

Middlefield Mirror

Summer 2024



In this issue:

YOUTH FLAT
NURSERY NEWS
DEAF AWARENESS
MEN'S CLUB

www.shmu.org.uk/press

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Editorial

Welcome to the Summer edition of the Middlefield Mirror.

We've got lots of exciting Middlefield Updates for you! Read all about the men's club, celebrate 20 years of the youth flat and a brilliant young person's award!

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.

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



Supported by





Middlefield Community Project Men's Club

Middlefield Hub run a Men's Club every Friday from 10am to 12pm. The group is open to men from Bucksburn, Northfield, Heathryfold, Cummings Park and Middlefield.

I found out about the Men's hub from Ulla, shmu's Adult Support Worker, she came with me to my first session where they told me all about the group and what happens there.

The group was run by Ron, who has now retired but it has been left in good hands at the hub.

I find it very therapeutic; we go to lots of tranquil places. It helps to refresh our mind; I find it very peaceful which is great for mental health. It means that I'm not isolated, it gives me motivation and something to look forward to during the week.

I've met quite a few people there and became good friends, it's a great way to socialise. Everyone has been so welcoming and friendly, always happy to have a chat.

It's great to go to different places every week, it keeps it exciting. We don't find out where we are going until we arrive to the group so it's a fun surprise. We have been to so many fun places, such as the Donside Hydro, the Alford Transport Museum, the Zoology building and many more!

The group is totally free, they provide a free tasty breakfast, and the trips are free too.

There is the option of 2 breakfasts, you can choose from a vegan or meat breakfast, I have the vegan option and it's delicious.

We sometimes stay at the Community project too and we have a great time playing snooker and chatting away.

I would recommend joining the group, it's great for your mental health and it's a great way of exploring new places within Aberdeen and the shire. Every time we go to different places we are amazed and surprised.

It really is a privilege to get to take part in something like this, it's a really thoughtful idea and I'd like to thank Middlefield Community Project for running this brilliant group.

Sadique Islam

MIDDLEFIELD YOUTH FLAT TURNS 20 - AND OTHER EXCITING UPDATES!

REUNION

On the 17th of May the Youth flat celebrated their 20th anniversary at the Auchmill Golf Club!

20 years of making a difference in young people's lives! And they have definitely made an impact, which is clear to see from the turnout of the reunion. Past youth flat participants travelled from far and wide to join, one even making an appearance from Australia.

Here's what a few of them had to say about the amazing work that the youth flat does.

Mark Foreman said, "The reason as to why I went to the youth flat growing up was because it created a safe and enjoyable environment that otherwise wasn't available for me at home. It gave me an opportunity to try things that I would never get the chance to, like taking trips to other cities, baking, crafting, playing pool, etc. It allowed me to create lifelong friendships, meet people from all over the world and see that there was more to life than what the area had to offer.

"The youth flat allowed me to see that I could become a better version of myself, a version that wasn't a delinquent getting in trouble with police, getting into fights or causing all kinds of mischief. It allowed me to escape from the troubles that I was facing at home and gave me the opportunity to have my own space, where I could safely communicate without being afraid.

"With the support that I received from the youthflat, I was able to break

the cycle and create a better life for myself. With the support of Sharon, Charlie and all the lovely staff that joined over the years I managed to beat the odds by graduating from both College and University; Something that most didn't think was possible for me. They supported me through every step of the way. My life would never have been as good as it is now without the support of the youth flat and those who work there.

"The youth flat is more than just a community hangout, it's a family. I'm extremely grateful that I got to be part of it, and I know that it will help others, just as it helped me."

John Hipson felt just as strongly about the flat. "I started using the youth flat roughly 19 years ago and I remember the first day I walked in. I religiously used the flat growing up, whether it be if you were needing help with any problems or to just go and play some pool with some pals. I had the best times there, so many good memories and laughs. I'm extremely grateful to all the staff for putting up with me but especially Charlie and Sharon, they both helped me overcome a lot of my issues I had and I wouldn't be where I am today if it wasn't for your help. I went from struggling to talk to someone on the phone to then moving to the other side of the world on my own this just shows what the support of the flat does for people."

So it was a brilliant night and everyone was delighted to spend some time catching up and

reminiscing over the past 20 years and looking forward to the next 20.

Thanks to Gordon Graham for DJing for the night too!

