

woodside free**press**

Spring Edition 2025



Contents

3	News Bites
4	Woodside Women's Day
5	Neighbourhood Network
6	UDecide
7	Community Planning
8&9	The Rightful King
10	Free Things To Do
11	Becycle
12&13	Aberdeen Festivals
14	shmu
15	Katie's Comic



Editorial

Welcome to the Spring edition of the Woodside Free Press. This is YOUR magazine.

We are here to help you find out what's going on in Woodside and connect with your community.

In our pages you will find news, views, reviews and features.

Woodside has been a busy community, this season. We've got the lowdown on the brilliant new Denis Law mural, Woodside Womens Day, Udecide and more!

If you have something you would like to say, some local issue you think deserves coverage, or if you would like to get involved by joining the happy band of volunteers that puts this magazine together, please contact Rose at shmu on **07752586312** or email **rose.ross@shmu.org.uk**.

All the content in this magazine has been produced and approved by members of the editorial team.

The staff at shmu are able to support and train anyone living in the area who is interested in developing their ideas and skills in either writing, photography, research or proof reading.

Woodside Free Press is a community publication and the views expressed are not necessarily those of the editorial team or of shmu.



Supported by





Girls celebrate World Thinking Day

On Sunday 23rd February more than 50 members of the Woodside and Hilton Rainbows and Brownies joined together to celebrate 'World Thinking Day' at Hillside Church. World Thinking Day is a celebration of 10 million girls worldwide that has taken place on every February since 1926. It remains a day for all Girl Guides and Girl Scouts to think of each other and celebrate their sisters all around the world.

The girls all had a great day working together to complete a challenge badge while learning about the 5 World Centres based in India, Mexico, Ghana, Switzerland and London. Highlights of the day included making samosas, learning Bollywood dancing, preparing guacamole, crafting piñatas, creating African drums and having snowball fights! It was a very busy day packed full of activities before the girls joined together to remake their Rainbow or Brownie promise and have a campfire singsong together. It was a great opportunity for the girls in the Woodside and Hilton area to make new friends and join together to have fun!

We would like to thank Hillside Church for their hospitality and making us feel so welcome during the Church service in the morning and the Girlguiding volunteers who gave up their time to support this event.

If you are interested in finding out more about volunteering with Girlguiding or if your daughter aged 4-18 is interested in joining one of our units please get in touch with Heather Kirkwood (Hilton District Commissioner) on hilton@girlguidingaberdeenshetland.org.uk

Forty-Five Years Fersands and Fountain

Fersands and Fountain Community Project began offering services back in 1980. It operated from a small community Flat in Sandilands Drive before opening a youth Hut and office in the old dinner huts at Kittybrewster School. Later the Portacabins were erected at the same location. Since then, the project has been involved in many achievements and many changes but has always had the same philosophy: to involve residents in managing and delivering services, to combat poverty, reduce isolation and increase education.

On the 7th of March the project was invited to a Civic Reception at the Town House where they were joined by a hundred friends and colleagues old and new. Local Councillor, Hazel Cameron formally welcomed the SCIO and thanked them for the 45 years of service they have provided. Mark and Claire then went on to welcome all their guests and highlight the major achievements the project was involved with through the years. Dave Simmers one of the Founders finished off the speeches and wished the SCIO another successful forty-five years. It was a real honour and a pleasure for everyone involved to be able to celebrate the birthday in such a beautiful and historic venue with such pomp and ceremony.



Woodside Women's Day Take 2

The Woodside Network recently held its second women's day!

Eighty women from across the city came together to experience what was on offer for their health and wellbeing.

On the day, you could take part in workshops which included, soundbath, Zumba, meditation, Nutrition activity with Aberdeen Science Centre and yoga. The Scottish Women's budget was there, as well as a spirit of the women panel. The day was brought to an end with a lovely cacao ritual.

The ages of the women ranged from 15 to 55+. The idea of holding a second day was to try and reach the women who had not managed to come along the first time. Both days were to bring women together to look at their physical and mental health, and to involve them in the community. They got the opportunity to look at what services the community could offer to women.

I personally found the day uplifting, empowering and well informed. It was not only about my own health - I found it powerful to see women supporting women, helping to design services. Women are at the heart and soul of their

families and the community of Woodside.

The women of the community are so inspiring, from the mum around the corner to the inspiring women we have working and volunteering in the community services.

