaps East Lothian Council's recycling services also observe ancient folkloric rituals.

But have you heard of Imbolc, one of the Celtic quarter years formerly celebrated on 1st February and dedicated to St Bride, originally an ancient fertility goddess? You might not see a lot of corn dolly-making in tribute to Bride, or folk leaping over bonfires to purify themselves, this week around North Berwick, but I did attend one or two fire-festivities in Edinburgh some decades ago - including some very colourful goings-on. If you care for a wee ritual to celebrate this moment

and the lengthening of the days, it is traditional around sunset on Imbolc to light every lamp in the house, even for a few moments. Or you could light candles to honour the Sun's rebirth. Or you could sweep the house (not my thing).

But now for Random Acts of Kindness day - it's an opportunity to 'make kindness the norm', so think about how you too could celebrate. You could even become a RAKtivist, which is short for 'Random Acts of Kindness activist'. The idea is primarily to perform an unexpected little kindness, such as leaving a kind note for the waiter who served you (not instead of a tip!) or sending someone a wee chocolate bar or a Good Morning text - you can find inspiration on the website, or make up your own.

My kindness ritual this month is to compile a PowerPoint of vintage photos, culled and scanned from 40 years of friendship with a dear old pal who just turned 60. Not so random - in fact, an exhausting if absorbing trawl through over 120 (yep!) crumbling photo albums. But will be worth it to honour someone infinitely kinder than I am, who has blessed my life.

Happy Candlemas, Happy Imbolc and Happy Random Acts of Kindness Day to you all. Let's celebrate kindness together at Coffee Connections and (from 2nd March) the Return of Scone Café!

- Carol Stobie (Project Manager)



"Carry out a random act of kindness, with no expectation of reward, safe in the knowledge that one day someone might do the same for you."

- Princess Diana





The new Community Connections Team get to know each other's hobbies

'Throw kindness around like confetti'

Befriending Update - Lisa Brownlie

It's kindness month this month, and this got me thinking about how I can be kind to myself. It's so important to do this to help us support and be kind to others and it's something I am guilty of not doing. So in January, I decided to take on the 30 days of yoga challenge, in a bid to be kind to myself! I have been doing between 20 – 30 minutes of yoga a day, with the exception of a couple of days. I have felt great, I have had more energy, felt calmer, and maybe more flexible.

Until I thought I could do anything. I decided to do some gymnastics with my 7-year-old daughter. Thinking I was a yoga guru I decided to do a forward roll only to be met with a VERY sore neck!!! As much as I have loved doing my yoga practice, I have a long way to go before I am as flexible as my daughter! And will continue with my practice and to be kind to myself.



Things to look forward to in 2022

* New movies

Big hits include The Batman, Top Gun: Maverick, Avatar 2, and many more.

* Doctor Who

Jodie Whittaker will finally hand over the Doctor Who role to a new actor – but who could it be?

* Red Nova

For the first time in decades a luminous nova will be viewable with the naked eye. The red nova is the result of two stars with such close orbits merging together, releasing extraordinary magnitudes of energy, along with infrared and visible light.

* Personal milestones

It's not just the big things we should be looking forward to – personal milestones are often ones that will really make a difference. Anything that gives you joy, like the release of a new book, a walk in the sunshine, or a visit from a friend, is worth getting excited about.

NBCCC Chosen As Local Good Cause by the Co-op

NBCCC is pleased to have been chosen as one of the three good causes to be supported by customers in this area in the period to 22 October 2022.

If you are a Co-op customer and have a Co-op card, you can access your account and nominate us to receive a contribution from the Co-op for every purchase you make. If you do not already have a Co-op card, why not apply for one (they are free) and then nominate NBCCC as your good cause for this year?

The North Berwick Co-op food store on the High Street has a screen behind the tills on which details of each of the three good causes for the year are promoted.

The funds we receive from this initiative will be used to support food-related initiatives which we are planning.



Tiger Power



Chinese New Year or Lunar New Year 2022 will fall on Tuesday, February 1st, starting a year of the Tiger. The zodiac sign Tiger is a symbol of strength and braveness. Many Chinese children wear hats or shoes with a tiger image for good luck.

