

# woodside free press

Summer Edition 2024





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## Editorial

**Welcome to the Summer 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.

There's plenty to celebrate this summer in Woodside from Off the Rails' 2nd birthday, Woodside resident Mike Melvin's fantastic award and thanking Kit for all she does. Please read on to help us celebrate

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 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.



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# WOODSIDE PROM

Local mum, Stacey Munro, pulled the Woodside Community together to create the perfect prom night for Woodside School's primary 7's.

Stacey, alongside a few other parents, felt that their youngsters deserved a proper prom, so they decided to fundraise to make it happen!

Everyone set to work, the kids collected recycling, exchanging it for cash at the machine in Sainsbury's, they organised a raffle at the Christmas fair and parents held an Annie Moon night.

"The kids are so excited, like, this is the first Primary to have a proper prom, and all the kids are so excited

that they're getting to go. They're going to Pittodrie, and a lot of kids don't get to go on trips like this, so it does mean a lot to them, they're all speaking about it, so it will be good.

"We've actually raised more than we set out too, so the money that's left over will go towards, the 2 primary 7 classes, so the money will get split between their activity's week in June."

Residents of Fullerton Court rolled their sleeves up and got to work too, hosting a prize bingo in aid of the event. The bingo was a success with residents and some of the school kids having a great time, and a total of £416 was raised by the Fullerton Court lot.

# Welcome to

# shmuFEST

Come and join us for a day of fun, music, and community at Deer Road Park and next door, at shmu HQ. Get ready for an unforgettable experience filled with live performances, a barbeque, and exciting activities all showcasing community talent from Woodside and beyond!

Celebrate our 21st birthday with us, with a wide range of entertainment, including face painting, circus tricks, live dance groups, a silent disco and much more!

Whether you're a music lover, excited to celebrate shmu's birthday, or a member of the community, shmuFEST has something for everyone. Don't miss out on this opportunity to connect with others and celebrate the spirit of togetherness. See you there!

Get your FREE tickets by visiting [www.eventbrite.com/e/shmufest-tickets-927256829137](http://www.eventbrite.com/e/shmufest-tickets-927256829137)







# Woodside Decides

**On March 20th Woodside Network held the community commissioning event in Woodside. 15 community members attended and fully engaged with the process.**

After an introduction which gave an overview of the process to date, and some of the survey results, participants entered into discussions about the best use of the funding to improve the environment and mental health and wellbeing in the area. A shortlist of ideas was then collated, with those present able to indicate their preferences.

One of the proposals made for the spending of the budget around mental health and well-being in Woodside was increased activity and opportunities for older people in the area. Although this was agreed as a relevant and really useful suggestion, it was also recognised that we needed more information to take forward any new project activities or opportunities available in the area for this group.

A small working group of the Woodside Network came together to plan, organise and facilitate an

open afternoon for over 50s in the area. This included engaging a range of partners, for example Silver City Surfers, Penumbra, Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership, Sport Aberdeen, Quarriers, and CFINE. Community members were invited to the event and were encouraged to go round stallholders to get an understanding of existing and potential opportunities in the area. Afternoon tea was also provided as well as some fun activities.

Fifteen community members attended and completed a short questionnaire for their feedback on the day as well as which activities should be prioritised moving forward. The Woodside Network will now determine which activities to move forward with using funding from the ACVO Community Mental Health and Well-being fund.

Recently, we have also organised a further Woodside Decides session with a focus on culture and creativity. We worked closely with the North East Culture Collective, who have provided £5000 for the Woodside community to commission

projects or activities. An event was organised in Woodside community centre on June 26th with a range of creative opportunities available for community members to try out as well as a period of discussion on how to spend the funds. Although only three community members and four organisational representatives based in the area attended the event, there were some very meaningful conversations held around how culture and creativity could be used to better understand and enhance the strong sense of community pride in the Woodside area. Participants also identified how visual art could be used to improve the feel of the area, particularly in locations where this type of art, for example murals, is not currently present. It was also agreed that due to the low numbers in attendance we would use the period of July to September to further engage communities using an outreach model rather than a standalone event.

Keep an eye out in the community for further events and ways to get involved and have your say. You can email Dave on [Dave.black@shmu.org.uk](mailto:Dave.black@shmu.org.uk) for more information.

