

# Middlefield Mirror

Winter 2022

NOW COVERING HEATHRYFOLD



## In this issue:

SPORTS CENTRE OPEN

HUB NEWS

TIME TO LISTEN

LETTER TO VANDALS

[www.shmu.org.uk/press](http://www.shmu.org.uk/press)

# Contents

3	New Sports Centre Opens
4	Keep Well
5	News bites
6-7	Keep up with the Hub
8	Are you listening?
9	Mental Health Triggers
10	Letter to Vandals
11	News bites
12&13	Elected Officials
14	shmu
15	I want to be a...

## Editorial

### Welcome to the winter edition of the Middlefield Mirror.

The theme for this issue is health and Wellbeing. Join the Middlefield Mirror team in exploring how we can take care of our emotional and physical wellbeing and how we can lend an ear to support others. We also have pieces from the Middlefield Community Project nursery and local officials and an update on the Healthy Hoose!

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](mailto: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](http://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





## Sport Aberdeen's Get active @ Northfield venue is now OPEN!

Sport Aberdeen was absolutely ecstatic to open the doors to its newly refurbished health and wellbeing venue – Get active @ Northfield – on Monday 3 October.

The venue boasts a 25m swimming pool, a 40-station gym and a huge variety of fitness classes. An impressive 292 new members joined Get active @ Northfield in September and the number continues to increase.

Sport Aberdeen already has 601 participants in its swimming lesson programme, ranging from 0 years to adults, and 45% of these participants live locally in Northfield or surrounding areas.

There are approximately 100 swimming lesson classes in the timetable per week, with 10 regular swimming teachers.

Sport Aberdeen is also offering a new Aquaphobia programme to help individuals with a fear of water to relax, float, and feel happy and

in control. These sessions will be delivered by a certified Aquaphobia coach and take place on a Tuesday from 1430 to 1530 at Get active @ Northfield. Find out more and apply here.

Tony Dawson, Sport Aberdeen chairman, said: "We are delighted to welcome the community of Northfield and surrounding areas to their newly renovated venue.

*"This is a fantastic addition not only to the local area, but for other communities across the city."*

Aberdeen City Council Co-Leader, Councillor Alexander Nicoll, said: *"This is a very impressive facility!*

*"Physical activity has many positive impacts, so we are pleased that people of all ages and abilities will be able to benefit from the programmes set to run within the new health and wellbeing venue."*

The excitement and buzz in the local community is clear from recent comments on Facebook.

One person said: *"My Mum has used the pool a couple of times and she loves it! She thinks it is fab and the changing rooms too."*

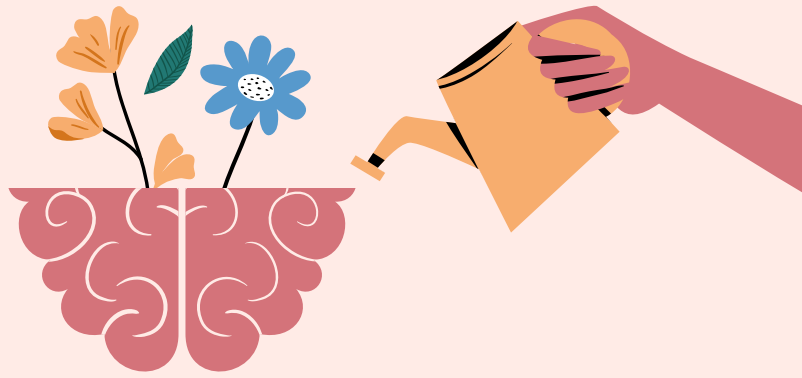
Another person said: *"I really enjoyed my swim on Friday. The pool was a nice temperature and I loved the costume spinner and the free hair dryers."*

Another person said: *"Brilliant – we took our two boys to the ASN swimming session last night and the disabled access facilities are perfect. The pool temperature is great and so clean, the gym is fab, and the staff have been brilliant each time we have been in."*

If you are aged 16 years or over and would like to come along and try the venue, then sign up for a free Sport Aberdeen guest pass here.

**To find out any further information, head to <https://www.sportaberdeen.co.uk/venues/get-active-northfield>**

# What we need to keep well



It's extremely important to make sure we are taking care of our mental and physical health.

