

North Berwick Coastal Community Connections

Annual Review

2021-2022



North Berwick Coastal Community Connection

Annual Review 2021-22

CONTENTS

1. Co-Chairs' Foreword
2. Project Manager's Report
3. Compassionate Neighbours Coordinator's Report

Appendix 1: Community Connections Newsletter



CO-CHAIR'S FOREWORD

The Covid 19 pandemic continued to have an impact on the activities of North Berwick Coastal Community Connections for much of the year under review, affecting both members and volunteers.

Despite that, the charity was able to continue its development and saw a welcome increase in the number of volunteers supporting its work which enabled us to support more members.

Highlights of the year include:

- A successful application for funding from the National Lottery Community Fund which will support our work for a three-year period from 1 October 2021;
- A further increase in the size of our small staff team with the appointment of our Administration and Communications Assistant, Lyndsey Gdulewicz in January 2022;
- The extension of the project to encompass the work of Compassionate Neighbours which seeks to support individuals and their families where there has been a terminal diagnosis, and the appointment of Charli Prime as Compassionate Neighbours Coordinator in February 2022;
- Recognition by the local Co-op as one of the three charities which customers could support every time they used their Co-op card when making a purchase. The funds raised will be used to support a food-related initiative in the near future.
- The successful launch of our website and the continued publication of our monthly Newsletter;
- The continued development of our popular Scone Café, with the addition of Scone Walks providing short periods of exercise for participants;
- Funding from North Berwick Trust to focus support around improving mental health.

NBCCC is grateful to our funding organisations for all their support and our thanks are extended to the dedicated staff team of Carol (Project Manager), Lisa (Befriending Coordinator), Lyndsey (Administration and Communications Assistant), Charli (Compassionate Neighbours Coordinator) and Ruth (Newsletter Editor). Our thanks are also due to the Board of Trustees who have worked hard to support the project over the year.

There is no doubt that there is still a need for NBCCC as it addresses social isolation and loneliness in the North Berwick Coastal Ward, and we look forward to continuing our work in the year ahead.



Robert Burgon and Donna McArdle, Co-Chairs

PROJECT MANAGER'S REPORT

– Carol Stobie

Part One – Looking back

What have we done in the last year?

- Community Connections is growing and stronger than ever
- We have gained three years' funding from the National Lottery Community Fund and two years' funding from the North Berwick Trust We've reached far more clients (currently over 100), supported by Scone Café, Coffee Connections, our monthly newsletter, Scone Walking, Befriending and Buddy Walking
- We further strengthened our volunteer team (over 40), with two rounds of volunteer training this year, and continue to convert members into volunteers!
- We've strengthened the team with our new Administration and Communications Assistant, Lyndsey, and Compassionate Neighbours Coordinator, Charli - joining Carol, Lisa, and Ruth
- We've launched the pioneering Compassionate Neighbours Project in partnership with North Berwick Compassionate Communities and St Columba's Hospice, including recruiting Coordinator Charli plus six CN volunteers training to befriend people with a life-limiting diagnosis
- Scone Café has returned to the Abbey Church hall and is flourishing, with record numbers of new self-referrals and many friendships made
- Befriending and Buddy Walks continue to support members to get out into the world again
- We launched a new group walk, Scone Walking, which happens within Scone Café time on Wednesdays and encourages those just getting back into the walking habit to do so in good company on a very gentle stroll down Elcho Green
- Coffee Connections activities keep members and volunteers connected, from our gathering at the Seabird Centre on Tuesdays to one-to-one café dates.
- Our villages links remain strong - sister Scone Cafes in Aberlady and Gullane are doing well and allow for mutual referrals. These are run by local volunteers independently of us, but who trained as NBCCC volunteers and were inspired by our model!
- Our new website and Facebook page have launched, reaching many more potential connections, and enabling online referrals, enquiries, and volunteer applications
- Our monthly newsletter reaches far and wide, cheering and informing all our supporters, and connecting them to many other local activities
- We're launching a new Stronger Connections project to support members' and volunteers' mental well-being. New funding from the North Berwick Trust allows us additional staff time for more complex referrals and volunteer support, liaising with other agencies and supporting new peer support groups to come to North Berwick: look out for the launch of Andy's Man Club, Sporting Memories, Keep the Heid Mental Health Café and future bereavement and family support initiatives.