The tiger is the second of the 12-year cycle of animals in Chinese astrology. The order of the years of zodiac signs is thought to be based on a folk tale known as the Great Race. The story goes that the animals raced each other to be the first to reach the Jade Emperor, so the years are named in the order in which they finished the race. The Rat is thought to have won by

hitching a ride on the Ox's back and jumping off at the last minute. According to the Chinese zodiac, there are both positive and negative characteristics. Tigers' positive qualities include being kind, adventurous, and enthusiastic. Their negative attributes can include being short-tempered and anxious.

If you are born in the following years, your zodiac sign is the tiger: 1926, 1938, 1950, 1962, 1974, 1986, 1998, 2010, 2022.



Archerfield Walled Garden Junior Parkrun

A junior Parkrun is only 2km long and is for children and young people from the age of 4-14 years. It's a run/race that takes part every Sunday morning at 9:30am. It is completely free but relies on volunteers. Our very first Junior Parkrun will be on Sunday 6th March, but we do have a trial run (invitation to runners only) on 20th February. If anyone is interested in finding out more about volunteering, please contact Penny Laurie-Pile: email pennylaurie-pile@live.co.uk or phone 07795 623776



Acts of Kindness

On the 18th of January, I was walking, with my rollator/walker, along the beach side of Forth Street to go to Coffee Connections at the Seabird Centre. As you may know, there are several cobbled lanes leading down to the beach and they are hard going for the walker. On the last one, the left-hand wheels suddenly buckled and turned sideways, so that the flat side of the wheels were on the ground and the walker was tilted. Fortunately, I didn't fall, so I dragged the walker onto Victoria Road hoping that someone at the Seabird Centre would be able to fix it for me. I soon realised that I couldn't drag it that far so I tried to fix it myself - and immediately every passer-by stopped and offered help. Soon half a dozen people had come to my assistance. One young man was able to get the wheels straight again, but it still wasn't right because I couldn't get all four wheels on the ground. Then a lady examined it carefully and said "I think THAT should fit in THERE!" - it did, and then it all worked as it should, and I was able to continue on my way to the Seabird Centre. It has been fine ever since! Very many thanks to all those willing people, especially the successful one!

- Barbara Reid

"No one has ever become poor by giving."

- Anne Frank



Winter Whereabouts - Scottish Seabird Centre

Northern Gannet

The gannets from the Bass Rock have diverse migratory behaviours, spending the winter months feeding in a range of locations from the North Sea down to West Africa. However, they're not away from Scotland for long - from February onwards they return to key breeding sites around the coast, including the Bass Rock which is the world's largest colony of Northern gannets.



Photo: Gannets Diving © Stewart Mcpherson, Darwin 200

Atlantic Puffin

Right now, the vast majority of the puffins that breed in the Firth of Forth during the summer, are far out at sea in the North Atlantic and Arctic Ocean. They're superbly adapted to life on the open water and use the winter to feed on fish and marine invertebrates, diving from the surface and using their wings to expertly propel themselves through the water. Head down to the Seabird Centre Discovery Experience to find out more about these amazing seabirds.



Photo © Nicol Nicolson

Arctic Tern

Right now, many of our East Coast breeding Arctic terns will be feeding off the pack-ice in the Antarctic or even further away, beyond New Zealand in the southern oceans.

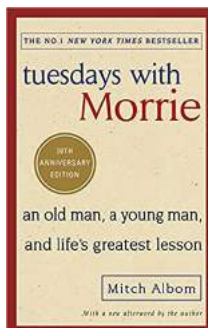
This incredible bird (which weighs around 100g) holds the record for the longest migration of any animal on earth, travelling between 44,000-59,000 miles every single year!



Photo © Susan Davies

Well, the theme for this month's newsletter couldn't be more apt for me. On the 12th of January while dancing to 'Nutbush City Limits' by Tina Turner, I found myself on the floor! My Achilles tendon had ruptured. I knew immediately what had happened. I had done the same thing twenty years ago, dancing again, but to a different song and a different leg. So my world has narrowed over the past three weeks to being housebound unless taken out for a drive. But in this bubble of a reduced life, I am surrounded by the small acts of kindness of friends and family. At first, I was too shocked to have much energy to see people but the emails and messages and Facetime chats have made all the difference as I have begun to emerge. I know many people reading this will face the challenges of being housebound on a daily basis and my short-term incapacity and dependence upon others will end in a few months. So I know I am preaching to the choir, as I bet you already know what wisdom and kindness you need to enhance your daily life. Of course, I have had plenty of time to read, and after our last North Berwick Compassionate Neighbours' meeting, we agreed to read 'Tuesdays with Morrie' by Mitch Albom. It is an account of an old man's wisdom being shared with a younger man. They talk about so many things: regrets, feeling sorry for yourself, death, the world, family, emotions, fear of aging, marriage, forgiveness, and the

