

Middlefield Mirror

Summer 2023

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LIFE OF A VOLUNTEER

HUB NEWS

MUSIC MEMORIES

IT'S GOOD TO TALK

www.shmu.org.uk/press



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Editorial

Welcome to the Summer edition of the Middlefield Mirror.

Find out all about ongoings at the Middlefield Community Project and read Blanca's story of moving to Aberdeen

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





A week in the life of a volunteer

I'm Janet and I love volunteering in my community. Depending on the week, you may catch me all over Aberdeen volunteering for different groups.

I first started volunteering around four years ago when I had to stop working due to my health, and I was feeling fed up and unsure of what to do with myself.

I found that doing a bit of volunteering, here and there has given me a purpose and has helped both my health and mental health.

So, here are some of the ways that I volunteer, perhaps you'd like to do the same.

I volunteer at the Cummings Park Community Flat. The flat was the first place I began to volunteer, four years ago. I was out and about, walking in the area to give me something to do when I found the flat and I popped in to see what it was about.

I was made very welcome and joined the ladies group held there at the time. Shortly after, I found myself volunteering as a keyholder and as a member of the committee.

As a keyholder, I've been able to be there for the community, if anyone needs to use the flat, they are more than welcome and I am happy to make them feel welcome, have a cuppa and a chat.

I really feel that being involved in the flat has given me back a purpose, and a reason to get out and meet other people.

I also volunteer with shmu on two of my local community magazine editorial teams. It was through the Community Flat that I got involved with the Cumming North Magazine, before later joining the Middlefield Editorial team too.

When I first joined the teams, I was involved with brainstorming story ideas for the magazines and helping to share what the community would like to see.

Last year, I decided I wanted to challenge myself a bit further and decided to write for the magazines too. This was the right decision for me, I feel really good and it's nice to put my name to something and am

really proud of what I've achieved. I never thought I'd be doing this, it's brought out confidence in myself.

I'd encourage others to give it a go too, it doesn't matter if you have no experience, we're here to help!

Finally, last year I started volunteering for Seaton Community Centre's Soup and Sannies for over 55's.

I really enjoy doing this, it's a rewarding experience, meeting the stories and getting to know the residents that come along.

They truly appreciate the effort of all the volunteers and have welcomed us as friends too! I have been able to meet a lot of interesting people that I would not have known without spending some time volunteering.

If you have time to spare, why not have a look into volunteering yourself as our community resources are always appreciative of help. Why not pop into the Hub and see how you can help there!

Janet Calder



NEWS FROM ABERDEEN CITY LIBRARIES

Mastrick is one of ten libraries across Aberdeen City which, along with the Central Library, are all warm, welcoming spaces for their local communities and those visiting from further afield to use our fantastic services and resources.

Mastrick Library's current opening hours are Monday and Wednesday 10am-7pm, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 10am-5pm and Saturday 10am-1pm. Visit www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/libraries-and-archives/find-your-local-library for information on our other libraries.

From 24th June to 26th August, we will once again run our Aberdeen Reads Challenge. This year Library Bear will be having a cosmic, out of this world space adventure with your help. For every book read, library activity attended and/or challenge completed youngers and families will receive 100 cosmic miles. Let's see if we can get him all the way to the moon. It's only 238855 miles.! You can do it! Ask in the library for details.

Our Bookbug sessions at Mastrick Library take place on Tuesdays every 4 weeks. Spaces are limited, and booking is essential. Look out for details on our Facebook page or check with the library staff to see when the next session is being held.

Lego Club for 8–11-year-olds is back. These sessions run every 4th Monday from 3.45pm-4.45pm. Check with the Library Staff for the dates. We'd love to welcome more children to these sessions. Master Builders should book their place in advance. To register visit **Mastrick Library** or call **01224 788558**.



Visitors to the library can browse and borrow items. We offer books (including large print and audio books) and Junior and Adult DVDs. Borrowers can also request items, subject to availability.