ALFIE'S SALTIRE AWARD

Alfie, a young volunteer at Middlefield has won a Saltire award!

Alfie achieved his 50 hours award for his generous volunteering in the community café. Well done to Alfie for this fantastic achievement and thank you for all your hard work!

Alfie said: "I love working in the café and seeing lots of different people. I like being at The Hub because people there know me, and it's lot's of fun. The staff there help me a lot"

SUMMER TRIPS

There has been plenty on the go at Middlefield youth flat to keep everyone entertained.

The summer holidays have made way for plenty of fun activities to be had with the youngsters.

The young people have enjoyed two trips so far, to Peterhead Prison and to Wild Shore Dundee which they have absolutely loved.

"The kids absolutely loved Wild shore" Sharon explained about the aqua park visit in Dundee. "It's like a total wipeout course, so much fun! I think I ended up in the water more than anyone, but it was great fun and they all loved it!"

There are a few more trips planned before the kids go back to school, which will no doubt be just as fun.

INTERGENERATIONAL GROUP

Some of the young people have joined forces with the Granitehill Gang to create a intergenerational supergroup!

The groups came together and have been doing a range of activities. This has been great to bridge the gap in the age groups and grow the relationships between the groups.

The intergenerational Group enjoyed a visit to the Spectra festival when it came to Aberdeen this year.

They worked together to host a jumble sale, which they did lots of community engagement and advertising. It was a great success, raising £700 which will go towards a learning day for both groups to enjoy together.



Alfie's Saltire Award



Summer Trips



Middlefield Nursery News

End of term activities and trips

What a great year we have had in our nurseries and we all have so much we can be proud of. The staff and children enjoyed celebrating the children's achievements and their time here with a variety of happy last week/day activities. These included a shorts and shades party, trip to the beach, joined up play sessions in the hall for children from both nurseries going to school, visits to see their friends in each others nursery rooms, graduation, parents picnic and walk to the nearby Auchmill woods.

These help to support the children in their transition and also support them to understand that endings can be happy and positive as well as a little sad too. In August many of the children will be leaving our setting to move on to start school. We would like to wish them all well and hope they come back to see us, to let us know how they are getting on.

We would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all of our children

in our setting for always doing your best. You have all grown and developed in your own individual ways in the past year and it has been lovely to see you progress and celebrate so many positive achievements.

To all of our parents and carers. Thank you so much for your continued support over the last year and working in partnership with us to ensure that we are getting it right for you and your child and providing them with the best learning opportunities that we can.

Also, to our staff team for always going above and beyond in creating a warm, welcoming, nurturing and caring learning environment for all of our children and families who attend our setting.

Supporting transitions to school

Supporting positive transitions is really important for children's understanding, development and emotional wellbeing. We supported transitions with 8 schools this year.

Staff supported children to become familiar with their new school settings by going on the minibus with them to see the nearby schools Manor Park and Heathryburn. This was great as children from both of our nursery rooms went on the visit together and could get to know each other a bit better. Staff also made up some booklets for the children and parents to keep which contained pictures and information about their new school e.g. pictures of uniform and their friends that would also be going to the same school. We also had visits from teachers from several of the different schools too. This is always great and really helpful for them to see our nursery and meet the children before they start school. Some children are going to different schools. We managed to go out in the minibus to drive to see Kittybrewster and Bramble Brae schools where some of the children would be going.



Nursery summer holiday stay and play sessions

Marie the nursery manager is offering nursery families the opportunity to come along during the summer holidays for a stay and play session with her in the hall. This is being trialled with the aim of giving families something to do and a means of keeping in touch with us and each other over the summer break. The sessions will run on a Wednesday 10.15-11.45. There is a small cost of £1.50 per family. The sessions are focussed towards our nursery children aged 2-5, but older siblings up to the age of 10 are welcome to come along with their family.

New Therapets dog

We were very fortunate to have more visits from our friends Dottie (the most beautiful miniature dachshund) and her owner Alison. Dottie is a

fully trained Therapets dog and is very much used to going into a variety of different settings such as schools and nurseries to visit children. They come to visit every fortnight on a Wednesday afternoon and the two nurseries take turns for their visits. Alison said she loves coming to see us. The children have really enjoyed her visits and Alison has helped the children to learn about how to be look after dogs. It is great to see the positive and very much calming impact she has on the children. She is also very much fun. Animals are well known to have a positive impact on wellbeing. We are very much looking forward to her coming back for more visits next term.