perfect day. It made me think about what is, or would be, my perfect day? In the book the perfect day is full of simple things; a good breakfast followed by a swim and then having friends over for a nice lunch and to be able to talk about their lives and how much they meant to him. He would then go for a walk in the garden and watch the birds and the trees and take in nature. In the evening, it would be a restaurant meal and dancing with wonderful dance partners until exhausted. And finally, he would fall into a wonderful deep sleep. As I mulled over his perfect day I concluded that my restful days while healing were pretty near perfect. I was doing all the things



I enjoyed: reading, knitting, drawing, and sitting in the garden on the sunny January mornings. It is true that my nights are so painful that a wonderful deep sleep had eluded me. But I have a daybed to have naps on and can watch the outside world come into my dining room. These perfect days of healing have been filled with love and small acts of kindness. In the book, the overwhelming message is so simple -what may seem an average day can turn into a perfect day of love and friendship. He also shares his belief that 'love is the only rational act. The most important thing in life is to learn how to give out love, and to let it come in.' (p52).

- Deborah Ritchie

Reference: Albom, M (1997) 'Tuesdays with Morrie' Sphere, Little brown Group

Spring Flowers

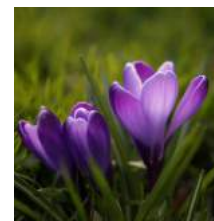
Q A F G A X B D L Q H L U V F
I U L Y K L B A J V E Q F I F
U C P B U G I L V Z L U L O D
N C G G Q M P E U F L T H L A
B C U G V B T G E E S H E F
N C O C B M R U Y Q B W U T F
E R P W K B B D A P O E K N O
G O T S S O L S V N R N L P D
X C W U M L O B N C E P W L I
O U E T L U I F L O U M D G L
X S I I Q I S P L L W S O O M
N Q K R D D P C Z O J D C N S
P F M I W P Q G A X W I R L E
X Z R S B G F O G R P E E O Q
W J V E C R R X A B I I R S P

cuckooflower
daffodil
anemone

hellebore
cowslip
tulip

snowdrop
muscari
violet

bluebell
crocus
iris



Five in a Row - They did it!

Team 'Five in a Row' crossed the finish line of the Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge on Monday 17th January at 10:27 local time. Ian Baird, Duncan Hughes, Ross McKinney, Fraser Potter, and Clive Rooney successfully rowed the 2550 nautical miles across the Atlantic Ocean in 36 days, 3 hours, and 33 minutes. The team rowed two



hours on and two hours off every day. They

had the honour to see minke and pilot whales, a pod of dolphins, and even a shark! They're absolutely delighted to have raised almost £50,000 so far for Reverse Rett, a small UK-based charity focused on medical research to help those who suffer from Rett Syndrome. If you would like to support the team, the Justgiving page is:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Ross-McKinney6>



Bar (cash only) Raffle Great prizes!

19.02.22

7-11pm

VENUE: ABERLADY BOWLING CLUB

Ticketed Event - Free entry. Booking required to secure your seat.
Please contact Samantha Gilhom by Facebook or Email: sammy_jo_me@hotmail.com



**Tai Chi
for beginners**

changes
POSITIVE ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

**Tuesday 8th February
1:30 pm – 2:30 pm**



To book your place or for further
information, please email
info@changeshp.org.uk
or call 0131 653 3977

"Sometimes it takes only one act of kindness
and caring to change a person's life."

– Jackie Chan



Amazing photo from Robina's garden!



Bouquet of Kindness - photo by Robina Brown

NEED A LIFT ?

Registered
Charity
SC 006385

Visit: nbvcs.com



Clients

Are you a resident in the North Berwick area, and find it difficult to travel to local services (eg to doctor, dentist, bank, shops), or to Haddington Community Hospital, or to Belhaven Hospital, Dunbar?

Just call Bex on 07536 388 753. We can provide transport for a return journey, door-to-door.