If you know anyone who would be interested in borrowing library items but are unable to visit the library due to disability, illness, shielding or caring responsibilities, give us a call and we'll let you know about our Home Library Service where we deliver items to customers in their own homes every 4 weeks.

We offer up to two hours per day of PC access. These slots can be booked online via Netloan or by contacting libraries. We also offer printing services and have photocopying and scanner facilities.

We've introduced a new printing service called Princh. Which makes it easier to print straight from a mobile phone or device. Ask staff for more details.

We are always delighted to meet new faces. For more information on how to become a member, please visit our website or contact your local library.

For information on our services and online resources, please visit www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/libraries or contact Mastrick Library by email: **MastrickLibrary@aberdeencity.gov.uk** or telephone: **01224 788558**.



Grampian Women's Aid break down the signs of Gaslighting

Gaslighting is a manipulative tactic in which a person, to gain power and control of another individual, plants seeds of uncertainty in another person's mind. The self-doubt and constant questioning slowly cause the individual to question their reality.

Gaslighting can happen to anyone. Abusers carry out gaslighting behaviours slowly and deliberately so that the person it is happening to do not realise it.

10 Signs of Gaslighting Behaviour

1. Blatant Lies - You know the person is lying, often and with ease, yet they say they do not recognise this in their behaviour. You begin to have self-doubt, question everything and become uncertain of the simplest matters.

2. Deny, Deny, Deny - You know what they said. They deny ever saying it. They ask you to prove they said it. You start to question your memory and accept theirs.

3. Using What You Love Against You - This is a manipulative tactic used by the gaslighter, causing the person to question themselves and things they hold close. For example, if the person loves their job, the gaslighter will find issues with it.

4. Losing Your Sense of Self - The gaslighting continues methodically

and continuously over a long period of time. The victim, over time, becomes a different person. Self-confidence disappears, and the victim becomes a shadow of their former self.

5. Words Versus Actions - A gaslighter will talk and talk to convince a person of their concern for them. However, their actions will not reflect the words.

6. Love and Flattery - A gaslighter will tear a person down, build them back up and tear them right down again. This abusive pattern becomes reality for the victim and the praise associated with the building back up convinces them to think the abuser isn't all bad.

7. Confusion - A gaslighter instils constant and consistent confusion leading the victim to become desperate for clarity. As the person searches for clarity from the abuser, the cycle continues, and the abuser's power increases.

8. Projecting - A gaslighter projects their actions on to their victim. For example, if the gaslighter is a liar and a cheater, they accuse the victim of being a liar and a cheater. The person feels that they constantly need to defend themselves for things they have not done.

9. "You're crazy" - The gaslighter knows the person is already questioning their sanity and searching for clarity. Hence, when they call the person crazy, the person believes it. The gaslighter will also tell other people the victim is crazy. If the victim ever approaches those people for help, they will most likely not be believed.

10. Everyone Else is A Liar - The gaslighter may tell the person everyone else is against them and that everyone is lying. This increases their dependence on the gaslighter.

Gaslighting is a form of mental and emotional abuse. If you recognise the signs and believe you, or someone you know, is in a gaslighting relationship, we can help and support you.

Women seeking support should reach out to us by calling **01224 593381** or emailing info@grampian-womens-aid.com or visiting <http://grampian-womens-aid.com/contact-us/>

When we're closed, Scotland's Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline is available 24/7 via phone on **0800 027 1234**, email helpline@sdafmh.org.uk or web chat at www.sdafmh.org.uk.

KEEPING UP WITH THE HUB

The Hub Cafe @Middlefield

If you're in the Middlefield area, then why not pop into the Hub Cafe at Middlefield Hub in Manor Avenue?

You won't regret it, whether it's for a coffee and a fine piece, some soup or a fine piece.



Our cafe has been here since January 2017, when the then-new Hub building opened.