How have we involved people in developing and delivering our activities?

Volunteer involvement: We involve volunteers and encourage their input through our regular Board meetings, volunteer meetings and training opportunities, regular emails, WhatsApp groups, newsletter, support and supervision one-to-ones, and evaluations.

Member involvement: Through our gatherings, newsletter, social media, evaluation surveys, and other communications, our members are encouraged to feedback and make suggestions to shape the project from the start. Each year, several members make the transition to become volunteers, especially at Scone Café and Coffee Connections. Our newsletter showcases their interests and widens opportunities for involvement.

Results of our recent evaluation survey continue to show that nearly all members and volunteers feel ‘very supported’ by the project.

Supporters and Networks involvement: we are rebuilding our networks in new ways this year, shaped by recent events and by our experience of changes in referrals and support needs of our members and volunteers. We have reached out to build more practical collaborations to help bring more people out into the community and plan to create a Reconnection Conversation event based on the results of our initial efforts. We reach over 200 with our newsletter.



How have we built on people’s strengths?

Volunteers’ strengths – we’ve added to our already remarkable team of skilled and experienced volunteers, incorporating their perspectives, and encouraging their confidence to step up and lead on Coffee Connections and Scone Café while staff move into the background for support only when needed. Their feedback has helped develop our training and we now operate both face-to-face and virtual meetings with greater ease, helping volunteers learn these skills too. They do chumming and seasonal campaigns, suggest new links for us to follow up and often step up to become the liaison with new local initiatives.

Members’ strengths: many this year made the transition to become volunteers, initially welcoming and networking at Scone Café and Coffee Connections. Members have taught us a lot about the value and effectiveness of peer support to improve mental and physical health. We will build this into our new Stronger Connections Project. Their contributions and creative ideas have helped shape our newsletters, funding applications, and other communications.



What connections have we had with other organisations?

We continue to collaborate with key agencies and organisations to:

- generate reciprocal referrals and awareness of community assets
- complement each other's work and identify gaps
- create joint activities
- maximise inclusion and welcome
- strengthen connections that benefit our members' well-being

Outcomes of our collaborations include:

- rediscovering confidence to go out and into new places
- reviving forgotten skills, enthusiasm, purpose
- rebuilding strength post-falls etc
- safely tackling new challenges
- developing new resilience after setbacks and loss
- some members becoming volunteers for NBCCC or other groups



Collaborations in 2021-22:

- Compassionate Communities – together we have obtained funding and launched the new Compassionate Neighbours project (see separate section), recruiting and training volunteers to support those facing terminal diagnosis/bereavement - now matching with nominees
- Local Churches – talks, promotions, referrals, facilities use; our weekly drop-in Scone Café (thanks to the kindness of Abbey Church); drop-in mornings for members to see staff at St Andrew Blackadder

- Beacon Community Lunches – our regular table here at these accessible home-made meals (optional donation) has become another point of contact for building up social confidence among members and volunteers
- NB Pipe Band Tunes and Songs Nights – up to 12 members and volunteers attend each month, joining in with singing, playing or just listening; one member has as a result performed on the open Stage at Fringe by the Sea festival, a huge development in her confidence and healing journey
- North Berwick Volunteer Car Scheme - we have formed a regular arrangement offering weekly lifts to those with limited mobility, to access our Scone Café
- Ageing Well – collaboration on promoting walks, swimming, tea dances and other activities
- Paths for All – gaining walks training/ insurance cover for more of our volunteers
- Bass Rock volunteers – continuing to work with the initiators of our Christmas treats campaign
- Law Quilters - we work together to identify project members to receive specially handmade quilts at Christmas
- Outreach village work (various coastal groups) – supporting and signposting to similar initiatives tackling isolation – independent, volunteer-run Scone Cafes now run in Gullane and Aberlady, inspired by our original model!
- We Are With You/Community Links (based NB and Gullane Surgery) – meeting CL Worker weekly, generating many new referrals of patients who would benefit from our services
- North Berwick Day Centre – crossover and collaboration for signposting to their new outreach service
- Scottish Seabird Centre – the café accommodates our weekly Coffee Connections, to renew social connections and confidence among members
- North Berwick Health and Wellbeing Association – meetings, mutual support, spreading of awareness, contributing to initiatives such as East Lothian Walking Festival.