There are a few different things we need to help take care of ourselves. Here are a few ideas to help you do this over the coming winter months.

## **Connecting time**

One of the most important things for our mental health is to make connections with people.

Getting out and meeting other people works wonders for my mental health. I enjoy getting together, meeting new people and making connections. I am part of a few different groups, from knitting to women's groups to adult learning, they make me very welcome, and you will never feel left out.

It's allowed me to bond with likeminded people over our shared interests. These connections were so important, especially during lockdown, although we weren't able to see each other in person, we still had the connection with each other and stayed in touch.

I definitely encourage people to find out what groups are in their area and join in to meet new friends for your own mental health. I would be lost without my groups and the friends I have gained from them.

## **Physical time**

Throughout lockdown, I started walking more to keep up my health. If the weather was fine, I would be out walking every day.

Getting out and walking helped my lung condition. Before I started walking regularly, I couldn't walk very far without having to stop to catch my breath. Now, I see such a difference in my health, doing that little bit helped and now I can walk for longer and do exercise. Steep hills have been known to catch me out though.

I often bump into others on my walk and have a little chat, it makes me feel good for interacting with others and looking after my physical health at the same time. My friend and I try our best to get out into the countryside and have lunch and a walk together.

## **Focus time**

I often find it difficult to concentrate, I find that having volunteering activities helps my concentration. Having tasks to focus on helps me to be productive and make a difference.

I have started to do different activities to stimulate my brain such as jigsaws, word searches and colouring in. This helps me pass time and gives me something to focus on. I enjoy having music on in the background with no pressure to finish within a certain time.

I also volunteer at my community flat where I help service users with anything they need. I also volunteer at Seaton Soup and Sannies, helping to lay tables, serve food and interact with the elderly ladies and gentleman. I love helping out, they always have great stories to tell you and are up for a quiz or a sing song. They get

a lot out of the day as they get to feel appreciated and look forward to getting together with each other and us volunteers too.

Since I stopped working, I struggled to adjust, as I have worked since I was 16 and it was a big adjustment to life. I found that I didn't just miss the work but I also missed the company. Volunteering has given me back a purpose to my days and given me a reason to get up instead of staying inside the same four walls. My life is full again, volunteering has done that for me.

If you would like to volunteer, I encourage you to see what's out there, there are so many organisations in our community, who desperately need volunteers. You could be one.

## **Down Time**

It is important to have some downtime too, it is not good for anyone to overdo it.

I make sure to listen to what my body is telling me, If I feel tired or if my body gets sore, I know its time to listen and take a break. Otherwise, my health will decline and I won't be able to do all the activities I love to do.

I make sure I plan some rest time for myself, usually at the weekend, when I can spend some time watching tv or knitting away. Once I have had some rest and relaxation, I'm set up for the week ahead and don't need to worry.

**Janet Calder**

# Pathways in Middlefield

## MEET THE KEYWORKER – Claudia Karl

Claudia has been with Pathways for 9 years, working in the Middlefield area, helping people to find work.

Claudia began her working life in Germany, in retail and trained in nursing before moving to the family business where she covered the administration and human resources functions. She then became a recruitment consultant, progressing to country manager for Germany and then European Manager. Claudia then moved to Scotland in 2003.

In Scotland Claudia worked as a carer before returning to the recruitment sector as a freelancer for an international recruitment agency. She then took up a role at Aberdeen International Airport before joining Pathways in 2013

becoming one of our team of Employment Keyworkers. Claudia brings her diverse work experience to everything she does to help clients to find work.

In her spare time Claudia likes pottery and helping various dog rescue charities as well as looking after her own dogs and other family pets.

Claudia meets clients in the Middlefield Hub and also at Manor Park. Claudia is always in demand so please make an appointment or ask for details at the venues.

**To contact Claudia call Pathways on 01224 682 939 or email [c.karl@pathways-online.org](mailto:c.karl@pathways-online.org) to make an appointment.**

**Pathways –  
Helping You To Find Work**

Middlefield  
Mirror Letters  
to the editor

The editorial team of the Middlefield want to hear from you.

The team are introducing a new interactive section to the magazine and want to hear from the community.