There are no formalities, just call between 9am and 12pm, Monday to Friday.

The more notice you give, the easier it is to arrange – our drivers are all local volunteers.

As examples, our suggested donation for a return trip within North Berwick is £6, and for a return trip from North Berwick to Haddington or Dunbar is £15.

Drivers

You are a driver and car owner with a little time to spare to help residents in the North Berwick area who would otherwise find it difficult to travel to local services.

Could you help our clients once a week (or more, or less frequently), purely as and when you are available?

The service covers journeys within the North Berwick area, and to Haddington and Dunbar hospitals only, and we can offer a mileage allowance for distance run per journey.

If you would like to discuss the possibility, then please call the number below.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Call: Scheme Co-ordinator Bex on 07536 388 753, between 9am and 12pm, Mon to Fri.
Email: nbvcarscheme@gmail.com Find us on: [facebook](#) Visit: nbvcs.com



NBVCS is a completely local, voluntary organisation, maintained through drivers' time, and clients' & others' donations.

Secretary: Hugh Trevor, 894924



Scottish Seabird Centre Events - book via website

www.seabird.org/events



Just a reminder that the Scottish Seabird Centre is open daily, from 10am to 4pm. We are participating in VisitScotland's Great Days Out campaign, allowing visitors to enjoy 50% off Discovery Experience entry over the winter season. (until 18 February). Or, simply enjoy coffee and a freshly baked scone in the Seabird café and enjoy the incredible views. Tickets for the Discovery Experience can be booked online www.seabird.org/discovery-experience.

For more information and booking, please see the Scottish Seabird Centre website: www.seabird.org/events or call 01620 890202:

Coastal Wildlife Walk

Friday 18 February, 9am - 10.30am



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. Everyone is welcome to ask questions, share their knowledge and experiences, or simply unwind and enjoy the wildlife.

Friendly, quiet dogs are welcome, but we ask that they are kept on a short lead throughout. These walks are for adults (16+) and cost £7.50 per person.

Live Music at the Scottish Seabird Centre

Tuesday 1 March, 7.30pm - 9.30pm



Join us for a fantastic evening of live jazz and rock classics, featuring an acoustic set with Bill Nisbet followed by a jazz quartet, Jazz Cafe. Refreshments will be available to buy at the Seabird cafe.

This is a fundraising event organised by the Scottish Seabird Centre volunteers in support of children's education and activities at the Scottish Seabird Centre. Tickets are £10.

Social Beach Clean

Saturday 4 March 2022, 11am - 12pm

Our beach clean walks primarily aim to remove marine debris from local beaches, whilst enjoying some amazing marine wildlife along the Firth of Forth shoreline with like-minded people. We will only collect what we can reasonably carry back to the centre, where the waste will be sorted, recorded, and disposed of (recycling where possible). In the event that there is only a small quantity of debris to collect, we may choose to undertake a citizen science survey (such as a nurdle hunt) and submit the data we collect to increase understanding of marine pollution and habitats. Friendly, quiet dogs are welcome, but we ask they are kept on a short lead throughout.

February Wildlife Watch by Ruth Fraser

During February, listen out for birds singing and look out for early spring flowers. With spring just around the corner, there's lots to see when we are out and about.

Lesser celandine



Lesser celandine is a small, perennial herb in the buttercup family. Look out for their friendly, yellow flowers on path edges in early spring. As one of the first flowers to appear after winter, they provide an important nectar source for queen bumblebees and other pollinators emerging from hibernation. Wordsworth's favourite wildflower wasn't the daffodil - it was in fact the lesser celandine. He wrote three poems about it: *The Small Celandine*, *To the Same Flower*, and *To the Small Celandine*.

Common blackbird



The blackbird is a common visitor to UK gardens and has adapted well to suburban areas. It is the most numerous breeding bird in the British Isles, with a population of around 6 million pairs. The male's song is a fluty, melodic whistle. They can sometimes be heard after dark, as birds sing under artificial light. In folklore, a blackbird nesting near your house is a sign of good fortune.

Wildlife Anagrams

M F D E L A S L Y

G F O R

P O Y P P

E K S R L E T

V R E A N

(answers on page 11)

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

"Kindness is like snow - it beautifies everything it covers." – Kahlil Gibran

North Berwick Youth Project Update

At NBYP, kindness, and friendship play a huge role. We have such a diverse group of young people that attend our sessions. The Youth Project gives them the space and the opportunity to build these friendships that may not have happened out with our groups.