Nursery places for August

We are adding any further applications that we receive from parents for nursery places for August

to our waiting list as we currently don't really have sessions available. We provide a range of different Early learning and childcare opportunities for children aged 2-5 years. This includes the funded 1140 hours for eligible children for ME2 and children aged 3-5 years. Also, fee paying childcare places for parents who may be working or in further education. Nursery session times can be flexible in order to meet parents needs and preferences.

We would like to welcome all of our new families that will be starting with us in the new term. We look forward to getting to know you and sharing many fun learning experiences with you all.



MY JOURNEY WITH CANCER – Part 2

Read part 1 in Middlefield Mirror Spring 2024

Routines

We all need routine in our lives, it keeps us grounded and allows us to retreat back into it when life is disrupted. Routine was something I clung to during the initial stages of my diagnosis and treatment and I found great comfort in things I perhaps had taken for granted previously. I also found myself being grateful for life in general and appreciated family and friends even more.

Reactions

I was a bit surprised at some people's reactions and it was quite an eye opener too but I had decided not to make every conversation about cancer. "How are you?" was generally met with "I am fine" move on. Dwelling on the subject wasn't necessary, I lived with it 24/7 so I didn't need to speak about it constantly.

I was and still am very upbeat about the future but I am also realistic and hearing that some friends and family have not had as good an outcome as myself is very hard to deal with sometimes so, I have my down days where the situation threatens to overwhelm me. I don't let it, but I can understand how it can happen.

Life Goes On

In the early stages of my journey, I remember sitting in a Costa cafe in the Bon Accord Centre and watching people go about their business and I wanted to shout out "STOP! I have been diagnosed with cancer "but of course I didn't. As time passed, I realised that life indeed goes on but not the life I had known.

As I also have a heart condition, I had to accept that although the cancer was shrinking it perhaps wasn't that simple and my heart condition deteriorated accordingly and again I made adjustments in my life.

A trip out to meet friends is offset by the rest I have to take the following day to allow myself to recover. Housework became less important and I am now a stranger to the Hoover and I don't think I can operate an iron anymore. I still keep on top of housework but it's not as urgent as in the past and that's the biggest difference I have experienced in my life.

Let It Go

I am a bit of a perfectionist and I have to resist the urge to straighten cushions in people's homes. Things need to be just

right or it gets to me, but not anymore.

My new motto is to not worry about anything, because I know that worrying won't make any difference, so I just let it go. That includes arguments which I don't have to win anymore but I also don't tolerate stupidity and I don't hesitate to call it out which I find refreshing.

So six months down the road I tend to live for the day and let tomorrow do what it wants. I maintain a glass half full outlook but every now and then I give in to "why me" emotions but that's a negative attitude and it doesn't last long.

Appreciated

I have always appreciated life and what it brings but now I am grateful for each moment and the people who are in my life especially my husband whose support is invaluable. I am so much more aware of the many people whose journey is not going very well but I am so grateful that my experience has been very positive.

To be continued...



Forget me not

My name is Gail Groves and I have been asked to write this article sharing my recent sad experience of bereavement.

I met my husband Brian in September 1976; he was in the Army Youth Team and I was in the Territorial Army. We hit it off from the very start.

Brian was due to return to his Regiment, 19 Field Royal Artillery in 1977, so we decided to marry prior to him joining his regiment.

Our marriage took place in Middlefield Church on 2nd May 1977 with Rev Blakey carrying out the service. We had a lovely white wedding with wedding cars, bridesmaids, flower girl, best man and a special 'Guard of Honour' of 6 of my fellow TA colleagues, with all our families in attendance (we had the whole works).

Brian joined his Regiment in late autumn and was based at Larkhill where we got our first army quarter. Brian was then posted to Paderborn, Germany where we lived, our first child, Lisa was born, 15 months after we married.

Brian finished his time in the army, and we returned home to

Aberdeen where we went on to have two sons, Stewart and Rikki.

We had a happy marriage and family life with our children growing up and having their own families, all of whom we were and are still so proud of.

In December 2023 Brian became unwell and went to the GPs and was referred on to specialist in ARI.

Unfortunately, Brian's health suddenly declined and we were informed on 29th January 2024 that Brian's organs were starting to shut down, he was told that he had two weeks to live!!!