In this section, you can write to the editors of the Middlefield Mirror, let us know of issues and events taking place in the community, send us your thoughts on topics we have covered. Have your say of what you want to see represented in the magazine and what you'd like to read.

Please email [rose.ross@shmu.org.uk](mailto:rose.ross@shmu.org.uk) with the email subject MM Letters to the Editors to have your letter included in the magazine.

Don't forget that there are lots of ways you can get involved in the magazine from submitting articles or article ideas, telling us what issues you'd like to see covered, sending us photos of the community or joining the editorial team.

Please contact Rose if you would be interested in getting involved!



# KEEPING UP WITH THE HUB

## **Settling in-new children and families**

In August we had several new children and families start attending our nurseries. We would like to thank all of our parents and carers for working in partnership with us in order to help get their children settled into nursery.

We are so pleased at how well all of our new children have settled in, especially as many of them have had very little group experience of social interaction with other children or even been away from their parents. Settling your child in a new setting can often take time, as each child is an individual and responds differently. It can sometimes be a difficult time for parents if they see their child getting upset so we appreciate your support in the different settling strategies that we use. It takes time, but all the hard work and persistence always pays off in the end.

The nursery staff have shown great dedication, enthusiasm, commitment and enjoyment in developing the variety of different learning opportunities they offer to the children both inside and outside. We are currently trying to add to and develop our wider larger garden space. The nursery rooms and smaller gardens

look so welcoming and appealing and help the children to develop their individual interests at their own pace in order to help them reach their full potential.

Thank you for donating cable drums

We would like to say a big thank you to Cable solutions in Inverurie for kindly donating us some cable drums for our nursery garden.

The children love using their imagination, creative thinking and problem-solving skills to use the cable drums in a variety of different ways e.g., climbing on, jumping from, balancing on, construction and role play. They are a great resource as they can be anything that the children want them to be.

## **Therapets dog visit**

We were very fortunate to have a visit from the most beautiful Rough Collie dog called Leo and his owner Fiona. Leo is a fully trained Therapets dog and very much used to going into a variety of different settings such as schools and nurseries to visit children. The children really enjoyed his visit and Fiona helped the children to learn about how to be safe around dogs. He was very friendly and very fluffy. One of the children commented, "He is beautiful". The children loved making friends with

him, cuddling and stroking him. It was great to see the positive and very much calming impact he had on the children. Animals are well known to have a positive impact on wellbeing.

This visit was hugely beneficial for all of the children, but particularly for those who may not have had any experience of being around dogs. We are very much looking forward to him coming back for another visit next term. The children will then learn more about what dogs need, see some of his belongings and learn more about how we have to look after dogs.

## **Photographer**

After a two year break, we were lucky to have our usual photographer, Linda from Tempest photography come back in this year to take photos of the nursery children.

The whole process was made easier for us and parents with the creation of an online booking system where parents could book the slot that they preferred rather than us planning all the slots for parents. Feedback from parents has been positive, with many saying that the booking system was easy to use and worked well. As always, the photos of all the children were amazing.

### **Walks and Minibus outings**

We have restarted our weekly outings where we take small groups of the nursery children out on the minibus, on focussed visits to a variety of different places. The children enjoy having ownership over choosing where they would like to go.

Both nurseries also enjoy going out on a weekly walk to the nearby Auchmill woods.

The aim of these visits is to enable children to experience different natural outdoor environments such as the beach, forests and local parks and gardens.

Trips on the minibus so far have included Seaton Park, Duthie Park and Johnstone gardens. Going to the Auchmill woods is great as it is right on our doorstep and hopefully our visits will help to encourage children and families to utilise this fantastic setting more. Especially now that all the paths have been upgraded.

Ron, our community development worker has also been adding some art installations of butterflies and wooden mushrooms in order to add some features of interest.

The children really benefit from being part of a smaller group as this helps enable the children to develop their confidence, language and let them explore different environments with more focused adult support.