# Fersands Updates

## Scottish Charity Awards

Fersands SCIO wins Scottish Charity Awards! Claire Whyte, Senior Development Worker travelled down to Glasgow with two volunteers and were very surprised and delighted to win a prize at the prestigious event. SCVO Scottish Charities Community Impact Award was awarded for the anti-poverty services offered by the Woodside based charity.

Services such as Community Café, Charity Shop, Community Pantry, and Free Shoppers Bus, which all save residents money and brings people together, were the main reasons for winning the prize.

The trophy takes pride of place in the office (next to last year's Celebrate Aberdeen's Small organization of the year Award) to remind workers and volunteers of all the great work they do!

## Nursery garden completed!

At long last, after over one year of stop – start works the Fersands Nursery Garden is complete. Staff and families are delighted with the whole transformation and the new learning opportunities provided.

The new Patio doors and Canope Shelter provides cover so the kids can go out in all weathers. The soft surfaces make the areas safer with opportunity to dig and grow or run or cycle along the decked pathways and use their imagination at the other

play spaces. Does your family use the Nursery, do you ever walk past the service .

## Adult Art Group

Are you interested in art or crafting and would like to learn more at our Woodside setting please come and let us know.

## Theatre Promotion Woodside

Adults interested in helping to bring theatre shows to Woodside, help promoting theatre acting helping get performances booked at centre promoting local performances. Come and learn how we can promote theatre in the community to help get more people come to the centre and set up exciting performances in the community.

## Woodside Men's Group first Meeting

Come along, have a coffee and a chat and agree what activities you would like to try for the next ten weeks.

Visit places around Aberdeen, play Pool, Chess or cards, go for a walk, try out some musical instruments, get guests speakers in?

## Creative writing Group and short story competition (Adults)

Woodside Creative Writers Group to start meeting at the end of August!

Short story award entries by end September writing group meeting new members welcome August 24th,

Walking Group for Woodside check dates with Sports Aberdeen.

Singing Group for anyone interested in a choir community singing group to have fun practice singing but we need to find a singing tutor/ piano player.

## Denis Law Café Connection

One of the world's best ever football players and the only Scot to ever win the Ballon D'or (European player of the year) was brought up in Printfield Terrace.

His achievements are being recognized and celebrated by creating an interactive walkway around Woodside which will end at the Woodside Centre Café. This might be an opportunity to rebrand the café and create a signature menu. Do you fancy an AC Torino Cappuccino, a Man United Mocha, Huddersfield Town Hot Dog or the The Lawman's Lasagna? Let us know what you think about this idea.

## Parent & Toddler group starting August

Come along on a Tuesday morning with your toddler to meet other mums and play in a safe friendly setting and enjoy tea & snack. Help your child to learn to socialize and make friends, have fun and get good exercise.







## Aberdeen becomes the first major city to back the Volunteer Charter

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



## AFRICAN WOMEN'S GROUP SCOTLAND

African Women's Group Scotland (AWGS) is a registered charity dedicated to empowering African women in Scotland by providing support, resources, and opportunities for personal and community development.

Our Organisation focuses on several key areas:

***Reduce isolation and loneliness to improve mental health.***

***Enhancing social, economic, and cultural well-being of African women through empowerment, education and self-improvement, workshops, social events, and advocacy efforts.***

***Offering support to help those in hardship with current economic challenges.***

***Supporting selected charities in Africa to promote global solidarity and improve the lives of African communities.***

Encourage publications in order to document their experiences and working hard to provide and enabling environment for them to thrive.

This year, AWGS celebrates 30 years since it was founded in 1994 to support African women and their community here and in Africa. We are excited to Celebrate this

30yrs of our existence this with gala event, scheduled to take place on 23rd November at the Chester Hotel in Aberdeen. This special celebration is for the achievements and resilience of AWGS over the past 30 years. Also for the incredible work and their contribution African cultures, voice promoting diversity and inclusion. The celebration provides an excellent platform for fostering links with the local Scottish community, contributing to a vibrant cultural exchange.

While the primary aim of this year's gala is to celebrate our 30th anniversary, for the many initiatives AWGS to accomplished, we also hope to use this opportunity to raise funds to support our ongoing selected charities based in Africa. You can support us by donation or sponsorship or through partnerships. For more information please contact us by email or visit our website and social media platforms.