How many members have taken part in our activities?

We have had 37 new referrals for one-to-one services in the past year, plus 22 new self-referred participants in Scone Café only, with 6 of these taking part in the new Scone Walking group walk. Taking in those members with whom we continue to work, and after recent discharges of those no longer requiring our services, our total number of current members is 93. We have worked with well over 100 during the past year. Some are signposted or referred elsewhere for more appropriate services or 'chummed' /supported into new community activities such as North Berwick Tunes and Songs.

How many volunteers have taken part in our activities?

Our active volunteers currently number 42, soon to be joined by 7 newly trained.

Volunteer Involvement: Our Community Connectors

At the heart of our work is an exceptional team of volunteers, with over 40 actively supporting our members and some others resting but intending to return at some stage. They volunteer in activities ranging from Scone Café to one-to-one services, admin support, seasonal help, and Trustee roles. We plan to reintroduce a new version of our Advisory Group early in 2023. As previously, each year we see several members transitioning into volunteer roles with their newfound confidence. Regular volunteer supervision and support, gatherings, and CPD training continue to be vital to our indispensable team.



Safeguarding

To ensure we protect the well-being of our members, volunteers, and staff team, we have worked to improve all our practices. We have delivered mandatory training on safeguarding and confidentiality to all new volunteers, this year introduced annual refresher training on these, and keep track of all those participating to ensure everyone understands and acts in accordance with our policies and procedures, which are all visible on our website. All our volunteers undergo full in-house training, Protection of Vulnerable Groups police checks, and reference checks, which must be completed before they can be matched with a member as Befriender or Buddy Walker.

Evaluation Quotes

'Makes me happy knowing I'm helping people in a practical way by helping give them something to look forward to every week - a happy, cheerful, and welcoming place with Dorothy's homemade scones. The buzz of conversations is just fantastic and always puts a smile on my face.'

– Scone Café volunteer

'Volunteering has made such a difference to my self-esteem. I now feel part of the community, not cut off by grief. I've made such good friends. It's lovely to feel useful and appreciated, and to be able to laugh again. Thanks to everyone who made that possible.'

– Scone Café volunteer

'A wonderful team of volunteers. This makes it easy for people who need a bit of support to come to Scone café, giving them the confidence to get out and socialise again. Brilliant idea.'

– Befriender volunteer

'Knowing that my small efforts are helping folk who value and appreciate what we do. The marvellous camaraderie amongst us and new friendships formed. Lots of laughter and fun. It's a privilege to be a member of NBCCC.'

– Befriender and Scone Café volunteer

'What I get out of volunteering is an ever-increasing enjoyment of meeting other folk and trying to engage with them for their benefit and mine.'

– Coffee Connections informal volunteer

'Helping other people to become fit and meet new people makes me happy.'

– Buddy Walker and Scone Walking leader

'I enjoy being a volunteer at Coffee Connections and Scone Cafe. I've met lots of lovely people and love hearing their stories and we always have a good laugh.'

– Scone Café and Coffee Connections volunteer

'I have been volunteering for nearly a year. As a buddy walker, I enjoy making a difference to someone's day through providing company and fresh air.'

– Buddy Walker

'I would also like to thank those involved in Community Connections who are doing a wonderful job – the magazine is full of such interesting facts and great photographs – please keep up the good work.'

– Project Member

'I admire P for the job she is doing – helping people in our community, especially at this time. Thank you, P, for all the help you have given me.'