Breakfasts are served from 8.30 am till 11 am. Lunch is 11am to 2pm. We're open Monday to Friday.

Tasty snacks and meals are available - toasties, panninis and baked tatties with various fillings.

Everything is costed at a reasonable price. For the daily special - soup, main course and pudding - please take a look at the cafe blackboard. We also have a Children and Pensioners Menu with smaller portions at lower prices.

Christine is our cook who does an amazing job running our cafe. She also makes 60 meals a day for the nursery children. A big shout out to our volunteers who help serve behind the counter and in the kitchen.

We are always looking for new volunteers to get involved. Please contact **01224 697000** or drop by if you want to learn more.

Our Hub Cafe was developed in 2016 by Management Committee members when we were still based at the flats at Middlefield. Those Management Committee members still volunteer every week at the cafe.

They are committed to offer tasty, healthy reasonably-priced, snacks and meals for our project users, local residents and visitors. Thanks to everyone involved in making our cafe a continued success including our loyal customers.

What's on?

Here at the Middlefield Community Project we've been running a series of classes since last November on a Wellbeing theme. We've chosen this theme to help with the post-pandemic recovery for individuals and families in our communities.

We plan to continue to run them again from the week beginning Monday September 4th.

The week before, on Tuesday 29 August, from 9.15 am till 1 pm we're having our 'Give it a Go!' session with taster sessions to give you a chance to meet our tutors and our learners. Come along and find out about all the learning opportunities, activities and groups.

Places are limited on our courses. We welcome all new learners. Let us know if you'd like

to come along to the Middlefield Hub on the 29th.

We'll be offering :

Arts and Crafts

Confidence to Cook

Coping skills (Dealing with Anxiety and Depression)

Health Issues in the Community

Sewing

Self-care

Yoga

There's a free breakfast buttie and a hot drink for all learners who sign in and a chance to enter a free raffle for a £50 Primark gift card. So please do come along and find out about all the learning opportunities, activities and groups at the Hub.

If you can't make it on the 29th please make contact with the

Hub telephone **0122469700**
or drop in for a chat with Lesley
Dunbar, the Adult Learning
Development Worker and see
if it's time for you to Give Adult
Learning A Go!

Growing @ Middlefield Hub

In the last few months, our
Community Food Growing Group
has gotten underway again at
Middlefield Community Project at
the Middlefield Hub at Manor
Avenue. The group is led by local

mom Claire Forbes and everyone
meets weekly, usually on a
Tuesday at 10 am for a couple
of hours.

Apart from being more physically
active, research has shown there
are benefits to our mental health
by being outside and connecting
with the earth and nature. There
are also benefits to other creatures
with our food growing - it improves
the biodiversity in the area.

We're looking for new volunteers
to join us - don't worry, you don't

need any experience - we're a
friendly, welcoming bunch.

Aberdeen City was recently
awarded its Sustainable Food
Places Silver Award and we're
pleased to be a part of this local
and national food movement.
Thanks also to Rebecca Dunn, the
Community Growing Development
Officer at CFine for her support in
getting us set up and going
as a local community food
growing group.



Elected Officials

Councillor Donna Clark

It has been a very busy time in Middlefield and Heathryfold.

I have received several queries regarding housing moves- mostly requests to move to smaller accommodation with many feeling that they have to downsize due to the cost-of-living crisis. I have also been getting many enquiries regarding grass cutting in the area.

I visited the Energy from Waste facility to learn about how the system is operated and is set to deal with the waste from Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray. I also got a tour round the facilities and see how it operates.

On 10th June, I conducted a walkabout of the Northfield/ Mastrick North ward which included Middlefield and Heathryfold.

Following this, I have raised a considerable number of issues with Aberdeen City Council, such as the high number of blocked drains and graffiti. If you see me out and about and have any issues or concerns, please do not hesitate to approach me.

