

Middlefield Mirror

Spring 2024



In this issue:

YOUTH FLAT

NURSERY NEWS

DEAF AWARENESS

JAZZING IT UP

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Editorial

Welcome to the Spring edition of the Middlefield Mirror.

Keep up with all the goings on in Middlefield this Spring! Try a new recipe with Lesley's mushroom roast too.

If you would like to get involved and join the editorial team or if you have ideas for this community publication you can easily get in touch with us. The staff at SHMU are able to support and train anyone living in the area if they are interested in developing their ideas, or their skills in writing, proof reading and photography.

So, please don't be shy, this is your magazine, written, edited and designed by folk from Middlefield and Heathryfold.

If you live in the Middlefield or Heathryfold area and would like to come along to the editorial meetings or submit an article then get in touch with staff at shmu on 07752586312 or email rose at rose.ross@shmu.org.uk.

The magazine is now on Facebook as well so you can search for Middlefield Mirror and like the page for regular updates.

You can also view this magazine, alongside previous editions on the SHMU website www.shmu.org.uk then click the 'PRESS' option.

Middlefield Mirror is a community publication and the views expressed are not necessarily those of the editorial team or of shmu.

Covid-19 has made many changes to our routines and life as we know it. Many of these changes have left us feeling negatively about the situation but there have been some positives from the lockdown Covid brought about. Whether it's getting to see more of your local area, reconnecting with family and old friends or having a slower pace we would love to hear from you about your positive experiences during the Covid-19 outbreak.

LIFE MAY NOT BE THE PARTY WE HOPED FOR
BUT WHILE WE'RE HERE WE MIGHT AS WELL DANCE



Supported by





JAZZING IT UP AT THE MIDDLEFIELD COMMUNITY CENTRE

Aberdeen Jazz festival has begun, The Middlefield Community Project had the honour of hosting the opening performance, The Good Manors Quartet featuring Sola Okunuga wowed the folk of Middlefield with their mix of Jazz, Funk and Reggae.

The man behind the event Ron Bird, co organised the performance with jazz festival representative Melody Fraser. Ron is a Community Development Officer for the project and told me why he wanted to put the event together.

“We have a very strong music culture within the project.”

“The crowd reaction is just brilliant, it’s really heartwarming to see members of the local community come in and participate in something that can be seen as quite elitist and middleclass, jazz can sometimes be seen like that.”

The set included hits like, no trouble no pride, just the two of us and a real crowd favourite, Stevie Wonder. People were standing up in their seats to get a better view, swaying, foot tapping and the odd knee pat along with some more classic moves were on show as people enjoyed the music.

The café was busy too, which was great to see. It means people are putting money back into their area and it created a real sense of community at the event, couples and families enjoying the music while splitting a fine piece.

Ron is not a big jazz fan himself; he is more of a reggae guy as displayed by his red, green and yellow hat. But he loves music and is grateful to the band for giving its power to the community.

“Music is so important, it is none invasive therapy and I think we might

have the radio on or something in the background, but we are not really listening to it, but getting the opportunity to hear live music of this quality and really of international standard, it’s such blow away stuff.”

“Any of the community members who attend would have been blown away by it, and in many ways inspired.”

For one boy in particular, the performance was eye opening.

“I know one young person, they came and listened to the whole thing, and they were like inspired by it.”

The show was a real success and a great way to kick off the festival, and who knows the next big music star might just come from Middlefield.

Olivia Andrews

A YAP AT THE YOUTH FLAT

Located in the Middlefield Community Hub, The Youth Flat is a safe, warm and welcoming space for kids aged 11 to 25. Its open to all the kids in Middlefield and the surrounding areas and its free to attend.

They offer set sessions and drop ins to give the younger ones a chance to meet and catch up outside of school and provide employability and CV building help for the older kids, as well as a place to let off steam.

The Youth Flat will be celebrating its 20th birthday this year first started up by its manager Helen Graham, who will sadly be retiring after the celebrations.