During one of our Wednesday Drop-in sessions this month we focused on kindness and positivity. January can be a tough month after the festive period so we wanted to spread some happiness. The young people were given chalk pens to write inspirational messages on the window, this took a bit of getting used to as we had to write backwards!

They came up with some really lovely messages that you will be able to see if you walk past the Hope Rooms on your way to the beach.



What's On; coffees, lunches and training



Coffee Connections is Back!

Tuesdays 2-3pm at the Seabird Centre. Come and join our friendly group. If you can, let Lyndsey or Carol know if you are coming along.

Scone Café

To open again **2nd March!**



VOLUNTEER TRAINING COMING UP - APPLY NOW!

Our in-house Community Connections Volunteer Training runs on zoom this **Wednesday 2nd February** 10-11.30am, OR on **Thursday 3rd February**, 6.30-8pm. Meet other volunteers, find out all about our range of work and how we operate to keep everyone safe, discover opportunities to use your gifts, and develop your skills. We provide great self-study material and follow up with you to explore your questions a few weeks later, then get you started with full support and supervision. See our website to get involved, or call Carol on 07940 203380!

The Beacon is Back!



The Beacon provides an open door for chat and a light lunch to anybody and everybody looking for a bit of companionship or to meet up with friends.

Soup, sandwiches, and home baking are served by an army of volunteers every Thursday 11am - 1pm in **St Andrew Blackadder Church hall**. Proceeds were given to many local charities and groups. It is starting up again on **Thursday 3rd of February**.

Dirleton's Lunch Hub

We are delighted to announce the Lunch Hub will open its doors again on the **2nd February** in the Kirk Hall 12-2pm. With a selection of soups, bread, and cakes. If you would like to come please phone / or email me to book a time. Phone number 01620 850509

While the restrictions have eased we have retained the booking system to ensure that we are not overwhelmed by the number of people wanting to visit. We have removed the table service for bread and cakes, but we will still serve the tea / coffee. Looking forward to welcoming you back.

- The Lunch Hub Team

Gullane Scone Cafe

We are looking forward to reopening on the **5th February**, 10.30 am at the Gullane Day Centre. We will be happy to welcome new and old visitors for a chat, maybe a quiz, and delicious scones made by one of our volunteers. Come along and safely meet new and old faces, and learn more about the social life of Gullane. We are very careful with ventilation, distance, and hygiene. We will be open on alternate Saturdays from the 5th of February onwards. For more information ring Margaret McSorley on 07907 999967.

Wildlife Anagram Answers:

Damselfly Frog Poppy Kestrel Raven



The NBCCC team:

For general enquiries, newsletter subscriptions, or signing up for our activities, contact **Lyndsey Gdulewicz**, Administration and Communications Assistant, on 07915719342 (Tuesdays), or email: admin@nbc-communityconnections.org



For the following services, contact **Carol Stobie**, Project Manager, on 07940 203380 (Tuesday - Thursday) or email: nbc-communityconnections@outlook.co.uk

- Gatherings, Coffee Connections, Scone Café, and drop-ins
- Partnership activities and outreach
- Volunteer applications



For the following one-to-one services, contact **Lisa Brownlie**, Befriending Coordinator, on 07862 694842 (Tue or Wed morning) or email: befrienders@nbc-communityconnections.org

- Befriending (weekly calls or meet-ups with a volunteer)
- Buddy Walks (any length, any speed fine!) with a trained volunteer



For newsletter matters, contact **Ruth Fraser** at newsletter@nbc-communityconnections.org

- To send in contributions for the newsletter (we'd love your stories, pictures, recipes, quotes, letters, practically anything you'd like to share with other members!)
- Deadline for March newsletter: **18th February**



Current Services Offered:

- * Scone Café weekly drop-in (will resume on Wed 2nd March)
- * Coffee Connections at local cafes (resumed from 18th January)
- * Befriending calls or meet-ups
- * Buddy Walks
- * Chumming to local activities, when available
- * 'Community Connections' monthly newsletter

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.



*'No act of kindness,
no matter how small,
is ever wasted'*

- Aesop