I was also invited to attend the celebration of success event for Northfield Academy at Kings Church in the Bridge of Don. The event was to recognise the success and achievements of pupils from Northfield Academy for the 2022-23 school year. Over 1000 people attended. I would like to congratulate all pupils for their hard work throughout the year and thank all staff for their efforts throughout the year as well as the work put into organising the celebration.

Following First Aberdeen's decision to increase bus fares on 2nd April, I would continue to encourage people who have not yet applied, to apply for the under 22s bus passes, which ensures free bus travel to anyone under the age of 22.

I regularly hold surgeries every first Wednesday of the month at 7pm at The Hub on Manor Avenue during term time, with the next surgery being held on 6th September. I do also hold surgeries out with this time, by appointment only.

If you have any issues or concerns, please do not hesitate to get in touch. I can be contacted via the following methods: email: donclark@aberdeencity.gov.uk , mobile: 07977 399622.

MSP Jackie Dunbar

I have been very busy in both the Scottish Parliament and in the Aberdeen Donside Constituency. I hold regular surgeries at my Constituency office in Mastrick to address the needs of constituents.

A significant amount of the casework which my office has been receiving has related to various housing issues including mould and a lack of insulation. Other issues include overgrown trees, speeding and issues with Adult Disability Payment (ADP). If you would like to make an appointment to discuss any issues that you may have, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Whilst I have been in the Constituency, I have been fortunate to meet with the GP Practice Mangers of New Dyce Medical

Practice and Woodside Fountain Health Centre. We discussed their local challenges, as well as the difficulties they share with other GP practices across the UK.

I have also met local charities such as Aberdeen Cyrenians and Aberdeen Foyer, who were particularly helpful in gaining insight into how best to support young people and those on low incomes through the cost-of-living crisis. Additionally, meeting with North East Sensory Services (NESS) gave me a perspective into how the government can assist those with hearing and sight difficulties to live with independence and dignity.

In Parliament, I've had the opportunity to speak in a number of debates, including Scottish

Government led debates on social isolation and loneliness as well as climate change and our just transition to net zero. I also led a members business debate, in collaboration with Amy Callaghan MP, on the VAT Burn Campaign. We urged the UK Government to follow the recommendations of several skin cancer charities, to scrap VAT on sunscreen products with SPF 30 or greater.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch via the following: email: Jackie.dunbar.msp@parliament.scot, by phone: 01224 011 936 or by post: 12a Mastrick Shopping Centre, Greenfern Place, Aberdeen, AB16 6JR.



MUSIC MEMORIES

After the very successful Football Memories programs which have been running in connection with Alzheimers Scotland and Aberdeen FC Community Trust (AFCCT), there were plans put in place to expand this into a regular session with Music Memories.

We spent a good amount of time planning this and the launch date was decided to be 31st March at the Players Lounge at Pittodrie, what we wanted was an environment where people could come to reminisce and speak about music in a safe environment, have a cup of tea and a chat with like-minded people.

Music Memories is a dementia friendly program based around reminiscing and focusing on making new memories and empowering

people living with dementia to engage through participation and enjoyment of specially tailored music. Debra Christie who is the Health and Wellbeing team lead at AFCCT said “Music can help people cope with challenges in their life which could include social isolation, loneliness, and loss. Music can help us recover from trauma and negative experiences so let’s harness the power of music.”

The sessions have been fantastic with music quizzes, Rock and Roll Bingo and a session that saw a conga chain form and head out the door into the Pittodrie concourse! There was of course a “getting to know you” session where everyone had a great chat and spoke about their favorite bands and concerts....

and some not so favorite songs! Participants will also get a memory box of their own so that they can keep records of sessions, photos etc. as a permanent memory of the sessions.

The sessions are held every second Friday at Pittodrie in the Players Lounge from 10am to 11.30am with entry through the Players Entrance and everyone is welcome to attend.