I went along to get a sense of what goes on at the flat, it was quite the experience.

Walking in, I was given a warm welcome by Sharon one of the workers there and introduced to her colleague Hassan and two of the kids from the P7 group who were getting started on making pancakes.

Sharron gave me a quick tour explaining what was on offer for the kids, they have a pool table, games area with an Xbox and Nintendo switch, a kickboxing bag, guitars, arts and crafts, computers and a cozy corner for a good gossip.

The fun began when the rest of the kids got in from school, they were telling me about how they were excited to be moving up to S1 and what they were looking forward to.

"I get to do more algebra, it's my favourite and I get fizzy juice at lunch."

The other girl was looking forward to learning Spanish and getting to

do cooking, I asked her what her favourite thing to cook was?

"em toast"

As we were all sat around the table having a good debrief about the latest school gossip, who had chicken legged who and what not. A clatter came from the kitchen. Hassan turned around to face us with a mug in one hand and its handle in the other.

"Oh no I've had that 17 years," exclaimed Sharron.

After Hassan joked it was one of the kids, he decided it could now be used as a plant pot for the garden.

We got chatting about football and the girls told me their favourite football players where Phil Foden and Jack Grealish, but they didn't like his hair.

The flat offer a cooking class too, it runs for six weeks at a time, the kids get to decide what they want to cook and have to work to a budget, they have been cheffing up burgers, fajitas and the originally named "Hassan mummy's dish" even tattie wedges. According to one of the boys "Angie's where the best" because she used the Ninja Air fryer unlike poor Sharron who got second because she used the oven.

Sharron was telling me all about the Easter trips they have planned, one to the movies and inforafe they also had a mystery trip, "well it's not really, we are going to pre warn you to put your hiking boots or trainers on, we are going to walk from here to the River Don."

"I think someone died in the River Don." One of the girls piped up, after a bit of silence, the jokey atmosphere

was resumed when within the same breath she asked me if I had ever heard the Ninja Song.

It was sung by Sharon's twin sister according to the kids and was all over Tik Tok.

All jokes aside, places like the youth flat play such an important role in communities.

"We were originally only supposed to open for three years, back then there was a lot of trouble on the street, people were being terrorised, there was a lot of drug use, a lot of crime, then the flat opened and it did take a lot of the kids off the streets. Just somewhere to feel safe to feel valued and listen to and to have someone to connect with."

"Here you get to see a different side of the kids".

Sharron still keeps up with the original members of the flat, two of which are now getting married and have kids together, after meeting at the flat all that time ago.

The kids' favourite parts about coming to flat was just simply speaking to Sharron, that's why places like the youth flat are so important. Seeing Hassan and Sharron with kids shows how much they just want someone to listen to them about their day and have a joke with.

The pancakes were served up, they even made one for me and we played guess the song on the computer. While the next group where not so patiently waiting, banging on the door for their chance to come in.

Olivia Andrews

"We did 2 trips to Innoflate and 2 trips to cinema with our Easter in the City funding. P7s for one and older youths for the other. The young people really benefited from these trips as both places are really expensive. They really enjoyed it and behaved so well on all trips. Roll on the Summer!!!"



"We have a Calm Group every Thursday which is just a quiet session for some of our young people who maybe struggle in our usual sessions. At Christmas they invited some of the residents over from Granitehill House Sheltered Housing for a Christmas buffet. They all done extremely well and great day was had by all."



THE YOUTH FLATS NEWEST MEMBER

The manager and long-time legend of the Middlefield Project Helen Graham will sadly be retiring after an incredible and fun filled 23-year reign.

Taking on the momentous task of filling her shoes is David Smith.

"I'm currently the depute manager, I started back in January but from the beginning of June I'll be taken over the project coordinator role, which is really exciting."

What got you to your role here?