We were in total shock and did not know what to do.

In the last week of Brian's life, he came home where we looked after him.

Brian passed away exactly two weeks after receiving the diagnosis.

Our whole life had been turned upside down in two weeks. Nothing will ever be the same for me or our family and extended family.

Were we prepared for this? NO never in a million years. We had

been married for nearly 47 years and now one of the most important people in our lives was no longer here with us.

Since Brian left, I have tried to find support to help me cope with my loss. Unfortunately, I have not been able to find anything that is face to face to help partners/spouses with their bereavement.

I have lost my husband, there's no support out there, there's a huge gap. I can guarantee that I am not the only one that would benefit from a face to face support group, why is there not one available! Please keep your eyes peeled for updates as I have been trying to get a group organised.

I mean a group to sit and chat with, to support one another, share their experiences and where there is signposting of various organisations that may be of help.

Every day is a challenge with emotions raw, life empty and heart empty without Brian, the love of my life.

Forget me Not.

Gail Groves



Deaf Awareness in Aberdeen

The Scottish Government estimates there are around 850,000 people with hearing loss in Scotland, one in six of the population. 70% are over 70, a number which is expected to increase. This means that we might know someone with hearing loss.

This may lead to feeling isolated, invisible, and misunderstood in our communities, it is up to everyone to become more deaf aware.

Here are some tips that we can all do to improve communication and make things easier.

Use simple gestures like tapping them lightly on the shoulder, wave, tapping the table or floor.

Ask the deaf person how they would like to be communicated with, not all individuals are the same.

Maintain eye contact, face the deaf person, and try not to cover your mouth when talking to them.

Write things down the old-fashioned way. Apps with speech-to-text software such as Google Live Transcribe can help.

Be patient and talk normally. Take your time, but don't slow your speech down, shout or exaggerate your words.

If someone doesn't understand you repeat what you have said, or re-phrase it differently using plain language. Avoid jargon.

Reduce background noise such as music, other people's conversations and don't sit with a window or light behind you.

Use an interpreter. You should always follow the advice of the person with communication needs.

Learn British Sign Language. Some online courses for learning basic phrases may be free.

Do you, or someone you know wear an NHS hearing aid?

Get your replacement NHS hearing aid batteries (sizes 13, 312 & 675) are available to collect from 3 new sites in Aberdeen City. They are:

Aberdeen City Vaccination & Well-being Hub, Bon-Accord Centre - 01224 555333

Aberdeen Community Health & Care Village - 01224 655555

Community Nursing Outreach Team Middlefield Community Project, Manor Avenue - 01224 558928

NESS can provide support for people who are blind and/deaf across the North East of Scotland, to achieve independence. They have an audio library, clubs & groups, lipreading & managing hearing loss classes, daily living aids, Hear 2 Help and an employment service.

North East Sensory Services (NESS), SMS: 07593 102004

Winnie's Signing Class

I came to the end of my 8wks course teaching sign language and lip-reading class at the Hub and I had a brilliant class, and everyone had done so well. It's amazing how quickly they learn with only 16 hours altogether. On our last week we did the song called "What a wonderful world" in sign and everyone done it brilliantly. The second course (advance class) will start on the 5th of September to carry on learning. Anyone wants to know more about it they can ask The Hub for more information.

Keeping Middlefield Clean

Here's what Keeping Middlefield Clean have been up to!



Pick 1: Middlefield's Spring Clean 15/3/24

3 people attended - 5 bags collected
Large scale objects - mattress, bucket (upcycled),
office paper recycling bins x2 (upcycled)
2 hour session

Pick 2: Middlefield's Spring Clean: The Sequel 22/3/24

7 adults, 7 children attended - 4 bags collected
Large scale objects - tent, metal grate, scooters x2,
wheelie bin lids x2, stovetop, large piping, carpet
2 hour session

Pick 3: pick with Stephen Shaw 1/4/24

3 adults attended - 3 bags collected
Large scale objects - broken basket, chipboard x2,
cardboard box, wooden planks
30 minute session

Pick 4: Middlefield's Spring Clean³ 19/4/24

2 adults attended - 10 bags collected
Large scale objects - buggy, kids bike,
bike tyre, scooter, metal frames x2, wooden planks
2 hour session

Pick 5: Middlefield's Spring Clean: The Finale 26/4/24

2 adults attended - 7 bags collected
Large scale objects - bike frame,
toilet aide frame, tent, trike, damaged metal
2 hour session