Alan Johnstone from Alzheimers Scotland and Football memories was delighted with the sessions starting, he said “Music in all its formats is a powerful element of reminiscence therapy so please come along, share your memories and maybe give us a song”

Dave Ironside

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 day activities. These help to support the children in their transition and 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 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 your progress and celebrate so many positive achievements.

To all 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 our children and families who attend our setting.

The nursery children and staff enjoyed their end of term celebration activities and summer trips. The Wee Helpful Hedgehogs nursery children enjoyed going to their favourite place Dizzy Rascals with the nursery staff. Great fun was had by all. There were certainly lots of quiet and sleepy children in the coach on the way back. The Wee Heilan Coos nursery enjoyed going to Camperdown park with their parents and nursery staff.

Supporting parents and children with the forthcoming transition to P1

This year we were working in partnership with 10 different schools. Nursery staff made children their own booklet about going to school. This booklet that they could keep had pictures of their new school, their uniform, school logo and friends that were going to the same school. Both nursery rooms also made displays

to help the children see who was going to which school and who was staying in our nursery. Children from both nursery rooms had trips together to go to visit the nearby Manor Park and Heathryburn schools. We also had visits to our nursery from teachers from all of the different schools where they enjoyed seeing our nursery rooms and meeting the children.

Nursery places for August

We are now taking applications for nursery places for August. 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.





‘Its’ good to talk’

When we are dealing with everyday living sometimes life just happens, issues can develop whether it is family, relationship problems, parenting issues, or generally just not feeling that you can cope with what is happening with you presently. If we are trying to cope with our problems we cannot think clearly or deal with other issues that arise, this can feel overwhelming and too much for us to cope with.

At the Middlefield Hub project, I work as a Well-being Worker and offer free 1-1 hourly appointments for people to come and discuss their problems and worries. I believe that this individual time is a safe personal space to come and feel listened to.

I use the MindU programme which helps to support the individual at their own pace, to explore problems and help make their own realistic goals to hopefully feel better. In life we

are learning all the time; sometimes we can re-learn that making small positive and personal changes in our lives is beneficial and important for ourselves, our families and the people around us.

The MindU programme can support you achieve these personal goals to help you:

Learn and develop new coping skills

Improve your confidence

Work through problems

Discuss any well-being issues

Make plans for personal development.

We know from research and findings that It is good for us to talk, good for us to share our feelings and problems. And most importantly it feels good to be listened to.

People that have used the MindU programme have said

‘I feel more positive about my future and from speaking to Ann about the issues I have in the relationship with my family member has improved my understanding of my feelings’,

‘I feel more able to cope now with my homelife, and I have learned that as a parent I have to look after myself and have time for me too’

‘I feel lighter and able to see the joy in things around me’


‘I have learned to like myself’

‘I have learned a lot about myself’

‘I felt heard’

Ann Brodie, Well-being Worker

If you feel this could help you, please contact the Hub :01224 697000 or email mcp@middlefield.org.uk



A Paraguayan in Aberdeen

My name is Blanca Matto, I'm from Paraguay, I have lived in the UK about 10 years, we lived in Brighton, England before moving to Aberdeen City, one year ago.

I moved with my daughter to the little city of Aberdeen, every morning we prepare a delicious breakfast, I must have my morning coffee and my daughter has milk to make her strong.

My daughter is happy in her school in Aberdeen, and is enjoying the summer holidays, getting to go swimming and playing in the park.

I like to play sports, and I use the bicycle in the City Centre. I also go to a cycling group for adults, called Belles on Bikes, which is a volunteer group and free to join. We have been to Torry, on a bike ride and I enjoyed the view of the coast. My favourite place in Aberdeenshire to visit is Stonehaven, we explored Dunnottar Castle, which had an amazing view.

I really enjoy photography and Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire is a beautiful place to take photos. It is very green and there's lots of wildlife, like Highland coos, which I love.

Aberdeen city has beautiful buildings, people are very friendly, we love exploring the green areas, for example the park, our favourite place is Footdee and the beach.