We go out throughout the different seasons as we have our fleece lined waterproof all in one suits for the children to wear. This also enables the children to experience seasonal changes and different weather conditions. Other benefits and learning opportunities include:

**Developing confidence in visiting unfamiliar places.**

**Experience a feeling of wildness in green/open spaces and experience a diverse range of habitats and features.**

**Develop practical skills such as how to crossroads, manage dogs and encounters with wildlife.**

**Learn how to care for public spaces.**

**Develop curiosity and a connection with nature and having fun!**



"It's good  
to talk"  
(but listen!)



**We have all seen a poster saying the importance of talking to someone about any problems you may be having, and of course it's very true, but it isn't always easy to talk or to even start a conversation. I would like another slogan to be considered and that is – It's good to listen!**

Active listening is even more important when the person who wants to speak is having difficulty putting their feelings and thoughts into words.

I have a lifetime of experience which I try to put to good use in my everyday life and I have discovered how important it is to listen. We all think we listen to others, but do we?

### **ACTIVE LISTENING**

The first rule of active listening is, empathise, don't sympathise. Never say you know how they feel, you simply don't. You know how you feel, but this is not about you, it's about someone who for whatever reason, feels they can talk to you. You can empathise by using supportive language. Try saying 'I hear you' or 'I understand'.

It's also important that you make this person aware that you are listening to them and not looking at your phone!

Try not to tell of your experience of an issue. No matter how similar it may

be, it is not what this person is going through, and everybody's experience of life is different.

I think a good example of this is ageism. I'm in my 70s and I neither look (after carefully applied make up) or feel and think how the public think an old person thinks or feels. Why would I? Just because I may be the same age as you, there are a thousand life experiences which will make us different. So, while it's fine to think you know where this person is coming from, you really don't

### **Listen and listen again.**

They are not asking for help directly, though they may be in urgent need of help, you may not be either qualified or in a position to offer that help.

What is happening when someone starts talking to you is that they are looking to speak their thoughts. Thoughts which may be giving them sleepless nights and which they think no one else can possibly have.

So let them speak and only speak to show you're listening. When they pause, they may be looking for you to advise them and if you have some knowledge of whatever is troubling them then fine you can relate how you acted when it happened to you but always leave it open with the fact that everyone is different, but do they think that could help?

Always remember too that when someone opens up about their problems, you may hear a shocking story. Try not to react to this, they already know it's a bad situation and that they should take action. An abused person often knows they are being abused, what they don't know is how to get out of a circle of situations. A listener can ask what they feel they can do, or what they want to do. You are not an expert, you may not have solutions for this particular problem, but you may be able to point to experts.

Most people just want to talk through their problems, and they want someone to listen, that's all. The act of 'unburdening' is extremely useful and once fears and emotions are out in the open, they no longer have the same level of fear. Today, I think it's fair to say we are in the midst of a mental health crisis, and while some situations require more than talking, it's a start

So, when you ask a friend or even a passing stranger, "how are you" be prepared to take a few minutes from your day to just LISTEN to them.

I've heard many stories while waiting for a bus and I've also learned a lot from people whose story is inspirational. So please take the time to talk and be sure you listen too

**Wilma Collie**



# Facing our mental health triggers

Isn't life stressful now? I wonder why so many people are experiencing so much stress and anxiety in their lives and I have spoken to some people who have never had issues with stress or depression but now find themselves falling into that emotional state where even small things take on huge significance and the spiral into depression happens so quickly that it takes family and friends by surprise, but I have a theory and this is based on recent events in my life.

Anyone who knows me will tell you I am an outgoing character who is not afraid to challenge anything which needs to be challenged.

That attitude didn't start at birth though. I was what my mother called "a nery child". I was afraid of my own shadow.

Meeting my husband when I was 19 was the start of the change in my life. He gave me the strength to do things I never knew I could do.

When our son came along, my life would change in ways I never thought possible. He is Autistic with all the challenges that that can bring and over the years I learned to challenge traditional thinking. I was never slow in coming forward if I felt something wasn't right. That was a mother's instinct in the beginning but that mindset stayed with me to this day. And nowadays, I don't moan about an issue, I look for ways to make it better.

It doesn't matter to me what or who you are, if you're doing something wrong, I will challenge you. But even I have my limits and just recently my ability to deal with things was severely challenged.