Pick 6: personal time Pick 3/5/24

2 adults - 4 bags collected
Broken bike, planks, wooden panel
Found a starling skull and took home
2 hour session

Pick 7: monthly Pick 11/5/24

2 adults 2 children attended - 11 bags collected
Trampoline frame, Broken furniture,
sofa cushion, buggy 2 hour session

Pick 8: monthly Pick 15/6/24

3 adults, 4 children attended - 9 bags collected
Mattress, traffic cone, crate, Large cooking pot, frying
baskets x2
2 hour session

Pick 9: 24hr litter pick 20/6/24

6 adults, 1 child attended - 13 bags collected

**This is the breakdown of 66 bags and a
total of 16.5 hours.**



Aberdeen becomes the first major city to back the Volunteer Charter

On the 18th of July, Aberdeen celebrated two major sign ups to the Volunteer Charter, making it the first major city in Scotland to back it.

The Volunteer Charter is a list of 10 key principles, agreed by Volunteer Scotland and the Scottish Trade Union Congress, which protect volunteers.

The charter lays out that volunteers should not be used in place of paid members of staff, they should be given no financial reward and they should be able to volunteer in a safe environment, and more. Visit Volunteer Scotland to read the charters principles.

Sarah Latto, Volunteer Scotland's Senior Policy Officer explains why the charter is vital. "It's so important anywhere to be honest, but in a city like Aberdeen I think it's incredibly important because, we know that volunteers have really struggled over the past five years. With the COVID-19 pandemic, and then with the cost of living crisis, we know that volunteering is in decline, which is quite a concerning.

"So we want to just do anything that we can at the moment to try and ensure that volunteers know, are reassured, that they're going to have as good experience as possible, and

that when they are volunteering, that they're doing so in roles that are, really meaningful and sustainable as well."

Aberdeen is blazing the trail in Scotland, as the first local authority with major Charter Champions.

Aberdeen City Council and NHS Grampian have become the first two major signups, backing the Charter in Aberdeen.

Alison Everson, Chair of NHS Grampian explained why the organisation became Charter Champions. "The volunteer charter is really important to us because we want to show that we respect and acknowledge the work that our volunteers do. They are tremendous across NHS Grampian.

"I'm very proud of all the volunteers that we have within NHS Grampian and very grateful for all their work they do and really keen to give support to them, acknowledging them as, as individuals, not as a collective group of volunteers, as individuals who are giving of their time for the benefit of other people. We want to acknowledge the work they do and through the charter we can really support them."

Councillor Martin Greig, Convenor of Aberdeen City Council's Education and Children's Services Committee, Spokesperson on Culture shared why the council backed the charter.

Volunteers contribute an amazing amount of additional value, social value to the city already. So many organizations and groups depend on the kindness and the time that's donated by individuals right across the city. They add so much, so, let's, let's flag that up, and, and encourage more people to become volunteers."

Finally, Chief Executive of Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations (ACVO), Maggie Hepburn said "This is a bold display of civic leadership from the Council and the NHS and a very welcome one at a time when many voluntary organisations are struggling.

"It's also long overdue formal recognition of the vital role that volunteers play in the daily life of Aberdeen. Communities are being asked to do more for themselves, so it has become even more important that volunteers are properly supported and valued."

There are currently 240 organisations signed up as charter champions across Scotland, the more organisations that sign up, the more reassurances that volunteers have that they are valued and respected.

Visit Volunteer Scotland to view the charter and sign up! If you'd like to become a volunteer, why not check out the fantastic new Volunteer Aberdeen Website by visiting www.volunteeraberdeen.org.uk/



Recipe Corner

HONEY MUSTARD PASTA SALAD

(serves 4)

This tasty pasta salad is quick to make and great for a quick lunch or a barbecue or picnic.

INGREDIENTS

5 tbsp mayonnaise or half Greek yogurt and half mayonnaise.

1 tbsp runny honey

1 tsp mustard (Dijon or wholegrain not English)

6 spring onions, chopped

1 red pepper, sliced

300g pasta

1 tsp oil

100g cooked chicken, or gammon or bacon, chopped

1 tsp paprika

METHOD

Cook the pasta as per packet instructions.

Drain and mix in the oil to coat the pasta completely then set aside to cool.