We love sweets, my favourite Muffin cake with tea, and my daughter favourite ice cream.

There are lots of activities to do in the spring, such as the family day in Duthie park, which is my daughter's favourite park. But my favourite month to spend in Aberdeen is October. It's not too cold yet and there's lots of beautiful orange colours as the leaves fall from the trees.

I like Scottish culture and its typical clothes, I recommend Aberdeen city for its amazing Museum, the view from the Art Gallery is glorious in the sun it is a picturesque city.

Aberdeen city it is a great opportunity to start over and learn English. I have had the opportunity to learn English through Grec's group the Language Café. This group welcomes people of all cultures and languages. I enjoy going to the group, they are brilliant, they organise speakers from helpful organisation to come and chat to us. They provide, tea and coffee and lots of biscuits and let us get to know one another and make friends. The sessions run every Thursday from 11am to 3pm starting on the 31st of August at Aberdeen Arts Centre.

We get to learn all about Scottish culture, which is very interesting. I learned a lot about Scottish

traditions, such as wearing the Kilt and the different Tartans. I have also tried Haggis and really liked.

Aberdeen is great for a start over as a single mother, to raise my special daughter. The city is small, it has a school, shopping, universities, children's play area, library, many activities on holiday for children. There are many good pubs and restaurants to try out too!

My friend in Paraguay asked me if I like it here, and I said, 'I love it here, but January is very cold, so have a hot chocolate!'

Blanca Matto





Una paraguaya en Aberdeen

Mi nombre es Blanca Matto, soy de Paraguay, he vivido en el Reino Unido alrededor de 10 años, vivimos en Brighton, Inglaterra antes de mudarnos a la ciudad de Aberdeen, hace un año.

Me mudé con mi hija a la pequeña ciudad de Aberdeen, todas las mañanas preparamos un delicioso desayuno, debo tomar mi café de la mañana y mi hija tiene leche para fortalecerse.

Mi hija está feliz en su escuela en Aberdeen y está disfrutando de las vacaciones de verano, nadando y jugando en el parque.

Me gusta hacer deporte, y uso la bicicleta en el centro de la ciudad. También voy a un grupo de ciclistas para adultos, llamado Belles on Bikes, que es un grupo de voluntarios y es gratis unirse. Hemos estado en Torry, en un paseo en bicicleta y disfruté de la vista de la costa. Mi lugar favorito para visitar en Aberdeenshire es Stonehaven, exploramos el castillo de Dunnottar, que tenía una vista increíble.

Realmente disfruto de la fotografía y Aberdeen y Aberdeenshire es un hermoso lugar para tomar fotos. Es muy verde y hay mucha vida salvaje,

como las vacas de las Tierras Altas, que me encanta.

La ciudad de Aberdeen tiene hermosos edificios, la gente es muy amable, nos encanta explorar las áreas verdes, por ejemplo el parque, nuestro lugar favorito es Footdee y la playa, nos encantan los dulces, mi pastel Muffin favorito con té con poca leche y el helado favorito de mi hija.

Hay muchas actividades para hacer en la primavera, como el día familiar en el parque Duthie, que es el parque favorito de mi hija. Pero mi mes favorito para pasar en Aberdeen es octubre. Todavía no hace demasiado frío y hay muchos hermosos colores naranjas a medida que las hojas caen de los árboles.

Me gusta la cultura escocesa y su ropa típica, recomiendo la ciudad de Aberdeen por su increíble Museo, la vista desde la Galería de Arte es gloriosa bajo el sol, es una ciudad pintoresca.

La ciudad de Aberdeen es una gran oportunidad para empezar de nuevo y aprender inglés. He tenido la oportunidad de aprender inglés a través del grupo Language Café del Grec. Este grupo da la bienvenida

a personas de todas las culturas e idiomas. Disfruto yendo al grupo, son geniales, organizan oradores de organizaciones útiles para que vengan a conversar con nosotros. Proporcionan té y café y muchas galletas y nos permiten conocernos y hacer amigos.