As Chair of the Woodside Network, I have a few people to thank. First of all ACVO, for giving the network a grant to run Woodside Decides, for funding both of these days. To the Network partners who continuously support the area. Most of all, I would like to thank the inspiring women who ran our workshops and stalls, to Kimmy and Dorothea in the coffee bar, who keep us all fed and watered. A big personal and professional thank you to the supportive women who helped organise and ran the day on behalf of the Network. Kit from Printfield, Claire and Almas from Fersands, Larissa from shmu and Freya from the Network. Without you all, I would have been at a loss for what to do.

You continue to inspire and surprise me, so thank you to, you wonderful, amazing women.

Charlene Kilpatrick.
Chair, Woodside Network.





Woodside Community Neighbourhood Network

Our Network consists of **Woodside residents, Community organisations, church representatives, elected councillors, council agencies, emergency services and anyone else living or working in Woodside who wants to make improvements.**

Woodside Decides!

Over the last year we have been making real efforts to get more people involved in our Network and in community services & activities.

By organising an “Over 50s” day, a Cultural Connection Day and two Women’s Days, we were trying to reach out to other community members and offer them opportunities to get involved in more services or activities at a local level.

The Network has also attracted some funds that it can allocate to groups or individuals with ideas to make improvements to the community.

Recently, we helped a woman’s group pay for some therapeutic art

sessions with a £60 grant. We also helped pay for training costs for a local man who supports a men’s group (£1000). He’s now studying for a qualification in Bio Counselling, to develop his skills. The Off the Rails Community Garden has benefitted from a £3000 grant to enable them to continue to develop their garden by creating a “Wellbeing Corner” and work will be beginning on this very soon.

Making Things Better

Currently, we are looking around Woodside for small groups that we can support to make a difference in their surrounding or setting, whether a Scout group, school group, sky rise block or nursing home. We may be able to offer a mini grant to groups that show they have organised themselves and come up with an idea that will improve something in Woodside and will make a difference to people’s lives.

Kerb parking update

Sandilands Drive and Ferrier Crescent residents attended meetings to campaign for change in the new law that bans motorists from parking on the pavement.

Residents were aggrieved as over thirty car owners in this area were fined in a single Sunday night operation. After this was raised at a Woodside Network meeting, we discovered that we had to apply to the council for an exemption to this rule. One of our local councillors, Neil Copland made a formal request for an exemption for Sandilands Drive and Ferrier Crescent on our behalf.

This request for exemption was denied, so anyone continuing to park on the kerbs anywhere in Woodside will run the risk of getting a £60 fine. What do residents want to do about this? Do you want to try and gain more public support to campaign for change? Come along to our monthly meetings!



Funding for Woodside Projects from UDecide announced!

The results for Aberdeen City Council's participatory budgeting fund, U Decide, was announced on the 7th March. There was £60,000 worth of funding available, £40,000 from Community Planning Aberdeen and £20,000 from the Fairer Aberdeen Fund. The total would be split across Aberdeen's priority neighbourhoods in each of the three localities: North, Central and South. This means £20,000 could be applied to each locality and shared amongst some of the projects in the community.

Community groups applied for funding by explaining what projects will benefit and how the funds will be used. The public have a direct involvement in deciding how the funds are spent as they could vote for what project they want a share of the funds awarded to in their area. The central locality saw 7 projects receive a share of £20,000. 2 of

these projects are based in Woodside.

The projects which received funding in Woodside were:

U-Band = £3000

U-Band is a community band consisting of mainly Ukrainian refugees who are introducing the local population to Ukrainian Culture through song. They recently moved to Scotland and their goal is to conduct performances for Ukrainians and residents of Aberdeen to share their culture and bring people together.

To find out more about who they are and what they have planned, visit U-Band on Facebook or you can contact them via email: UkrainianBand.uk@gmail.com.

Empowher - £2645

Empowher is a peer-led mental health support group for women in Aberdeen. It was only set up in November 2024 and it provides

a safe and supportive space for women to discuss their mental health. It was created due to the founders' lived experience, being inspired by the success of Andy's Man Club and recognition that there is a lack of support groups for women.

The group meets up every fortnight for 1 hour at Hilton Community Centre which is close to Woodside. At least two regular participants are also from the Woodside area. The funds they receive will allow them to hire the venue for their fortnightly meetings and provide professional art therapy for those who are interested. They also aim to find advice from specialist organisations to keep the group going.

For more information on when meetings are held, follow Empowher Aberdeen on Facebook or reach out to them by email: empowheraberdeen@outlook.com.

Community Planning Aberdeen

Your Place, Your Plans, Your Future

It's time to have your say in Aberdeen. Community Planning Aberdeen would like all Aberdeen residents to share their views.