Add the mayonnaise, mustard, paprika, and honey to a bowl and mix well.

Add all other ingredients and stir through to coat evenly.

Adult learning at the Hub

This is your invitation to come to our Open Day session at our Adult Learning Wellbeing Cafe on Tuesday, August 27th, from 9.15 am - 1pm at the Middlefield Community Hub on Manor Avenue, starting with a free breakfast bap and hot drink.

It's your chance to find out about our weekly classes and groups on offer at the Hub, that starts on Tuesday, September 3rd. You can meet our friendly tutors, try out a short session with them and sign up for classes and/or groups. Our classes are 'pay what you can' - either free or a £5 or £10 donation towards costs. Classes and groups are open to all adults over 18 who live in our area - Middlefield, Heathryfold, Cummings Park and Northfield to Byron Square.

Our programme is varied with Arts and Crafts, Baby Massage, Coping Skills for Anxiety and Depression, Sewing and Yoga. Our new classes include Spanish and Capoeira, a Brazilian form of dance and self-defence.

Some of our classes are funded through ABZ Works and we can support you in taking your next steps in employment or further education and training, if that's what you need.

All our classes run during the daytime but we'd like to start offering an evening programme soon too.

Everyone who comes along and takes part is entered into our free raffle for a £50 Primark gift card.

Please phone 01224 697000 to let us know for catering if you can make it along on the 27th of August.

Please phone and let us know if you can't make it along but are still interested in our daytime or evening classes.

Our Adult Learning Wellbeing Classes and groups are your chance to relax, learn a new skill, and make new friends—it's never too late to learn! So give it a go and we'll look forward to welcoming you on Tuesday 27th August.

Summer at shmu

We're delighted it's the summer holidays here at shmu, as we get to work with some brilliant young people on a range of exciting creative projects.

Here's what we've been up to!

SUMMER FILM SCHOOL

This year's summer film school was an absolute blast.

Film loving youngsters had the fabulous opportunity to experience every aspect of filmmaking. They wrote, filmed, produced and edited two amazing short films, all in the space of five days.

Splitting into two groups, they made 'Family Misfortunes' a horror style film following the passing of a family's father and 'Shattered', a short film about a poltergeist.

They finished off the week with a screening of the films for their friends and family.

Please visit our YouTube channel, 'shmuTV' to watch their fantastic work.

SCENE IN A DAY

Some keen filmmakers enjoyed the summer film school so much they returned for our Scene in a day session, along with some other eager young people.

Our Scene in a day sessions is also a brilliant opportunity to get a taste of filmmaking by recreating a scene from a film of the young people's choosing.

This year, the group loved recreating the 'Are we there yet?' scene from Shrek 2.

They did a fabulous job, acting, filming and editing the scene.

If you'd like to check out the scene, please visit our YouTube page 'shmuTV'.



Elected Officials

Cllr Donna Clark

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 still hold monthly surgeries at @theHub on Manor Avenue, however the date and time is changing to the first Friday of each month at 10am. I also hold surgeries at Northfield Community Centre at 10:30am as well as in the Cummings Park area which have recently moved to the Cummings Park Community Centre at 12 noon. Both these surgeries are held on the third Monday of each month. The most common issues I have been receiving from the Middlefield/ Heathryfold area include potholes, downsizing requests, grass cutting, overgrown hedges, abandoned vehicles as well as dealing with a lot of individual-specific cases.

I would like to welcome David Smith into his new position at the Middlefield Community Project. I know he is looking to undertake a lot of new and different activities to the Project and I look forward to working with him moving forward in order to help improve the local community.

I would like to congratulate all volunteers across the Northfield/ Mastrick North ward who received certificates at the end of volunteers week from ACVO in order to recognise their dedication to volunteering in their local communities and across Aberdeen.

I would also like to commend the efforts of all those within the Northfield/ Mastrick North ward who took part in a 24-hour litter

pick which took place on 20th June. It was great to join the group who headed out from Northfield Community Centre and help to clean up the area.

On Saturday 22nd June, I attended the official opening of the Northfield tennis courts on Kettlehills Crescent alongside my ward counterparts Gordon Graham and Ciaran McRae, following the refurbishment works to bring them back into a usable condition once again. It was brilliant to see so many families and individuals attend the opening and take part in a bit of tennis.