"Well, it's been a Journey, I won't go too far back but, my mother was a community worker, she's retired now, but growing up I was always at community centres and youth projects and youth clubs as well. That was always in me I think, but I didn't find this sort of work until my mid-twenties through teaching drums, I'm a drummer, so I started off teaching through youth projects and centres like this and that's when I got the idea this could be a wee avenue for work."

"So, I went to Glasgow did my degree in community development, I then moved back and was given the great opportunity to set up the Aberdeen FC Community Trust."

"But after 10 years and a pandemic it was time for a change, a refresh, so I applied for this job back in November and was successful."

What has been your favourite part of the job so far?

"It's probably going to sound really cliché, but just the people of Middlefield, just really honest hard working, direct, got a real sense of community about them, they will tell you straight if they are not happy."

"I would say young people as well, that's always been my passion".

"I think the relationship here between the project and the community is really special and is something I feel really humbled to be asked to do."

"I feel a real pressure to get it right as well, but I'm determined I will."

What are your future plans and hopes for the project?

"The possibilities, I know it sounds a bit vague but there is so many opportunities."

"It's not set in stone, but I had a meeting recently with a dance agency about doing a Friday night dance and a meal with the café once a month, like a special evening for local people."

"Just championing Middlefield and fighting for equality, I think there is a lot of disadvantages in this area I think that's something people like me and this project can help level the playing field."

A big music fan, the Coral being one of his favourites and a keen drummer, David plans to bring music to the Youth Flat, hoping it will really help the kids."

"I know when I was younger, the drums were a great source of getting your frustrations out."

During our interview on of the young lads from the flat popped in with a cup of tea for David, he was touched that he had brought it all the way in for him. *"He has been making me tea every week or so and he loves it, I worked with Alfie up at my last job at Lochside Academy and Northfield too, he makes a good cup of tea as well by the way."*

David's transparency and seeing the relationship he has already built with the young people and the community here was heartwarming to see. The reiteration of making sure he gets it right shows that he genuinely cares about the community, with only a few months until Helen retires, I'm sure Middlefield will be in good hands, David can't wait to start his new adventure.

"Middlefield is an oyster"



From HIIC to the Start of a Safer Community

The Middlefield group that are standing up and want to be heard.

Middlefield Community Hub is a central point for many different groups running in the area. Amongst the various groups running, the Hub are the hosts for the Health Improvement in the Community (HIIC) course.

Charlotte, Ashleigh and Winnie were the first three to participate in the course, run by CHEX Glasgow and supported by the Hub's Adult Learning Development worker, Lesley.

To begin with the ladies were unsure of what the course would entail but decided to give it a go and see what it was all about.

"We were all unsure to begin with", said Charlotte, "but there was no stopping us once we got into it."

The first few weeks there were a range of ice breaking activities, before the group delved into their own interests for the community. Once the group decided on the main issues facing Middlefield, it was time to research their chosen areas and create presentations. Lesley was there to provide any help needed.

"It was quite an achievement for us to build the confidence and work together to build a strong group."

"The first five minutes of the presentation were nerve wracking

but as I got into it and interacting with the group, I got more comfortable as it became conversational," said Ashleigh.

"I learned a lot about the people that came, and we got a lot of positive feedback. It was good to get encouragement and find out we are on the right track, so early on in our group".

After the presentations, the group established their own community groups, one being Keep Middlefield Clean, another future page that will be supporting local people in a low-income household within the area and BSL classes, all after the nature of their chosen subject.

Keep Middlefield Clean is the new group that want to improve the local environment. The main goal of the group is to make Middlefield a better place for future generations, by making it safer.

"It's only early days, but through more people hearing about the group, they will become more conscientious in the community. We are here to help anyone and hope more people will get involved."

"It will be nice to see others who live in the area and know that there are other people who care about the area we live in."

"We want to make it a safe place for people to be able to walk about and

enjoy being out and about in the area."

KMC have begun organising litter picks as part of Keep Scotland Beautiful Spring Clean. They have also been visiting the local nurseries to give demonstrations.