They'd like to hear what you think is good now and what could be better, your views will help shape Aberdeen's plans for improvement.

Engagement is running between March and the 18th of May. You can visit <http://yourplaceyourplans.commonplace.is> to take part or find out where you can take part in person.

Community Empowerment Toolkit

An online toolkit to support community organising and engagement has just been launched by Community Planning Aberdeen. The Community Empowerment Toolkit provides tips and information for anyone looking to take action and make changes in their community. It is also for anyone

looking to undertake community engagement as part of their role.

The online toolkit has been developed through engagement with community members and organisations across Aberdeen, and also through the Grampian Engagement Network.

Community members can find out a wide range of information, including getting in touch with their local Community Council, where to get help with funding, useful data to support projects, and how to connect into existing groups and organisations.

For organisations looking to undertake community engagement, the toolkit provides a step-by-step guide, with lots of useful resources to help support good community engagement. While the toolkit has been developed by Community Planning Aberdeen, the community engagement section can be used for any location.

If you have any feedback, or would like to share any good news stories of community engagement please email communityplanning@aberdeencity.gov.uk.

'Foundations of community engagement' Training

As well as the toolkit, a new introductory training course 'Foundations of community engagement' is being offered to community engagement practitioners across Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire and Moray. This course is for staff who want to learn the basics of community engagement and apply these skills as part of their job role. If you have any questions regarding the training courses, please contact gram.puttingpeoplefirst@nhs.scot.aberdeencity.gov.uk





The Rightful King

Aberdeen Statues

Will Wallace said tae Bobby Bruce

‘wha’s that doon by the Provost’s hoose?’

*The Bruce said ‘why, that’s Denis Law
the finest man tae kick a ba’*

‘I’ll second that,’ said Rabbie Burns

I lo’ the Lawman’s twists and turns.’

*The Lion said when Law did score,
he couldna match the Hampden roar*

*Lord Byron said ‘I’m mad and bad,
but nae as dangerous as that lad*

*And not amused was Good Queen Vic
when Denis Law they didna pick*

*Ed the Seventh said not one thing
for Denis is the rightfu’ King.*

A ten-year-old boy looked up at the new mural on Clifton Court. ‘Is that Ronaldo?’ he asked his father. ‘No son.’ he answered, ‘that’s Denis Law.’ ‘Who’s he?’

An understandable question from the wee boy. After all, why should he know about some footballer from long ago? All sports, especially football, is all about the NOW. There’s nothing more important than today’s game. Who’s in, who’s out. The game could determine the league, the cup, relegation. A real six-pointer. When the kicks off, hearts start racing.

Then next day the pundits pick over the bones of the match. One says, ‘what a signing,’ the other ‘the manager must go.’ Within a week the memory begins to fade, within a month the game is forgotten.

But some games, some managers and some players are remembered.

One of them is Denis Law.

Born and bred in the Printfield area of Woodside, Denis Law was brought up in post-war poverty. He attended Powis School. His footballing talent was soon spotted and Denis was signed for Huddersfield, moving on to Torino before ending up with the

club he’ll always be associated with, Manchester United. Lightning fast, with great skill with both feet, he made up a famous threesome with George Best and Bobby Charlton.

Nicknamed the Lawman and simply ‘The King’, Denis scored many great goals for United and for Scotland, he was always proud to play for his country. Pele famously said that Law was the only British player that would get chosen for Brazil. He reached legendary fame for one goal in particular.

United had given him a free transfer. Manchester City took him on. It was the second last game of the season, a game United had to win if they were to avoid relegation for the first time in their history. In the 81st minute Law backheeled it into the net and walked off the pitch. It wasn’t quite THE goal that sunk United, but the world saw it as such. It was the last kick he made as a professional player.

Denis Law died in January of this year. It’s a shame he never saw the wonderful new mural that dominates the area where Denis Law played in the streets when he was a ten-year-old boy.

Dougie Thomson

Meet the Artist

The brand new, striking mural, was done by Australian visual artist, Jerome Davenport alongside local artist Charlie Kelman.

Jerome, part of the Blank Walls Art Collective has previously been involved in delivering art projects in London, Germany, Portugal and even more in his homeland Australia.

Jerome and a small team of helpers used the Pouncing technique that helps transfer work from paper on to a wall or other surface at a different scale. In this case it involved getting outlines of the main images i.e. the shape of the head in perspective, then working on detail once the proportions are correct.

Jerome said; “ I was honored to get involved in this huge project to celebrate Woodside’s Dennis Law.