– Project Member

'It is great to know that it is there if I get chatting to someone whom I know would benefit'

– NBCCC Supporter

'An open, friendly and engaging team'

– NBCCC Supporter

CASE STUDY 1

P's story as a Befriender/Buddy Walker

'When you start a journey, you think you know the destination or outcome, and when I became a Buddy Walker, I was still in that mindset. What fool me! On reflection, our initial bond was genuine, warm, easy (in a pleasing way), and conversation flowed. Our initial common interest was dogs, with my two little ones being made so welcome at 'R's', Ruffles and Joey racing to get out of the car to get a treat and a cuddle. As weeks and months have passed, we still talk dogs (a lot...) but we talk family, life, current affairs, careers, health and well-being, and life in East Lothian (which is great as a newcomer to NB), and I have met her daughter which was lovely, having heard so much about her.

So perhaps I thought my destination would be one-way, I would give but not receive, and I was fine with that; but I come home after spending time with my lovely 'R' full of energy, chat, and words of wisdom. I love being involved in the community because I meet new, and different, people but I hadn't really expected to meet a new friend in the true sense of the word.'

R's story as a Befriendee

'June 22nd last year was the first time I met P, who became my buddy walker. When it was first suggested that I would benefit from having a 'buddy walker' or be involved in meeting other like-minded people over tea or coffee at the Seabird Centre – I knew the latter was not for me, meeting over coffee was something I knew I would not benefit from. Meeting at my own home on a one-to-one basis, chatting, going for a walk, coming back, and having tea in the garden was something I could cope with, enjoy, and benefit from. It's now seven months since my first meeting with P, and my life is so much better having P in it. I wait at the window on a Friday and at exactly 10.30am P and her two gorgeous little dogs arrive – what a welcome they give me – so does P!! I find her calming, always cheerful, and full of interesting chat. We talk about our families, national issues, and lots of chat about dogs. Conversation flows and is very easy – I am very lucky I have a good friend I know I can trust and depend on.'

CASE STUDY 2

'If ever I needed a reminder of how privileged I am to be living in a place like North Berwick, then the morning of a recent Buddy Walk was just a reminder.

I have been walking with my buddy for several months now. I have known him for many years but sadly dementia has affected him in recent times. His conversation is now somewhat limited, but I usually know what he is trying to say, and I believe that we have developed a mutual trust over the course of these walks. Our walks take place every two or three weeks (due to my other diary commitments) and there has only been one occasion to date when we were forced to abandon (due to persistent heavy rain). Buddy Walks often need to be short if the person being accompanied has mobility issues. My buddy has no mobility issues and enjoys walking, so we can often be out and about for a couple of hours (admittedly including a stop for coffee and cake).

Having arranged a walk for the morning of Monday 21 March 2022, I was pleased to open the bedroom curtains that day to see that we had a blue sky and full sun- a good start! After meeting my buddy at his home, we took our usual (risk-assessed) route along the west golf course towards the town. The temperature might only have been 7C (44.6F in old money) when we were walking and the coast of Fife was shrouded in mist, but the walking conditions were ideal. My buddy commented to me how quiet everything was- and he was so right. There was no wind, and very little traffic on the roads and we were able to appreciate the beauty of the town.

After a very pleasant coffee stop (with the sun beating down on us in the outside courtyard of a local café) we commenced the return journey along the beach and exchanged greetings with several people who were also enjoying the weather that morning. One man (whom we did not know) acknowledged our greeting and raised his hands to indicate what a lovely place this is.

I think that my buddy enjoys his walks (and his wife enjoys the space which these walks give her to do other things). I know that I most certainly enjoy them too and I encourage any volunteers who like walking to undertake the Paths for Life training and support the NBCCC project by becoming a Buddy Walker. If your experience is anything like mine, it will be really worthwhile both for the volunteer and those being taken for walks.'

– A happy Buddy Walker



How many posts are funded for this activity?