"It was great to see how interested the young kids were and the enjoyment they were getting from it."

"Hopefully, it can plant a seed to start that conscientiousness for the community early on".

If you'd like to get involved or would like to keep up with what the group are up to, visit the Keep Middlefield Clean Facebook page and pop them a message.

Even by helping for an hour or two will make a big difference. "It's an achievement when you see it all clean and tidy."

"We have the park and the dog walking park, let's keep it litter free and looking nice."

The Hub's Lesley said "We hope to run another Health Issues in the Community course at the Middlefield Community Hub, Manor Avenue in the summer term from May to early July. Please get in touch with us if you would like to find out more about the course or take part. The course is free and will run over 10 weeks."

By us at Keep Middlefield clean.

MY JOURNEY WITH CANCER – Part 1

No one has written a guide on what to expect when you reach old age so there's no reference as to what the various aches and pains are and if you are generally healthy, it's so easy to put a nagging pain down to yesterday's activities.

Taking the Plunge

The ache in my breast and under my arm was very easy to dismiss simply because the dreaded word CANCER looms large when dealing with lumps in that area. But bruising and swelling are not to be ignored. The shock of discovering a lump stops you in your tracks but the rest of the world keeps on turning and it's so easy to push thoughts away and just get on with your life.

You have a holiday planned and paid for and you're all looking forward to it, you don't want to burst everyone's bubble and say "I have a lump"? No, you don't, you go ahead with your plans and tell yourself you will deal with it when you get back.

However, nothing is changing, and the lump seems to be determined to have its day. That's when the reality of what is going to happen hits hard.

Taking this first step and getting help is an enormous challenge and once you've made the decision there is no going back. So, how do you begin, who do you tell? Of course, your doctor is the first person you need to talk to but in my case my husband of over 56 years was the first person I spoke to and that was the hardest thing to do.

You know the conversation must start somewhere but how? I think just saying the words is the hardest thing to do and once you start talking, will emotions take over? I'm not an emotional person but I've not faced this problem before so who knows how I will handle it.

It was as difficult as I thought it would be, even more so, to see the panic in my husband's face.

I had done my homework on what happens next, but he didn't hear me because he was struggling to get his head around it.

I have always had health issues throughout my life, and I have dealt with them and got on with it but I have always needed the support of those closest to me, something I have probably taken for granted if I'm honest. All my health issues have been managed and I tried not to be controlled by them, but this was different.

The one thing I appreciate most is honesty and truth and the one thing I dislike is someone who fudges an issue. I got that honesty and truth when I saw the breast cancer surgeon. There was absolutely no disguising that I had a lump. It had grown so big it was almost visible through my clothes, so the initial examination revealed nothing I didn't already know. A biopsy showed that it was indeed cancerous, and a series of scans and x-rays followed.

The biggest eye opener for me is the number of different types of cancer there are and each one requires

different treatments, there is no one size fits all scenario as previously assumed.

The First Step

Telling my husband was extremely difficult and the hurt look in his eyes was something I will never forget. Telling other people, however, wasn't easy, and I didn't want people to change their attitude towards me so I only told a very small group which means I remained in control of the situation, something which is very important. Having taken the decision to get help I very quickly saw my GP who just as quickly referred me to the Oncology department at Foresterhill. From the beginning through to the first visit to Oncology all happened within a few weeks.

My various appointments came through very quickly and I was soon to hear back the results of the tests. I refused to believe that it could be negative and so it wasn't.

My particular cancer diagnosis is a quite common one for which well-established treatments were available. I embarked on these treatments that week and Radiotherapy followed soon after.

I am a glass half full kind of person, and I was remarkably happy with what was happening to me

I very quickly established a routine of hospital visits, and I became aware of myself becoming totally absorbed into the vast machine which is the NHS.

Elected Officials

Cllr Donna Clark

Of course, I would have had great difficulty getting to appointments without the help of my various "taxi drivers"! My husband was the main one and then my sister and on more than one occasion a dear friend and neighbour who is sadly no longer with us.