On Wednesday 10th July, I held two summer surgeries at @the Hub and Northfield Community Centre, both of which were a success. I am considering potential holding other surgeries like this during the October holidays.

I recently attended some of the graduation ceremonies for both the University of Aberdeen and Robert Gordon University in July. It was great to celebrate the fantastic efforts of all those who graduated from both universities.

Finally, I would like to wish all academy pupils within the Northfield/ Mastrick North area the very best of luck as they receive their exam results at the start of August.

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

Thank you Helen

We simply have to thank Helen Graham, who recently retired from her post as Project Coordinator at Middlefield Community Project.

Helen dedicated many years to Middlefield, doing so much for the community and its members. Enough can't be said for all she has done.

The Middlefield Mirror team want to give Helen the sendoff she deserves and celebrate her properly, so keep your eyes peeled for the next edition of the magazine where you can read more of Helen's amazing work in the community.

We want to hear from you too! Helen impacted the lives of so many and we know lots of you out there would love to thank her. We'd love to hear your stories so please get in touch by emailing rose.ross@shmu.org.uk

Aberdeen History

Alan Johnstone

Suggestions for change to Union Terrace Gardens is nothing new, as can be seen from this plan put forward in 1928 and reported in the Aberdeen Press and Journal.

The Links and Parks Committee of Aberdeen Town Council turned down yesterday a scheme for the erection of a building on the site of Union Terrace Gardens, with the reconstructed gardens and parking for cars on the roof and accommodation for a 'bus station below. The provision in Aberdeen of a parking place for motor cars has given rise to considerable discussion in recent months, but so far nothing of a tangible nature has emerged to public view. Unknown to the general citizens, however, Mr George Ross, retired manager, 28 Fountainhall Road, has been giving the question consideration for weeks now, and, yesterday, the Links and Parks Committee of the Town Council had an opportunity of studying a scheme proposed by him.

It is understood that the committee, while appreciating Mr Ross' desire to solve the problem, were of the unanimous opinion that the scheme would be too costly and that it would interfere with the amenities of the Gardens. They accordingly decided to recommend its rejection by the Council. In his first letter, dated November 28, Mr Ross stated that a parking place could be provided for about fifty cars by providing a ramp from the corner of Union Terrace and Denburn Viaduct to the level of the foot of the arches below Union Terrace pavement. It would be necessary to widen part of the path and make the surface smooth. By covering this space at the Union Terrace level parking for another fifty cars could be provided. This would practically widen Union Terrace. If



a small charge were made for the parking either or both suggestions would become paying propositions.

The letter went on to explain the proposal for a central 'bus station on the middle floor. The Gardens would, be raised to the Union Terrace level and preserved as at present. The middle floor, which would cover an area of about 5000 square yards, would be available as a 'bus station and the lower floor still, on the railway or Denburn level, could be used as a repair shop. By retaining the Gardens on the Union Terrace level, the open space was conserved. The area allocated to the use of the public would be more than is at present available. Touching on the traffic question, Mr Ross stated in his letter that his scheme would provide another important road and, possibly, rank for a grant from the Road Fund. Considerable traffic would be turned off Union Street, easing the congestion at the Market Street crossing.

In a later letter, dated January 6, Mr Ross gave some figures as to the estimated cost, but confined his calculations to the car parking space only. A fair estimate of the cost of forming a ledge over a strip of the Gardens along the Terrace, with the necessary piers and foundations, to provide a parking place on the Union Terrace level 500 ft. long

by about 30 feet wide would be £5000. A rough estimate of the cost of forming a ramp from the corner of Union Terrace near the Wallace Statue to the foot of the arches below Union Terrace pavement, widening the levels in front of the arches, and making the surface suitable for parking on the lower level, would be about £6700. As certain foundations were common to both sections, however, the cost of both parts of the scheme would possibly be less than £10,000. The space on the two levels would accommodate considerably more than 100 cars. While quoting no figure for the construction of the 'bus station, Mr Ross admitted that the cost would be substantial, but the advantages would be great. 'Bus stations were likely to become as common in the future as railway stations, and with so fine a site available Aberdeen might well become the pioneer of the movement. Ross concluded with the suggestion that instead of utilising the lowest floor for a repair shop, the north traffic might be dealt with there. The scheme was not intended to compete with the garages in the city, but to help them by increasing the motor trade of the city.

The photo shows children by the railway line fence at the Gardens, fascinated by the steam rising from a passing train.