5 part-time:

Project Manager - Carol Stobie

Compassionate Neighbours Coordinator - Charli Prime

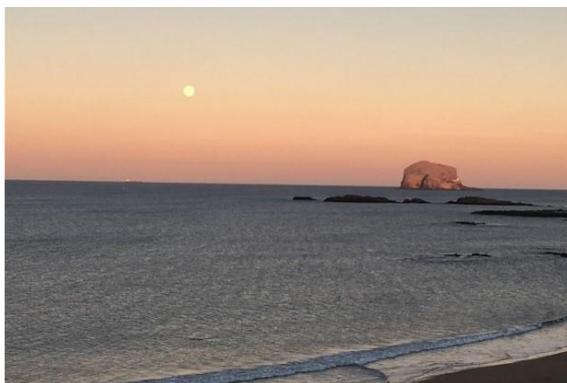
Befriending Coordinator - Lisa Brownlie

Administrative and Communications Assistant - Lyndsey Gdulewicz

Newsletter Editor - Ruth Fraser (independent contractor)

What have we learned from our activity this year?

- We learnt that Covid impact is long term and multi-faceted, generating a greater complexity of referrals
- We encountered more widespread and challenging mental health issues among both members and volunteers - see NB Trust application
- We saw that the potential of peer support was even greater than we had thought, and identified local services gaps in this respect
- Now that home visits are possible again, it's proved vital to have these visits and risk-assess domestic situations before we confirm arrangements with volunteers or deliver services
- We experienced a desperate demand for sitter services which we cannot meet – we need stronger links and signposting on this
- We discovered the need to be clearer than ever on what we can and cannot deliver, so that we do not take on cases too complex or demanding for our volunteers to support
- The significance of the Community Connections newsletter we started during Covid has been heightened, keeping members (especially those without digital means) included and informed, even if they currently don't feel ready to take up other services - it helps them see what it would be like, and they often resurface as a result.



Challenges

- See above - we experienced a significant rise in more complex referrals
- We saw the unexpectedly steep growth in demand for buddy walks, above all
- At times, there is a waiting list for services and difficulty in keeping up with demand!
- We found it could be difficult to move some clients on from one-to-one into gatherings or towards discharge – because of the post-Covid impact, and/or increased anxiety over gatherings

- More of our members have developed dementia, entailing new challenges in service delivery and training
- Staff have spent significantly more time devoted to volunteers whose support needs have become greater
- We receive inappropriate referrals at times, so need to clarify what we can and can't deliver for others to understand better before they refer
- The team continues to operate either from home or rented meeting space, with no premises or storage space of our own as yet.

Successes

- We're delighted at the revival in Scone Café numbers and vibrancy
- Our volunteer recruitment and face-to-face training have revived, bringing new age groups and skill sets to the team
- We've launched the new projects we hoped for
- We're helping more members than ever
- We've learnt more about the art of grant applications, and achieved funding for three-year and two-year programmes of activity



What have we spent this year?

The main financial highlights of the charity in the year were:

On the 1st of April 2021 full responsibility for the work of North Berwick Coastal Community Connections (NBCCC) was passed to the charity from the North Berwick Health and Wellbeing Association (NBHWA) which had established NBCCC as a pilot project in April 2019. At that date, balances of funding that had been awarded to NBHWA on behalf of NBCCC were transferred to the charity as follows:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------|
| • National Lottery Community Fund | £10,017 |
| • One Council Funding | £11,567 |
| • North Berwick Trust | £10,822 |

During the year under review, the charity was successful in achieving funding from the National Lottery Community Fund over three years, with £65,000 being awarded for use in the year commencing 1 October 2021.

The charity received an award of £1,000 from the McCarthy Stone Foundation following a nomination by a member of NBCCC (and a resident of a McCarthy Stone property).

Since the end of the Financial Year, we have been fortunate enough to have received:

- additional money from the National Lottery for a cost-of-living top-up
- the remainder of our three-year Grant income from North Berwick Trust
- an award from the Co-op Local Community Fund
- money from Truacanta for training
- a very generous donation
- £240 donations from Scone Café

Our huge gratitude goes out to all the organisations and individuals who have helped support us

The expenditure for the financial year under review was £51,000 the breakdown of which can be seen in the NBCCC Trustees Annual Report.