Life for everyone has changed so much and become a daily struggle. The biggest struggle I think is the rising cost of energy and I didn't have any issues until the energy company I use started changing things around. I challenged this and things settled down again only for it to start up a few days later. I began to stress over this, not the money but the way they seemed to be taking over and the rising feeling I had that I was not in control.

I must admit I got a little bit stressed out and didn't like the feeling.

Then I made a decision.

I was able to take back control from the energy company and had things changed to how I wanted. Then I felt much better, but it made me think about why I got in such a state. I realised it was because I couldn't control the situation

I think this is something that we need to feel, in control and when something happens that we can't control it has an effect on our thinking and our way of dealing with life.

I feel much calmer now and I have thought about the rise in mental health issues. Is it because we

haven't been in control of many aspects of our lives in recent years?

Take health care. We are all aware of the changes that has gone through, and we are still struggling to come to terms with those changes. For some people these new challenges might be on top of existing health concerns and of course we all reach out to others more than we ever did in the past, but sometimes we take on others issues without realising it.

We are all more willing to talk about stuff which in the past we would have kept to ourselves. That was a bad attitude and had a significant impact on both men and women.

Thankfully that's changing too. Sometimes in life things cannot be changed and we have to deal with it and accept that it's different now.

For me I now know what triggers my stress levels to rise. Control, or at least losing it. Can we exercise more control over a situation, or can we accept it and move on?

Taking the time to evaluate my triggers has given me a better understanding of my mental health and helps me take better care of it.

My trigger came from the energy company but was rooted in lack of control, what's yours?

**Wilma Collie**





# A letter to vandals

I don't know you, but I see your work in many corners of my community and haven't you been busy? Some of your work is astonishing and I struggle to know how you manage to do what you do.

I want to know why you do it, what makes you hate your community so much?

You may think it doesn't matter or hurt anyone when you have been busy, but it does. It's not as if you're the first of your kind, there have been people like you for generations, but they didn't have the level of hate that you seem to have against us, your community.

I am speaking about VANDALISM in my community area, but I know this is not confined to my community alone. I want to know why it's done. What drives a person to take, what are sometimes huge efforts, to destroy what is around them.

Community groups give of their time and energy to improve their area and make life better for everyone and to see costly equipment destroyed beyond repair is simply not acceptable. Resources are stretched and what we have may be all we get given due to the financial and staff pressures on councils and groups

Why do you do it? What drives you to destroy much loved and hard fought for property and equipment? Can you tell us because we are listening, and we want to know.

If you think its somehow a grown-up thing to destroy stuff and make stuff unusable to people, it's not. Its small children who are left upset and bewildered by your actions and people who only want to help their community.

If you are at a loss for something to do, come and speak to your community hub.

Some of your vandalism is spectacular and if your imagination and anger was put to good use it would be great for your community.

VANDALISM AFFECTS EVERYONE IN SOME WAY. LITTER HURTS

And to the person who came out of the hub with a takeaway coffee got into his car and threw the empty cup on the ground, there were two volunteers doing a litter pick that day and you just dropped your rubbish and drove away. They didn't say anything to you but you were lucky because if I had seen you, I would have told you to pick up and you'd never do it again.

Litter is unsightly and dangerous so if you take it into the park then take it home. WE DON'T WANT IT

**Wilma Collie**

# ABERDEEN'S FIRST CINEMA SHOW

*Alan Johnstone*

Aberdeen's first "cinema show" took place in the Music Hall in 1896. The Aberdeen Journal of 25th September looked forward to the event.

"This new and unique entertainment will be given in the Music Hall on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of next week. According to southern newspapers, the animatography throws living pictures on the screen in a highly realistic manner, and creates much amusement, raising the spectators to the highest pitch of excitement. For ingenuity, it is unsurpassed, and never fails draw a demand for an encore. The apparatus which will be used in Aberdeen is Mr R. W. Paul's invention. It is the same as has been employed with great success at the Egyptian Hall Promenade Concerts, and Queen's Hall, London. When the entertainment leaves Aberdeen, it has been arranged by Messrs Marr, Wood & Co. to visit Peterhead, Brechin, and Montrose; and, as already announced, the same firm have arranged for an animatographe exhibition at Glenmuick tomorrow, in the presence of their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of York and the Duke of Cambridge."