Aprendemos todo sobre la cultura escocesa, lo cual es muy interesante. Aprendí mucho sobre las tradiciones escocesas, como usar el Kilt y los diferentes tartanes. También probé Haggis y me gustó mucho.

Aberdeen, para empezar de nuevo como madre soltera, para criar a una hija especial Aberdeen ya que la ciudad es pequeña, tiene una escuela, tiendas, universidad, área de juegos para niños, biblioteca, muchas actividades en vacaciones para niños. ¡También hay muchos buenos pubs y restaurantes para probar!

Mi amigo en Paraguay me preguntó si me gusta aquí, y le dije 'me encanta aquí, pero Enero es muy frío, ¡así que tómate un chocolate caliente!'.

Blanca Matto

Storytelling Photography



We are now a few weeks into our latest Storytelling Photography course and the participants are well on their way to being brilliant photographers.

The course, run by our brilliant volunteer and retired photography lecturer, Mark Wyness, aims to teach participants how to capture incredible images which tell a story, using their phone cameras.

The photographers have gotten stuck into the course, enjoying imaginative weekly photo tasks and getting creative with their images. They are learning how to both improve their photographs and use images to tell stories.

If you're interested in photography and would like to learn how to take better photos using your phone or are keen to get involved in shmuPRESS by joining the photography team, keep an eye out for future courses or email rose.ross@shmu.org.uk or call 01224 515013 for more information.

shmuTRAIN

There have been plenty of great achievements in our shmuTRAIN department recently.

Our Stage 1 young person Lauren has recently finished her Personal Development Award - Practical Abilities Unit. For her project she chose to research her favourite artist Lewis Capaldi and about mental health. She produced an amazing PowerPoint, very informative poster and did a very good presentation about both! We are so proud!

Here's our previous Succeed 3 group participant Simon with his well-earned Work Placement Certificate from Robertson. He had 4 days of construction/painting & decorating work experience and learned a lot about the field he wants to pursue further! He is now away to start a Construction course with Barnardos and we wish him all the very best!

If you would like to find out more information about our employability team, please contact Michelle Trail by emailing employability@shmu.org.uk or calling 01224 515013



Spot the signs – looking out for depression

We all have mental health, but we don't all keep an eye on our mental wellbeing or know what signs to look out for, which may indicate our mental health is declining.

The Scottish Government's health survey in 2021 indicated that around one in four people in Scotland can be affected by mental health problems in a year.

In this series we will be breaking down some signs of various mental health conditions, when to go to a GP and where you can get help. In this edition, we are focussing on Depression.

The Scottish Government report shows that globally, around 5% of adults experience depression.

There are many forms of depression, but there are signs to look out for that may help you consider whether you

may be affected by depression and to seek help.

Signs of depression can often be displayed through, physical, mental and social symptoms.

These are a few of many signs that the NHS suggest keeping an eye out for.

PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS:

Moving or speaking more slowly

Changes to appetite or weight

Changes to menstrual cycle

Disturbed sleep – you may find it harder to fall asleep or that you wake throughout the night.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SYMPTOMS

Experiencing low moods or sadness continuously

A feeling of hopelessness

Low self-esteem

Lack of motivation or interest in things

Feeling worried or anxious

Having thoughts of self-harm or feeling suicidal

Social anxiety

You may participate in hobbies less.

Avoid contact with friends and family and retreat from social occasions.

These are just a few symptoms of depression; they vary widely from person to person and may be more severe for some.

You should talk to your GP if these symptoms persist daily over two weeks or months. Find out more information about Depression on the NHS' website.

Penumbra Mental Health Launch new service for Aberdeen

Penumbra Mental health are a charity providing dedicated services for people with mild to serious and enduring mental ill health.

Well Aberdeen is a new service, by Penumbra funded by Aberdeen City Council, delivering short term support for anyone living in Aberdeen, over 16 years of age.