I prefer going to appointments on my own but sometimes the company of my husband or my sister was invaluable, and I am so grateful to everyone who helped me.

Everything is carefully planned and monitored, and I was very impressed by the professionalism of everyone I met. I very much keep myself to myself and I don't share feelings and emotions freely so to meet so much care and compassion was refreshing.

After a few weeks I felt that my life as I knew it was now noticeably different, and as the sheer exhaustion of the Radiotherapy began to take effect, I experienced a new level of tiredness which left no room for negotiation, I was tired and therefore I did nothing, simple as that. Arranging to meet my friends became difficult as the exhaustion didn't respect my need for a visit to Costa!

Six months later I am still having scans and tests but lumpy has shrunk visibly and some of the smaller tumours have shrunk too, so all good and I have been able to get out and about much more easily.

To be continued...

It has been a busy time in the Middlefield and Heathryfold areas as well as the wider Northfield/ Mastrick North ward since my last update.

I'm still holding monthly surgeries at @theHub on Manor Avenue on the first Wednesday of the month at 7pm, which are well attended by local residents. I also hold surgeries at the Cummings Park Community Flat and Northfield Community Centre on the third Monday of every month during the day which are also very well attended. The most common issues which I have been dealing with to speak to someone within the Council, void properties as well as issues such as potholes and antisocial behaviour.

I recently took part in the interviews for the new Headteacher at Northfield Academy, following which Craig McDermott was appointed to the post. I look forward to working with Craig going forward and I wish him all the best in his new role.

I recently attended the Aberdeen City Music School concert which was held at the Music Hall on 2nd March. Pupils from schools right across the city took part in this concert, displaying their musical talents. I would like to commend the efforts of all pupils who took part, particularly those from the Northfield/Mastrick North area.

On Wednesday 6th March was the budget meeting to

set out the council's spending plans for the 2024-25 financial year. As part of the council's budget, the administration committed to the protection of the Fairer Aberdeen Fund, from which funding of £1.54 million will be allocated to various community organisations across Aberdeen City, which includes the Middlefield Community Project as well as the Cummings Park Community Flat. I understand how vital this funding is for the community projects not only within the Northfield/Mastrick ward, but across the city.

Also, as part of the Council's budget, the administration committed to the freezing of council tax for this financial year, this means that no one will have to pay more than what they currently are on their council tax, which will help many individuals and families, especially as we are still living in a cost-of-living crisis.

Finally, I would like to wish Helen Graham all the very best in her retirement as she steps down from her valued role at the Middlefield Community Project. It has been a pleasure to work with Helen since my election in 2022.

If I can ever be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me on 07977 399622 or email me at; donclark@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Middlefield Nursery News

Supporting parents with school applications and the forthcoming transition to P1

This term we supported parents in applying for P1 at school. Next term we will look to build on this and organize visits to the different local schools in our neighbourhood and work in partnership with the schools to help support our children to have effective transitions to move onto their new setting. This will involve trips to the schools and visits to our nursery from school teachers to meet the children.

Nursery projects

The nurseries enjoyed celebrating, Burns night. The children got actively involved in a variety of different arts and crafts activities e.g. making tartan, trying haggis, neeps and tatties and listening to traditional Scottish music and Scottish dancing and trying on a kilt. They also enjoyed celebrating pancake day. A very kind parent made doughnuts as part of a similar Polish tradition of celebrating 'fat Thursday'. They also celebrated Chinese New Year making Chinese dragons, lanterns and having Chinese food. The

children enjoyed making cards and gifts for Mother's Day. The children will enjoy participating in a variety of activities to celebrate Easter.

Staff appreciation day

We have been continuing to look at the importance of supporting everyone to have positive mental health and wellbeing. The nursery staff celebrated staff appreciation day on Friday March 1st. We thanked and acknowledged how grateful we are to all our nursery staff for all the hard work that they do. We also made appreciation certificates and gave these to all the wider project staff to thank them for all that they do to help the nursery team.