Part Two – Looking forward

What are we changing about our activities, based on our learning to date?

- We're launching the Stronger Connections project, with staff and volunteer time and training in mental well-being and the support of new local peer support groups
- Coffee Connections now has a stronger element of volunteer peer support, with staff 'surgeries' at times
- The Project Manager has booked onto cascade training in delivery of Paths for All Walk Leader Training so that we can run our own training sessions
- Staff and volunteers are gaining more mental health awareness and dementia awareness training to help with new patterns of referral
- We are linking to new peer support groups, building up mutual referrals and encourage feed-ins to our gatherings, and encouraging shared volunteer potential from local networks
- We now link more strongly with retirement homes and the North Berwick Day Centre
- We take more initiatives to encourage those still 'stuck at home' to come out and try gatherings etc and to help volunteers move clients on from one-to-one.



COMPASSIONATE NEIGHBOUR REPORT

– Charli Prime

- Recent Campaign
- Current numbers
- Next steps
- PHPCI Conference (Bruges)

Since July 2022, and with the help of Lyndsey Gdulewicz, Compassionate Communities embarked on a campaign to promote EASE (End of Life Skills) training, through social media, the website, email, leaflets and attendance at NPCCC volunteers' meetings. This has generated a total of 6 participants, 1 of whom has committed to additional training to become a Compassionate Neighbour.

EASE is a national social movement designed to provide the literacy, dialogue and confidence needed to talk about death and dying in a natural and comfortable way as possible. By offering training with end-of-life skills, the aim is to raise awareness, develop confidence and signpost opportunities that support community members who have a life-limiting condition.

We hope that more volunteers and participants of EASE will request to become Compassionate Neighbours, to join our team of 8 so that we can continue to dispel many of the myths and misery surrounding death and dying. We have had 3 successful matches so far, and in January 2023 we will be operating independently of St. Columba's Hospice, although we will continue to cooperate and collaborate where possible. I will be meeting with East Lothian Palliative Care Team, requesting to speak on Forth FM and revisiting North Berwick and other coastal ward GP surgeries.

A bespoke NBCCC volunteer training programme will be on offer for all potential volunteers who can decide if they want to become a Buddy Walker, Befriender, attendee at Scone Café, Coffee Connections, or a Compassionate Neighbour. Volunteer training will run concurrently with EASE training, twice a year, in Spring and Autumn.

During Absent Friends Week 1st – 7th November this year, Compassionate Communities embarked on what we hope will become an annual event, celebrating the lives of those who have died with a small ceremony on Elcho Green. Our intention is to have decorated jam jars into which a small battery-operated tea light will be placed, representing a departed loved one. Pebbles will be available for anyone who wishes to write the name of a deceased loved one and a small cairn will be created on the beach. We have engaged the Day Centre and requested support from Scone Café and NBYP to decorate jam jars. Participants can take a decorated jam jar with a tealight as a symbol of remembrance especially as winter can be poignant for many.

As the current Compassionate Neighbour Coordinator, I will participate in EASE facilitator training in Spring 2023. Training I have already completed includes training programmes from Befriending Networks Vital Skills; Managing Capacity, Waiting Lists and Ending; Support and Supervision.

Deborah Ritchie has submitted a request to the NBCCC project manager, Carol Stobie, to apply for external funding for additional hours for my post, taking it to 10 hours.

I would like to thank the Board for agreeing that my attendance at the PHPCI (Public Health Palliative Care International) conference in Bruges this year would be beneficial.

I was asked by Caroline Gibb from Truacanta the following questions:

What was your favourite moment of the conference (or the whole trip)?

For me watching the lanterns float on the canal basin was incredibly moving during the Great Crossing Festival (De Grote Oversteek). Not only did I share my own grief, but I also was given a sense of belonging, something that bereavement doesn't often achieve. Participating in this event inspired Deborah Ritchie and me to organise something similar in North Berwick during Absent Friends Week 1st - 7th November 2022.