The same newspaper of 29th September reported on an impressive show. "The first of a series of three exhibitions of photographs was given yesterday evening in the Music Hall, Aberdeen. This is the first occasion on which the results of Mr R. W. Paul's marvellous invention, the cinematoscope, have been shown in Aberdeen, and the entertainment was naturally looked forward to with considerable interest, a fact

which was amply demonstrated by the magnificent gathering that filled the hall. The exhibition was remarkably successful. The scenes reproduced were of the most varied description, and the enthusiasm of the spectators was unbounded. In all no fewer than eighteen views, or about eight or ten more than are usually given at a performance, were thrown upon the screen, and they included the arrival of the Paris express at Calais, the Serpentine dance (in brilliant colours), Westminster Bridge, cycling in Hyde Park, the coronation of the Emperor of Russia, an engineer's workshop, the Boulevards of Paris, Brighton beach, and foot racing. In addition to the photographs, the entertainment embraces a very clever and enjoyable performance by Mr Douglas Beaufort, who is an admirable conjurer and ventriloquist, and gives in addition an excellent musical sketch, a la Grossmith. Messrs Marr, Wood & Co. deserve to be complimented for having arranged with Mr David Devant, of the Egyptian Hall, London, for the production of the entertainment, which will be continued tonight and tomorrow."



***The photo of the Music Hall dates to the late 1890s / early 1900s. Sourced by Alan Johnstone***

## Heathryfold Park update

Friends of Heathryfold Park group are in the final stages of an installation in the park. This will start in the next few weeks. We are very excited about this so watch the park area to find out more. The park is also due to have trees and shrubs planted as part of a city-wide greenspace project.

The Park Group were also in the process of trying to get statue installed in the park area which would represent the park area. A metal sculpture of deer or a family group of deer is a suggestion, and the group would welcome ideas from park users.

Heathryfold Park group, is a group of local residents doing our bit to improve the area of Heathryfold Park and Auchmill Community Woodland. We also hold 'Pick in the Park' events where we pick up litter and keep the park clean!

For more information visit our Facebook Page 'Friends of Heathryfold Park'.

# Elected Officials

## Councillor Donna Clark

Since being elected as a Councillor in May for the Northfield/ Mastrick North Ward, I have been tirelessly working to ensure the views of Middlefield and Heathryfold are heard.

I have received several queries regarding housing issues, vandalism, issues with street lighting and tree issues in the area amongst a number of other matters within the area. I am pleased to note that graffiti on the bus shelters at the Haudagain bypass and Manor Avenue at Logie Terrace has been cleaned by Aberdeen City Council, following the matter being reported to the Council by myself. I would encourage residents to

report any further instances to me as soon as they happen.

I have recently had an opportunity to visit the refurbished facilities at Get Active@ Northfield, which officially opened to members of the public on Monday 26th September, with the pool opening a week later on Monday 3rd October, due to technical issues. I hope that residents of Middlefield and Heathryfold can return to using these fantastic facilities. For further information regarding opening times of the facilities and classes that are running, please visit the Sport Aberdeen website or give them a call.

Over the summer period, I took part in a joint surgery with Jackie

Dunbar MSP @theHub for the Middlefield and Heathryfold areas, which was well attended and a variety of issues were raised. Going forward, I will be holding a surgery @theHub at 7pm, every first Wednesday of the month, with the next surgery taking place on Wednesday 2nd November. Feel free to pop along if you have any issues or concerns that you would like to discuss.

**If you have any issues, questions 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**

.....

## Councillor Gordon Graham

I conducted a tour of Byron Square with Council Officials and the Police, the main issue we identified was that the trade waste bins were located close to the buildings allowing easy access to the roofs.

As people know I am a member of Friends of Heathryfold Park, we are currently waiting for trees and shrubs to plant at various locations in the area. They are due to arrive late October early

November. We have also secured funding for exercise equipment which will be at various locations around the park.

I had a visit to the New Pool and Leisure Centre, I am sure it will make a positive contribution to the area. People are already stating that they have joined either the swimming sessions or the activity center.

I went down to Cumming Park community flat to meet volunteers

at the flat, to thank them for the work they are doing and present them with Certificates.