New Nursery Projects starting

Wee Blether

Feedback is really important to us, and we are always looking at improving ways of getting the children's ideas, thoughts and feedback about the nursery room, routines, activities and resources. We have just started and are trialling a new group called the Wee Blether. We got this idea from another nursery setting who do something

similar and said they find it works well. This involves Carrie-Anne and Marie having a chat with a small group of nursery children (3/4 children) to try to get an idea of the children's thoughts on different themes or listening to conversations that the children initiate. e.g. nursery lunches, garden, toys etc... We thought it would be nice to do this in the cafe, so it makes it a little more of a special event for the children to be involved in.

Big Blether

Like our new Wee Blether, we thought it would be good to do something similar with our nursery parents to get their thoughts, views and ideas about all things to do with the nursery. We are going to be offering an open drop-in session to parents once a month in the cafe where parents could discuss their thoughts with Marie/Carrie-Anne. The discussion themes could be initiated by parents, or we could have planned themes to think about.

Litter picks

Marie the nursery manager helped out on the first organized community litter pick as part of helping to clean



up Middlefield. There is a newly created Facebook page called 'Keep Middlefield Clean' to promote such activities and hopefully help raise local residents' awareness and encourage them to get actively involved. We then had our two local community activists Ashleigh and Charlotte come into the nurseries to help the children learn more about the importance of not dropping litter and looking after our environment. This was organized to link in with the current nationwide initiative run by keep Scotland beautiful encouraging communities to come together to help clean up their local areas. They discussed how litter can be harmful to us, animals and also make the environment look messy and how it is important to take pride in our surroundings. The children got the opportunity to be involved in some fun activities e.g. using litter pickers to pick up different things. Following on from this the nursery staff took a small group of children out to pick up litter in our nearby surrounding area. We hope to be able to then plan regular litter picks into our nursery routine.



Mushroom Roast

This is a good recipe for using up mushrooms in a Mushroom Roast.

It's tasty and easy to prepare. Everyone who tries it really likes it! .

Mushrooms are really good for us - they contain protein, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants.

Give it a go!.

Recipe – serves 2 hungry people or 4 as part of a lighter meal.

INGREDIENTS

200g mushrooms, chopped small

Large knob of butter or tbspn veg oil

1 onion, finely chopped

150g grated cheddar cheese

90g breadcrumbs (blend or grate)

1 egg, lightly beaten

1 tsp marmite

Salt and pepper

DIRECTIONS

Butter your baking dish/loaf tin.

Fry the mushrooms and onions in the butter for approx 10 mins.

Drain the butter away.

To the mushrooms and onions add the grated cheese, breadcrumbs, marmite, beaten egg, salt and pepper, and mix.

Place the mixture in a greased baking dish/loaf tin, pressing it tightly together.

Bake at 190 degrees/gas mark 5 for approx 35 mins, until nicely brown.

Leave to cool for 10 mins before getting it out.

Don't worry if it falls apart a little!

Delicious served with veg and gravy or cut in to wedges and eaten cold the next day.

This recipe comes from Doreen Keighley's Vegetarian Cook Book, published by Thorsons with the Vegetarian Society, 1985



Suicide Prevention is Everyone's Business

On average two people die every day from suicide in Scotland, it is also the biggest killer of young people.

Have you ever actually asked someone “are you thinking about suicide?” it may seem a bit blunt or too taboo, but it could just save someone's life and you shouldn't be afraid to ask.

Justine Dunbar is the Community Engagement Officer for Aberdeen City and works as part of the North East Suicide Prevention Team, she explains the issues further and gives advice on how you can ask the question or seek help.

She started in her role back in November after working at Shelter Scotland and many years of volunteering work in the sector.

Would you be able to tell me more about what your job involves?