Exploring Bruges was also a joy.

Did you have a lightbulb moment?

Pieter Deknudt (Belgium) 'Towards a warmer mourning culture: Reveil' What resonated with me was the power of starting small, being consistent, and keeping faith that communities will respond. Pieter started a movement to celebrate the loss of loved ones with concerts in local graveyards, and this has spread across the country. The website is reveil.org and you can select an English version.



What was your biggest takeaway?

There can be no 'one size fits all'. Neither a top-down model nor a bottom-up model is enough on its own. Sustaining communities towards a compassionate approach needs professional support and funding. We require to have energy, focus and commitment.

What were you most proud of?

Hearing about the Truacanta projects across Scotland, recognising our own approach to participation, sharing and taking ideas from the groups, and connecting in person.

What did you bring back to your community?

A renewed sense that we can achieve a positive outcome towards developing a compassionate community.

What are your next steps?

Maintain momentum for compassionate communities and continue to build our team of Compassionate Neighbours.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Community Connections Newsletter

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



Carol Stobie, Project Manager
 Tel. 07940 203380
 Email: nbc-communityconnections@outlook.co.uk

Lyndsey Gdulewicz, Administration and Communications Assistant
 Tel. 07915 719342
 Email: admin@nbc-communityconnections.org

Lisa Brownlie, Befriending Coordinator
 Tel. 07862 694842
 Email: befrienders@nbc-communityconnections.org

Charli Prime, Compassionate Neighbours Coordinator
 Tel. 07360 587369
 Email: compassionateneighbours@nbc-communityconnections.org

Ruth Fraser, Newsletter Editor
 Email: newsletter@nbc-communityconnections.org

For postal correspondence:

*North Berwick Coastal Community Connections,
 c/o North Berwick Community Centre, 8 Law Road, North Berwick EH39 4PN*

Appendix 1: Community Connections Newsletter

Community Connections

North Berwick Coastal November 2022



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

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

One of the November birth flowers is the peony.

Peonies can symbolise prosperity, good fortune, and happiness.



'The sun rising over the Law' - Ruth Fraser

A Time to Remember

As autumn begins to slip into winter, we are taking time this month to remember lost loved ones. The 'To Absent Friends' festival takes place across Scotland from the 1st to the 7th of November. It is an excuse to remember, tell stories, celebrate, and reminisce about those who have died. North Berwick Compassionate Community will be holding an event as part of the festival on the 2nd of Nov (pg. 5). Also, of course, there will be events taking place on Remembrance Sunday this month, an opportunity to remember the service and sacrifice of all armed forces (pg. 10).

November can also be a time for change and preparation. It's time to give your bedroom, wardrobe, kitchen, and mind a declutter. Getting rid of the things we don't need can be therapeutic, be it clothes or beliefs holding us back. When we have less, we have more space and energy for the truly important people and things in life. My plan is to take on my wardrobe this month. I am looking forward to taking a bag (or two) to a charity shop and heading into the winter feeling lighter and brighter. - Ruth Fraser



Celebrations in November

- **Guy Fawkes Night - 5th Nov**
A celebration of the gunpowder plot conspirators' failure to blow up the Houses of Parliament.
- **Remembrance Day - 11th Nov**
A day to remember members of the armed forces who gave their lives in conflict. The date was chosen to commemorate the end of the hostilities of the First World War.
- **World Kindness Day - 13th Nov**
A day to celebrate and promote kindness in all its forms.
- **Buy Nothing Day - 25th Nov**
Held to coincide with Black Friday, this is an international day of protest against consumerism.
- **FIFA World Cup - 21st Nov to 18th Dec**
Held every four years, the 22nd World cup will be held in Qatar.

North Berwick Coastal Community Connections is a registered Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) (SC 090505)

Please visit www.nbc-communityconnections.org to join the mailing list for the Community Connections newsletter and email newsletter@nbc-communityconnections.org to send any contributions to the newsletter.