**Email: [africanwomenscotland@gmail.com](mailto:africanwomenscotland@gmail.com)**

**Website: [www.africanwomenscotland.org.uk](http://www.africanwomenscotland.org.uk)**

**Facebook: [Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/africanwomenscotland](https://www.facebook.com/africanwomenscotland)**

## The Joy of Giving.... Can you help?

**Do you have any clothes or shoes that are in good condition, but you just don't need them anymore? Do you want to help make a difference in someone's life?**

A range of male clothing items such as warm jackets, jumpers, t-shirts, trousers, gym wear and shoes are desperately needed to help one of the most vulnerable groups of people we have in the city. Please ensure donations are in clean, good condition.

The sizes desperately needed are: Small, Medium, Large in Men's warm Jackets, Jumpers and T-shirts 28in/30in/32in waist Men's jeans, shorts or tracksuit bottoms (sizes S,M,L) Men's footwear: Size 39-44/ UK 6 -10 There is also a great need for unused socks, boxers/ briefs. Any gym clothing would also be greatly appreciated.

We also get regular requests for football boots, mobile phones, charging cables etc, therefore would be delighted with donations of these items too. Highland Moss, which is on Constitution Street, Aberdeen is a drop off point for AARC. Opening Hours: Wednesday to Sunday 10am - 6pm. Monday 12 noon - 4pm. They are closed on Tuesdays. For further information or to arrange drop off or collection, email: [jaynesmith@asylumandrefugeecare.co.uk](mailto:jaynesmith@asylumandrefugeecare.co.uk) or Tel: 07392 856117





## ...on the right track

### **They might be off the rails but they're on the right track!**

The Off the Rails Community Garden have just celebrated their second birthday and couldn't be prouder.

The small group have been going full steam ahead, achieving an incredible amount in such a short space of time and showing no signs of breaking any time soon.

The Woodside Free Press spoke with Liz and Alicia, who reflected on the last two years and shared some plans for the future.

Alicia volunteers helping in the garden and as part of the committee too. She has been involved, from the early stages of the garden, despite having never previously been interested in gardening. "I just saw Liz starting to put planters in one day and I was being nosey, so I came down to ask what she was doing. She explained it's a community garden and asked if I wanted to get involved, so I said, 'why not' and here I am two years later.

"It's massively helped my mental health; I've made so many more new friends. I've only lived here for four years and for the first two, I didn't know anyone. Since starting

the garden, I know pretty much everyone."

A sentiment Liz agrees with. "Yesterday I was having a bad day and just needed some time to myself. I came down here, took out one of the chairs and I just sat and picked berries off the bush, plucked the occasional weed and smelled the flowers. In those moments, it just feels like all the stress melts away."

Alicia's favourite part of the whole experience has been watching the space transform. "I've watched it go from an empty space to what it is now. It's amazing to open my blinds in the morning and look out to something beautiful, whereas before there was absolutely nothing, just a big grassy field full of dog poop. Now there's always lots of people down here, enjoying it."

The garden certainly does make for a good view, from the thriving crop in the planters, the range of fruit trees and the picturesque mural proudly displaying the name.

The brand-new archway that the ladies were delighted to show off is also a nice touch, giving it a homey feel. You'd have no idea that the volunteers behind it didn't

have gardening experience prior to beginning the community garden.

That's right, Liz, a founding member and chairperson wasn't a gardener before deciding to create the garden.

This hasn't hindered the group at all as they have ploughed ahead, planting a huge variety of food which the community can help themselves to. They are growing pretty much anything you can think of, such as tatties, lettuce, onions, peas, cucumbers, tomatoes, a herb garden and more. It doesn't stop there with plenty more fruit such as rhubarb, strawberries black current, red current bushes and ten fruit trees growing, apples, plums, pears and cherries.

Liz envisions this as a space "kids can walk through and pick themselves fruit off a tree and pop it in their mouth as they go", within a couple of years. "I grew up in the country and I absolutely loved doing that when I was a kid, going hunting for raspberries, so I wanted to provide that for kids in the city." Not only will people be able to grab an apple on the way past but hopefully it will be able to save people some money on their food shops, and they can cut down on the imported fruit and veg available in the shops, with



the alternative being right on their very doorstep.

The garden will also be a good educational tool for kids in the community.

There are a few plans coming up for the garden including a mental health corner and installing a polytunnel. The mental health corner, which the group are open to name suggestions, will be a quiet, secluded corner of the garden for anyone looking for a bit of peace can take themselves off to.