I attended an open day at Middlefield Community Project during this time I provided a kids Bebop Activity Bouncy Castle from monies raised at my 65 Birthday bash.

**Gordon Graham**  
**ggraham@aberdeencity.gov.uk**

# Jackie Dunbar MSP

Since my last update, the Scottish Parliament has been on its summer recess, this has meant that I have had the opportunity to be out and about within the Aberdeen Donside Constituency, including holding joint surgeries, which included a joint surgery for the Middlefield area at the Hub, where I was joined by Councillor Donna Clark.

I was pleased to have supported the Cost of Living (Tenant Protection) Bill, which has recently been passed by the Scottish Parliament. This emergency legislation will be introduced to put in place a rent freeze until at least 31st March 2023. The Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government stated that "it is right that tenants in the social sector are protected during this time and, of course, no social tenants will face a rent rise during these next six months." I note that the Cabinet Secretary also had engagement with landlords in the private sector, where there is recognition that excessive rents are not acceptable and a recognition that tenants are struggling in the current cost of living crisis. The purpose of this legislation is to provide necessary protection for tenants during the current cost of living crisis, the legislation also recognises that some landlords can be impacted by the cost crisis.

A local project which I was recently made aware of was the Junior Cop initiative, which sees Police Scotland partnering with schools such as Muirfield School, Quarryhill School, West Park School and Manor Park

School, to allow pupils the opportunity to carry out speed checks around their school area, whilst also allowing them to speak to road users. I understand the initiative was initially set up to help create positive relationships between the children and the police. I recently submitted a motion to the Scottish Parliament recognising this important initiative.

I had the opportunity to meet with a number of organisations during the summer recess period, including SSEN, Openreach, Aberdeen South Harbour, Charlie House, Autism and Neurodiversity North Scotland, Aberdeen Bay Wind Farm, Stroke Association and Scottish Rugby Union to name but a few. Through these meetings I had the opportunity to discuss with the organisations the work they have done/ are doing within the Aberdeen Donside Constituency and how their work benefits all communities not just in Aberdeen Donside but also across the whole of Aberdeen City.

Now that Parliament has returned from the summer recess period, I will now be back in Edinburgh from Tuesday to Thursday, however, my office remains open and are more than happy to assist with any issues or concerns that you may have, 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.**

## Healthy Hoose Update

Many within the community are keen to keep up to date with any developments regarding the Healthy Hoose.

The Healthy Hoose, located at Middlefield Community Project is now acting as a Community Treatment and Care Clinic (CTAC)

This will be one of four CTAC's located across Aberdeen.

These clinics offer blood pressure checks if requested by your GP, Blood tests, requested by a GP. Ear care, with requirements set by the clinic and the removal of sutures or staples after surgery or injury and finally, wound care. This will be available 3 days per week.

This change follows the closure of the Healthy Hoose on the first of March 2022.

Previously ran as a nurse practitioner and drop-in service, the new system will be appointment only, which can be booked by calling **01224 550200**. At present there is no nurse practitioner service available.

Surveys are still available at the Hub if you would like to share what you would like to see in the Healthy Hoose.

## Adult Services

The Adult Services team are delighted to hear that one of our participants has won a Koestler Bronze Award for a music video produced during his film sessions at HMP Grampian.

The track 'Living with Time' features hard-hitting lyrics tackling the complex background to one man's offending and the impact of a lengthy prison sentence. The video includes an honest and charismatic delivery from our participant, who despite being an experienced poet had never performed on camera.

Only 11 other entries from across the UK received recognition in the Performance category with even fewer achieving one of the coveted top prizes.

Koestler Arts is the UK's best-known prison arts charity, encouraging people in the criminal justice system to change their lives by participating in the arts. The Koestler Awards have been running for 60 years and each year attract 3,500 entries. Alongside recognition, winners can receive feedback and sell their artwork.

---

## Challenge Poverty Week

Challenge Poverty Week took place between the 3rd and the 9th of November.

shmu's campaign was a collaborative effort with Cfine, ACVO and Abernecessities. Each organisation made a short film, highlighting how low income and access to fair pay, high cost of living, and lack of access to help and services that people need, are affecting thousands of local households across the city.