Well Aberdeen is designed to help you feel well, empowered and linked locally. Many of Penumbra's team members are peer colleagues who have lived experience of mental ill

health and have some understanding of what you are going through.

The support will give you time, space and compassion, you can use up to 3 sessions to explore your current situation and plan for your own goals.

You will also have access to friendly group workshops, for sharing practical techniques and tips with others to manage your mental health.

Penumbra will connect you with a local peer network who can share their own lived experience. There will also be plenty of opportunity for

volunteering, the team will support you to join in with community activities and interests.

You can access this by contacting Penumbra directly, simply email **Well.Aberdeen@penumbra.org.uk** and they will send you a simple support request form to get to know a bit about you and how you're feeling.

If you would like to better your mental health, get in touch with Penumbra today, you can also check out their website for more information, visit **penumbra.org.uk**

Community Contacts

Aberdeen City Council Helpline - 0800 0304 713

ALCOHOL

Alcoholics Anonymous - 0800 9177 650

Drinkline - 0300 123 1110

CRIME

Crimestoppers - 0800 555 111

DRUGS

Alcohol and Drugs Action Helpline

01224 594700 or 07927192706

Narcotics Anonymous

0300 999 1212

DENTIST

Emergency - G-Dens - 111

DOCTORS

NHS 24 Emergency - 111

POLICE

Non-Emergency - 101

ELECTRICITY

If you have a power-cut - 105

GAS

Gas Emergency - 0800 111 999

WATER

Scottish Water Emergency - 0800 0778 778

HOUSING

Emergency Repairs - 03000 200 292

Family Planning - 0345 337 9900

Mental Health Aberdeen - 01224 573892

Breathing Space - 0800 838 587

Samaritans - Need to talk

01224 574 488 or 116 123

SOCIAL WORK

Adult Protection - 0800 731 5520

Joint Child Protection Team

01224 306877 or 0800 731 5520

Aberdeen City Carers Service- 01224 914036

Age Scotland - 0800 1244 222

CFINE 01224 596156

Financial Advice at **CFINE** 01224 531386

Pathways 01224 682 939

Citizens Advice 01224 586255

St Machar Credit Union 01224 276994

Northfield Medical Practice 0345 013 0740

Woodside Medical Group 01224 492828

Penumbra First Response 01224 276994

OUR LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS ARE:

Councillor Donna Clark

donclark@aberdeencity.gov.uk, 07977399622

Councillor Ciaran McRae

cimcrae@aberdeencity.gov.uk 07500 999617

Councillor Gordon Graham

ggraham@aberdeencity.gov.uk 07736 329751

Area MSP

Jackie Dunbar

– MSP for Aberdeen Donside

Aberdeen office: 01224 011936

Jackie.Dunbar.msp@parliament.scot

Area MP

Kirsty Blackman

– MP for Aberdeen North

Aberdeen office: 01224 633285

kirsty.blackman.mp@parliament.

DOMESTIC ABUSE SUPPORT

Domestic Abuse is not acceptable. It is not your fault and you are not alone. Domestic Abuse is when you are hurt, bullied or frightened by:

Your husband or wife. Your boyfriend or girlfriend

Your current or ex-partner

Their behaviour can be; controlling, physical, sexual, financial or emotional.

Help and support

There are services available to support you, and they are still open. You do not have to wait for an emergency to get help. Tell someone you trust or contact:

Police Scotland

If you are in danger and it is an emergency, call 999.

For non-emergencies call 101

National Domestic Abuse Helpline Free and confidential advice. Open to all. 24 hours a day.

Telephone: 0800 027 1234. Website: sdfmh.org.uk

Grampian Women's Aid

Telephone: 01224 593381. Website:

grampian-womens-aid.com

Rape Crisis Grampian Telephone: 01224 590932.

Website: rapecrisisgrampian.co.uk