But to see these projects through and continue to maintain the garden, the group need help. They are on the lookout for volunteers, so if you have some time to spare to help them out, why not pop along and see what you can do. They are looking for volunteers to help with the gardening and some heavy lifting if you can. Don't worry if you're not already a keen gardener, that's not a problem here.

If the thought of getting your hands dirty doesn't suit you at all, they are also looking for some volunteer committee members too. If funding applications is your thing or if you'd like to help as financial secretary, Off the Rails would be grateful for your help.

You can get in touch through the 'Off the Rails Community Garden' Facebook page or by emailing [Offtherails.communitygarden@yahoo.com](mailto:Offtherails.communitygarden@yahoo.com) to arrange a time to chat.

So, who knows what the garden will look like in another two years time, but, judging by what has been achieved by their 2nd birthday, it's sure to be brilliant.



# Celebrating Kit Trail



For 30 years, Kit Trail has been the backbone of the Printfield Community Project. Having dedicated so much of her life, there is no denying that the project would not be the same without her.

So, we'd like to thank her for all that she does.

Kit "got a taste of doing things in the community" after she had her children and wasn't interested in returning to her previous job. She turned to community work, heading off to college to train as a Youth Worker. Kit found her calling and never looked back. At college, she did a placement at Middlefield Community Project, before working there full time after college.

Arriving at Printfield in 1994, determined to make a difference to the community, after 10 years at Middlefield. The project was half the size it is now, operating out of the one flat.

Printfield was established with three goals in mind – encourage people to use the credit union, give people an opportunity to get back to work by providing an after-school club and develop youth work in the area.

Kit has continued to build the project over the years, expanding the space and staff, there is now 14 part time members of staff and 38 children on the register.

Kit cares deeply about the community and wants to make a difference. Looking back over her 30 years at Printfield, she recognises there has been ups and downs.

"We've been lucky here, we're a strong team, and it's been great to work closely with Mark and the staff at Fersands as well. We're always at risk with funding cuts but we have been lucky to get what we need to cover our projects."

"I think just seeing the impact on the families we support has been the highlight for me. The project is really all about supporting families to bring up their kids. We have had families that have moved away come back because they haven't been able to access the type of support they can get here, where they've moved to.

"It feels really good to know we have been able to help so many families over the years." Amanda, Printfield's Youth Work Coordinator,

is a shining example of the success of the project. "When I first came here, Amanda's mum had her in the creche, then she was in all the youth groups. Amanda had her family, who used the services too, now she is our Youth Work Coordinator. It's great to have been able to watch her journey.

"The support in the community, to me is always visible. I have seen instances where somethings happened to a family and you can see that people have rallied around, they've provided meals and they've been there to support. Not everyone in this community uses our services, but if something happens, you know the support is there.

There have been sad times over the years too. "We've had some heartbreaks and lost people along the way which happens in life. Rose, our Administrator passed away in 2016, which was our first big loss. We also lost Fiona one of our workers and Kathy who'd been involved with the project since 1989."

Kit is as excited as ever for the future of Printfield and has no plans to stop.



# Woodside Resident Receives First Ever Denis Law Volunteering Award



Woodside resident, Mike Melvin, has become the first person to be awarded an Honorary Denis Law RGUplus Award.

The Denis Law RGUplus Award recognises exceptional contribution to volunteering and extensive commitment to the lives of others through leadership, talent, expertise.

Mike has over 38 years' experience supporting volunteering, having first volunteered while still at school.

Mike currently works at ACVO-the Third Sector Interface for Aberdeen where he is the Volunteering Services Manager, helping build the tremendous contribution volunteers and the community make and volunteers in his spare time with organisations such as Cornerstone, Health Services Research Unit, Rowett Institute, Scottish Fire & Rescue Public Participation Group, shmu, local community groups, is a recipient of the Margaret E Morrison Garthdee Spirit of the Community

Awards and a Northfield Champion Award. He further serves the community in his role as a Deputy Lieutenant for the City of Aberdeen.

Mike is also a well-known regular on shmu community radio, where 'Mike on the Mic', presents the weekly So Why Don't You programme, which promotes all the latest news from the wonderful world of volunteering, community and third sector.

Mike was presented with the Award by RGU Head of Employability & Community Engagement, Laura Chalmers as part of the RGU Graduation Ceremony.