The films were then screened at the Belmont Cinema on Monday the 3rd Of October, kicking off Challenge Poverty Week.

Followed by an open discussion, bringing third sector organisations and community members together to discuss what more we can do together to challenge poverty in the region.

We were also delighted here at shmu to use our various platforms from social media to community magazines to showcase vital information and local organisations, doing important work to challenge poverty.

You can view each of the films and STV's coverage of the event at [ww.acvo.org.uk/cpw-22/](http://ww.acvo.org.uk/cpw-22/)

# I want to be a....

Every child says that at some point before becoming an adult. I want to be a fireman, nurse, doctor, lorry driver, the list is endless. But how many people are doing the job they first dreamed of? And how many people are happy doing what they do?

We see people in our everyday lives doing a job or a service in our community, but have we ever wondered how they got into that role and are they happy?

One person most of us have heard of is our relatively new member of the Scottish Parliament for the Donside district, Jackie Dunbar.

I was lucky to grab a few moments for a chat and a coffee with Jackie during Holyrood's summer recess.

I started by asking her how she is getting on with her new role and if she had any surprises when she started?

"I am constantly amazed to be a member of the Scottish Parliament", she said. She went on to explain that walking into that place and taking her seat was awe inspiring, and she still must pinch herself!

I asked Jackie what influenced her to get involved in politics and had it been something she had always been interested in. It wasn't always so.

Losing her mum at an early age changed her life in many ways and her father's determination to keep the family together no matter what, greatly influenced her attitude to getting a job done to the best of your ability, traits which stand her in good stead in her current role.

After leaving school Jackie went to work for Norco at Berryden, where Sainsburys is today. The old co-op

was loved by many, and Jackie enjoyed her time there on the fish counter, bit smelly maybe, but she enjoyed it! A spell with the Town and County petrol station was followed by working at the Tesco filling station.

After having her daughter in the early in 1990 Jackie decided she wanted to play a part in the SNP. They had been on the sidelines of Scottish politics for a considerable time but there was a change in how people were thinking, and so Jackie decided this was what she wanted to do.



■ VICTORY SALUTE: Thumbs up as Maureen Watt (middle) SNP, wins Northfield with 1642 votes.

She was very much involved in her local community and saw the struggles and problems they dealt with, and she wanted to help. To be a voice for them, and generally make life better. So, she joined the local SNP office. Very much an office 'boy' in the beginning, door knocking, leaflet delivering in the early days, and generally behind the scenes work, but speaking to people on their doorsteps convinced Jackie that this was the right thing for her, so she put herself up for election.

Getting just 27 votes the first time, however, didn't put her off and she carried on till she was eventually elected to serve the Donside area as an MSP.

Born in Peterhead, Jackie moved around a bit as a child, always having the love and support of her family which has been crucial in her new role.

As all working mums know, getting the work life balance is tricky at the best of times and although today's fathers are much more hands on than previous generations it is still often women who organize and deal with daily life and fit in a paid job along the way.

Jackie's role of course takes her away from the family home a fair bit and must add to the pressure of daily life but she lives by a very simple rule.

When Jackie closes her garden gate and enters the family home, she is quite simply a wife and mother. No politics, (well as little as possible) are allowed to interfere with that role.

That seems very sensible, if not very difficult given the huge workload she will have if not now then certainly in the future.

The one thing which came across at our interview was that although she never dreamed of being a politician when she was a child it was surely her childhood which influenced her more than even she herself realizes.

Her very clear desire to help in any way she can and her very focused approach to problems is an attitude which can only benefit the community at large. As my final question I asked Jackie if she was happy.

She replied yes, she is and her role now has given her an even greater insight into how she can help her community.

I hope Jackie keeps that special feeling for it shows how she is very much one of us.

# 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:

**Councilor Donna Clark**

*donclark@aberdeencity.gov.uk, 07977399622*

**Councilor 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: 0131 34 85067

*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](http://sdfmh.org.uk)

### Grampian Women's Aid

Telephone: 01224 593381. Website:

[grampian-womens-aid.com](http://grampian-womens-aid.com)

**Rape Crisis Grampian** Telephone: 01224 590932.

Website: [rapecrisisgrampian.co.uk](http://rapecrisisgrampian.co.uk)