“The role as a community engagement officer is really all about reducing stigma around talking about suicide and linking in with

everybody on the ground, we have suicide prevention resources that we can distribute, and we also provide training as well.”

Their “Introduction to suicide prevention training” gives a broad overview of the topic looking at the warning signs and how to ask, so it's perfect for someone who wants to know more about what they can do to keep themselves and others safe.

What should people look out for, are there any warning signs?

“I would say it's any change that you have noticed within somebody, that can be anything from if someone has been more withdrawn, more negative in terms of their own self-image, not looking after themselves in terms of eating and personal care.”

The signs can be different for everyone there can even be no signs at all, so if you feel like someone is

not themselves always trust your gut and ask.

She also mentioned the importance of active listening.

“Listening is a really crucial skill when it comes to suicide prevention.”

“The factors that cause someone to have thoughts of suicide or act on their thoughts of suicide are different for each person, so it could be a series of things that has happened. You're not necessarily going to be able to fix that problem. But what you can do is just give the person that space to talk.”

“Asking them open question's and focusing on how they feel, rather than the details because you don't always need to know, sometimes somebody just needs to unload and say the words as to how they are feeling.”

“Never promise confidentially either, there might be a situation, where you

have to pass on information if they are at risk.”

We spoke about what to expect as a “care giver” once you have asked the question and how you can protect your own mental health when helping someone who is struggling with theirs.

“Some people will feel a sense of relief once they have been asked the question and that gives them the safety to know that they can talk.”

“For some people it might be that you have asked the question and they have said yes and then there’s this silence, you might just have to be there next to them side by side until they are ready to actually talk.”

“If you’re having that conversation with somebody and you’re not happy, you don’t feel that they are able to keep themselves safe, then obviously phone 999.”

“It’s about keeping yourself as that care giver person safe, so debrief somehow don’t carry that with you”.

Although suicide can affect anyone, certain situations and life changes can have a negative effect on our mental health, this is especially true for becoming a new mum.

“There is a lot of pressure becoming a new mum a lot of changes, physical changes as well, hormonal changes that can affect how you feel.”

“Not wanting to say that you are struggling because of the stigma that people might say you are not a good parent, but what I would say is that you’re not alone in feeling like that, reach out.”

Latnem is a peer support group for mums and birthing people, more information on the charity and other support is available on the North East suicide prevention.

So how can the everyday person help prevent suicide in their community?

“Challenging myths, if you’re in a conversation and you hear someone say, like oh people who talk about taken their own life are just seeking attention, actually challenge that”.

What it means is that they need help, and their needs are not being met.

“Just checking on people it seems simple, but asking are you okay? And listening with kindness and compassion

If you are having thoughts of suicide, there is help out there. The Prevent Suicide North East app is a great resource as it contains a safety plan, an important self-help tool where people can recognise their own triggers, coping mechanisms and trusted supports. It also has links to all the other support networks. Its free to download, all the information is also printable for those who don’t have access to a digital device.

You can also access help through your GP by asking for a link practitioner who can help you access local services, or by booking a double appointment so you have time to talk through how you are feeling.

1 in 20 people in Scotland could be thinking of suicide at any one time, you are not alone.

Helpful contacts

To request training, resources or help with suicide prevention activities email:

northeastsuicideprevention@samh.org.uk

Suicide Prevention Northeast Prevention App - <https://www.preventsuicideapp.com/>



Student Placements

Over the last 3 months, we at shmu have had the pleasure of working with two brilliant placement students, Oliva and Lauryn.

We'd like to thank them for all their hard work throughout their placement. They did a fabulous job. You may have seen their fantastic 'Oot and about' series on our social media channels, where they visited the various communities, we work in and spoke to the community members. If you haven't had a chance to watch them yet, make sure you check it out on our Facebook and Instagram pages.

You will also have enjoyed some of Olivia's articles in this edition of the Middlefield Mirror.

We're so glad that they enjoyed their placement and were able to get so much out of it.