On being awarded the Denis Law RGUplus Award Mike stated that he is surprised and very much honoured to receive the award. Mike is dedicated to recognising and thanking all the amazing volunteers we have in Aberdeen and encouraging even more people to get involved in volunteering, making a real, positive difference for people,

our communities and all aspects of life in Aberdeen. He states that he is therefore delighted that this fantastic Denis Law RGUplus Award has been created, which Mike says brings together all that is good about Aberdeen - the Denis Law Legacy Trust - a renowned, excellent charity and of course volunteering which Aberdeen excels in.

The Denis Law Legacy Trust added 'Congratulations to Mike Melvin on becoming the first ever recipient of the honorary Denis Law RGUplus Award! We are delighted to recognise Mike's dedication and commitment to supporting volunteering in Aberdeen with this award. Well done Mike and thank you for all that you do.'

For more information about volunteering in Aberdeen and the Denis Law Legacy Trust please visit: [www.volunteeraberdeens.org.uk](http://www.volunteeraberdeens.org.uk) and [www.denislawlegacytrust.org](http://www.denislawlegacytrust.org)

# Norma's Woodside



Norma's Family



Norma's Wedding



Norma's Parents' Wedding



Norma



**Norma grey up in Woodside in the 30's/40's. She eventually moved away when she got married, but always kept Woodside in her heart.**

"I have a lot of good memories of growing up in Woodside, I went to Woodside School, and then Hilton. Woodside was a good school, I thought so and all my pals liked it too.

"I'm not sure what it was about it that we liked so much, it was a good building, and they were all very good to you. They were disciplined but fair to us."

Outside of school, Norma loved spending time with her friends.

"Woodside was a place, we lived within distance of each other, we did everything together. We would play together, worked together. You would play in each other's houses, even if you didn't know them that well."

One of her favourite things to do was visit the ice rink, where she and her friends spent their days learning to ice skate. "I got a pair of boots for my birthday; I thought I was the Queen. You had to lace them up and it wasn't easy. The skates took a while to get used to, getting your balance. Me and my pals learned to do a few different dances down at the Ice Rink, we taught each other. I was very lucky that we could afford letting me go to the skating.

"My pals were my neighbours on Great Northern Road, two of them were next door, one of them upstairs and a few others along the road. We were a close community, it made childhood good fun."

Norma was an only child so loved living in a tenement, where there was other children, she could play

with. "Some of my pals, there was maybe five of them in the family, so I'd be mixing with them. It was good living in the tenement. If your mother got you into trouble, you could nip through the window next door. Or nip upstairs, there was always somebody there for you in that tenement."

The area has changed a lot over the years, looking very different to the Woodside of Norma's childhood.

"Woodside looks so different now, the actual road is totally changed. When I was here, there was tram cars, there was lots of shops, you didn't have to go into town." Like many, one of Norma's favourite shops was Andy Mckessocks Little Wonder. "We spent a lot of time at the Fountain, I had an auntie doon there, that's where we'd all meet. Your crowd would end up meeting another crowd, there was always plenty of folk there."

***"Woodside was a place, we lived within distance of each other, we did everything together."***

"My father was a railway man; we used to stand and wait for his train to go past and wave at him. He always tooted the horn before he got there so we knew he was coming.

"Woodside was a friendly place, I used to get sent to the shop by my mother, as you were heading off, I'd hear knocking and look up to the old women who lived above us 'Norma will you get me a loaf?' that's just what we did. Then at Christmas you'd get a sweetie for doing their shopping."

Norma grew up during the war and vividly remembers spending time

in the bomb shelters. "There were two shelters in the back garden, whenever a siren went, you had to throw on your coat, get up the back garden into the shelter. Later on, if it got quiet, we all went through to one shelter and have a concert.

"There used to be some right good singers and they would entertain folk. We'd just sit and enjoy, or you could sing along if you knew the songs. It was good fun, took your mind off the war. You could maybe hear the siren outside, but it distracted you a bit. The air raid shelters were fantastic, you felt safe, and the singing and stories people would tell were great.

"My mum had made me a siren suit out of dad's old trousers, it buttoned right up to your neck and would keep you warm in the shelter as it was a woollen material."

Norma and her husband, Jim, were together for 66 years, meeting on a Muggiemoss bus tour. The rest was history. "His sister worked in the office at Muggiemoss and got him a ticket on a bus tour, we met there and after that we just fell into place."