“The reception and welcome from local people has been tremendous. There’s been great response and fantastic feedback from the community. It’s important that the Community feel ownership of the work and feel some connection to the artwork”.

Feedback from the community

Mark Lovie “Most people are blown away with the striking images and the majestic scale of the figures. It’s really got people talking, I spoke to one gent who’s been living in Woodside for many years and he said it was Terrific, he said, ‘I’m originally from Manchester and I went to see Denis Law Play when I was nineteen. He was a fabulous player, The King”.

Another said “I was at the same school as Denis, I grew up in Sandilands and he grew up in Printfield, I was a year older than him”





Discover Aberdeen Without Spending a Penny: Free Activities in the Granite City

Embrace the Outdoors

Aberdeen Beach: Miles of golden sand await you at Aberdeen Beach. Stroll along the promenade, build sandcastles, or watch for dolphins in the summer months. The beach is also home to the free Queens Links, offering a place for picnics and games.

Hazlehead Park: This expansive park, gifted to the city by Robert the Bruce, is a haven for nature lovers. Explore the walking trails, admire the flower gardens, and let the kids loose in the playground.

Footdee (Fittie): Wander through this charming fishing village with its colourful cottages and unique character. It's a great place to experience the city's maritime heritage and take some memorable photos.

Donmouth Local Nature Reserve: Observe seals at play in their natural habitat at the Donmouth Local Nature Reserve, where the River Don meets the sea.

Delve into History and Culture

Aberdeen Maritime Museum: Discover Aberdeen's seafaring past at this fascinating museum. Explore exhibits on shipbuilding, fishing, and the North Sea oil industry, including a massive model of an oil platform.

Aberdeen, the “Granite City,” is a captivating blend of history, culture, and natural beauty. While some attractions come with a price tag, there's plenty to see and do without opening your wallet. Here's a guide to exploring Aberdeen on a budget.

Tolbooth Museum: Step back in time at the Tolbooth Museum, housed in a 17th-century prison. As you explore the historic cells, learn about crime and punishment through the ages. Closed for refurbishment at the moment but plans are to reopen this year.

Aberdeen Art Gallery: Immerse yourself in art at the Aberdeen Art Gallery, which boasts a diverse collection spanning centuries. Admire works by Scottish artists and international masters.

Old Aberdeen: Take a walk through the historic heart of Aberdeen, with its cobbled streets, medieval buildings, and the impressive St. Machar's Cathedral.

Other Free Experiences

Sculpture Trail: Discover public art as you follow the Aberdeen Sculpture Trail. Encounter statues of historical figures and contemporary creations dotted throughout the city center.

University of Aberdeen's Zoology Museum: Get up close with animal skeletons and specimens from around the world at this free museum, perfect for families with children.

Cruickshank Botanic Garden: Explore a diverse collection of plants from around the world at this tranquil garden, located next to the Zoology Museum.



BECYCLE

Fersands Bike Club will soon be starting thanks to Becycle.

Becycle, a local charity run by volunteers to promote cycling and re-cycle used bikes, has won a grant from Nescan to promote cycling for local youths.

They are working with Fersands and Fountain SCIO to give over thirty brand new bikes to young people in the community. Youths will be able to pick up new bikes and helmets. Locks and other accessories are totally free if they join the Bike Club.

The Bike Club will try to measure how much the bikes are being used and will offer bike maintenance and road safety workshops.

Some of the new bikes have just arrived and the first group of teenagers were there to receive them and even help assemble them.

This is such a great idea and a great support to many youths who otherwise wouldn't get the chance of such good bikes and can now develop their skill and gain an interest in bikes and cycling. Youths in Woodside will become more mobile, more skilled and live a healthier lifestyle!

fear fascination a gothic exhibition

19 May – 7 December 2025

*The Gallery, Sir Duncan
Rice Library*

Step into a world of Gothic terror in the latest exhibition from University of Aberdeen Collections.

Showcasing the extensive collection of Gothic novels, this exhibition explores how these texts used fear to both terrify and excite readers with their tales of monsters and villains, and exploration of transgressive themes.


Discover hidden meanings within these classic tales that question, are the monsters truly monstrous?



A large crowd of people is gathered on a street next to a tall ship. The ship's complex rigging and masts are visible on the left. In the background, modern city buildings are visible under a clear sky. The scene is festive and crowded.

Aberdeen's Festival Fever:

A Year-Round Celebration



The Granite City is known for its rich history, stunning architecture, and vibrant cultural scene. Throughout this year, the city comes alive with a diverse array of festivals, offering something for everyone. From music, and light shows to crime writing and traditional celebrations, Aberdeen's festival calendar is packed with exciting events. Here's a glimpse into some of the upcoming highlights.