Thanks again to both Olivia and Lauryn and we wish them the best of luck with whatever they do next!



Join the multi-media team!

We are starting a new group that will report on local news and events. You will learn how to use skills from many of shmu's media stands, focusing on video, audio, print and photography to tell our communities stories.

The course will run every Thursday at 1pm till 3pm for 8 weeks, starting on the 2nd of May 2024.

Courses take place at shmu, Station Road, Woodside

Open to Participants from Cummings Park, Northfield, Middlefield, Tillydrone, Mastrick, Torry, Seaton and Woodside.

No experience required! Email volunteer@shmu.org.uk or call 01224 515013 to sign up or for more info.

After completion of the course, you will have the opportunity to continue with our multi-media team covering stories of local interest.

We'd love to work with you, so come and join us!





Becoming Deaf Aware in Middlefield

When I was doing a short course in Health Issues in the Community at Middlefield Hub, we students were asked to do a project on what we can do for the community, I chose to do a deaf awareness simply because I am profoundly deaf.

My name is Winnie Shephard and I have been profoundly deaf since I was 13 months old due to German measles. I went to a deaf school from the age of 3 years old till 13 years old and then went to a hearing school, from that time on I was in the hearing world, married a hearing man, had 2 hearing children and worked among hearing people.

I became a tutor for sign language for about 38 years, I met my partner Alex who is also profoundly deaf but cannot speak BSL (British sign

language) and through him, I felt people need to be more aware of deafness.

There are eleven million people in UK with hearing loss and out of that, there are eight million over 60 who have some kind of hearing loss.

There are many reasons why we all need to be aware and look after your hearing. If you feel that your hearing is not so sharp as it used to be, please get your hearing assessed and there are wonderful aids that would help.

In my classes I have come across quite a few who lost their hearing due to accidents, trauma, and illness.

One woman I know turned deaf overnight due to a terrible illness. She wore a powerful aid which helped and learned to sign and lip-read.

I do not want to frighten people but to encourage them not to take their hearing for granted.

Use your eyes more and learn to lip-read.

It is more interesting and surprising how you can learn to read lips and read their facial expression.

If you want to know more about deafness or have any question, you can see me at the hub. I will be running a BSL course at the hub, where community members will have the opportunity to learn the basics of British Sign Language and lip read. The first course, which is currently fully booked will run from the end of April to June, but keep your eyes peeled as there will hopefully be more opportunities to learn.

Hope you all have a nice spring.

Winnie Shephard

KEEPING UP WITH THE HUB

Rosie's Book Club Launch

Rosie's Book Club was launched on Thursday 7th March at the Middlefield Community Hub (on Manor Avenue) to celebrate World Book Day.

We're encouraging parents of under-fives to read stories to their children at home. It's free to join. We're encouraging any parent with under 5s, who live in our catchment area of Middlefield, Heathryfold, Cummings Park and Northfield (to Byron Square) to join up.

Three storybooks at a time can be borrowed.

Book borrowing sessions will run on Thursdays every week at 10am to

10.30am— you'll find us in the Under 11s Room.

World Book Day is a worldwide celebration of books and reading that is held annually and has been organised by UNESCO since 1995.

Granitehill House group going places!

Our Granitehill House Group, with 12 members now, has been meeting since last June, getting out and about with weekly trips. They're supported by the Middlefield Community Project Adult Learning Development Worker and 3 volunteers.

Since mid-October, they've been meeting at Granitehill House, going out less in the autumn and winter but still having an active programme. At

Christmas, the group members were invited to a Christmas buffet meal with young people from the Calm group, at the Middlefield Youth Hub. It was fab!

We have been preparing and planning a spring study visit to the Orkney Islands in mid-April. We'll stay in a house in Stromness.

We will see what life is like for older people in a rural, isolated island community and meet with a group of older people living in sheltered housing to compare notes. We'll also be visiting some of the stunning archaeological sites, like Skara Brae, Stones of Stennes.