***A Celebration of Tradition:
Scottish Traditional Boat Festival
(June 27-29, 2025)***

Head down to the charming harbour of Portsoy for the Scottish Traditional Boat Festival. This popular event showcases the region's maritime heritage with a flotilla of historic boats, demonstrations of traditional crafts, and lively music and dance performances. The festival will take place on Saturday the 28th and Sunday the 24th of June. Tickets can be bought from the festival's website.

***Aberdeen Highland Games
(15th June)***

On 15th June 2025, Aberdeen will host their Highland Games at Hazlehead Park. A staple summer event, which starts at 10am and will include a day of fun for all the family. You can expect traditional Highland game events, stalls and activities as well as entertainment from professional performers.

There will be more information relating to ticket prices released on Aberdeen City Government's website closer to the time and if you are interested in applying to set up a trade or charity stall at the event, this can also be done via the website.

***A City in Celebration:
Granite City Festival
(June 28, 2025)***

The Granite City Festival is a highlight of Aberdeen's summer calendar. This vibrant event brings the community together with live music, street food, family-friendly activities, and a buzzing atmosphere. The music festival takes place at Hazelhead Park spanning the entire weekend. Tickets for the festival can be purchased on the website through upfront payments or a payment plan.

***The Tall Ships Races
(19th July)***

After 28 years, the Tall Ships Races returns to Aberdeen to become the largest free family event being held in Europe. This four-day festival will start on the 19th July with 50 tall ships from all around the world arriving in Aberdeen Harbour. There will be an opening ceremony celebrating the fleet's arrival, over 1000 sailors will come together for a parade, there will be live music and entertainment and visitors will be able to board the tall ships for the first three days before they set sail.

In addition to these highlights, Aberdeen also hosts a variety of other festivals throughout the year, including:

***Aberdeen Comedy Festival
(September 22-28, 2025)***

Get ready for laughs with a lineup of top comedians.

***Aberdeen Fringe Festival
(October 24, 2025)***

Showcasing a diverse range of performances, from theatre to music and comedy.

***Envirolution
(September 20th, 2025)***

A free community festival based in Seaton Park, aiming to increase connection and engagement with the natural world. Envirolution wish to support communities to achieve a more sustainable future.

With such a diverse and exciting lineup of festivals, Aberdeen offers a year-round celebration of culture, arts, and community.

A Course for All Ages (even mine)

They say, 'use it or lose it.' Like all cliches this one has a lot of truth to it. Anyone who works out at the gym will tell you how quickly a spell of laziness will undo all your hard work. Surely, it's the same with the mind. Keep the little grey cells working out by learning a language or a musical instrument. As the poet says, 'make it new.'

So, when the present writer, no longer in the first flush of youth, saw that shmu was running a course Introduction to Community Film, I quickly volunteered. I bought a good camera and mic with the thought of making YouTube videos. But I'd never really used it, using the equipment for little more than snapshots. This course was just the thing to get me started.

Trouble was that I feared that this old guy would be taking up a place from a young person, and we all know that opportunities for young people are getting harder to find. But the folk at shmu assured me that this was no problem, and that all were welcome.

And so, my Thursday mornings for the next ten weeks were occupied with the workings of cameras, microphones and editing software. There was talk of shots and interview techniques. I personally struggled a bit with the editing side of things, with my failing eyesight. It seemed to me that all this new tech is made with young eyes in mind. But I took to camera like a duck to proverbial water. Although you are exposed to all aspects of film making, there is scope for specialising.

The staff up at shmu are enthusiastic and help you to go with your strengths.

Then, finally, let's make a film.

At the time they were doing the yearly Winter Wonderland at the Woodside Community Centre. I thought that filming local folk transforming the Centre into something magical would make an interesting short film. All agreed, and the cameras started rolling.

I was amazed at just how much work is involved. But finally, we got the film finished and I had that satisfied feeling from having actually made something.

Then the ten weeks were over, but my involvement in film making is still open, for there is a film making group at shmu that I'm thinking of joining. I enjoyed this course with shmu and feel confident and enthusiastic about getting some filming done over the summer.

So, if you are at a loose end, want to re-train or just improve your skills, why not check out what shmu has to offer? It's on your doorstep after all. Use it. What have you got to lose?

See Santa Claus Comes to Woodside on YouTube. It already has a mighty 39 views!

Douglas Thomson



Don't Luke now



Don't Luke now, is a comic series by Katie Watson exploring Social Anxiety.