"We got married at Woodside North Church and it was a good day, I wore a navy suit, it wasn't a white wedding. That was the fashion then. We all got married young then. I was 18 when I got married and most of my friends had been already too."

After Norma was married, she left Woodside, moving with her new husband to Clermont street, where they went on to have their three kids. "We only had two bedrooms, it was like a box but oh it was magic."

"I liked Claremont Street, but I did miss Woodside, I missed the atmosphere it had."

## Woodside's wisest conquer shmuFM

Here at shmu, we have recently had the privilege of working with the fantastic residents of both Fullerton and Murray Courts.

Over a period of weeks, our shmuFM Development and Community Media Support Workers had the pleasure of visiting both high-rises, getting to know residents and working on a radio project with them.

At the beginning of the project, when we explained the residents would eventually be joining us in the studio at shmu for a live radio show, there was understandably some apprehension from some of the residents, having never done anything like this before.

After a number of weeks visiting the different buildings, reminiscing and putting the world to rights with participants, it was time. Everyone was ready for their live shows in our radio studios.

Fullerton Courts was our first live show of the two, presenting 'Bingo, Prescription Drugs and Rock'n'roll' We loved every minute of having them in to see us and we're pleased to say that they did too!

They all did a fantastic job with Jane taking the lead on the desk. Hopefully they'll come back and join us again. The group were pleased to give a special birthday shoutout to their own 'Miss Moneypenny' as they call her, Maria their financial secretary and keeper of the coin. Before long they'd finished their cracking show and were off to get prepared for one of their famous parties.

The ladies of Murray Court, or the Murrayites as they were also known, were just as fun!

This group had fantastic memories of Aberdeen and regaled us with stories of nights out, trips to the cinema and much more. Margaret shared a fantastic story in which she got directions from Prince Charles at Balmoral!

They also have great fun in Murray Court with plenty of activities, fundraisers and meals to keep them amused.

We are hoping to snag an invite sometime.



Throughout our time working with these groups, it became clear that these buildings were little communities within the community of Woodside. There is a lot we can learn from their experiences over the years and what it means to be a community. The residents look out for one another, keep each other company and entertained.

Thanks to the residents of Fullerton and Murray Court for coming to see us, and the phenomenal shows. Hopefully we get to work with these groups more in future and get to keep doing brilliant projects like this.

If you missed the live shows, don't worry, you can still catch them by visiting our Mixcloud page, where you can find the groups' shows and more.

[www.mixcloud.com/shmuFM/](http://www.mixcloud.com/shmuFM/)







## Pete The Punk: Shooting From The Hip Pt. 2

**I SPOKE IN THE LAST ISSUE** about my trials in trying to get a bad hip properly diagnosed during covid and my subsequent struggles to be referred to a specialist.

Fast forward to 2022: I'm now on eighteen heavy-duty painkillers and anti-inflammatories a day, so you could call this progress of a sort but my hip is a lot worse and the bottom line is, where would I be without them?

One of the things that keeps me sane through all this is taking the dog up the hill but I have to give it up, leaving me stressed and low. The dog's nae impressed, either. Little do I know that surgery is still well over a year away.

On a tv news item, I see many hip patients in England waiting so long for treatment, and becoming so incapacitated in the meantime, they're spending their life savings travelling abroad for surgery because it's half the price of private treatment in the UK. I can only count my blessings that I live in Scotland. Despite our long waiting lists, we're much better off here.

I finally get a consultant's appointment in July 2022 and immediately feel better. He shows me my 6-month old x-rays. Instead of round and healthy, the ball of my femur is shaped like an old thru'penny bit. "You need a new hip," he declares. No kidding. "Should be about a year," he reckons - not ideal, but something to aim for at last!

I put my head down and the clock ticks its way ever so slowly into 2023. A pal of mine, referred for a new hip the week before me, has his operation in early May. My turn soon, surely? I call the hospital. No joy. I'm nae happy.

A pre-op date is eventually arranged for early August - happy days! Surgery normally follows pre-op interview within six weeks but during the meeting the nurse asks me why I was on antibiotics the week before? "Och, I'd a wee infection in my foot but it's all cleared up now," I tell her. She peers between my toes: "Oh no," she says, "The consultant will need to see that before we can go ahead". "Mmmm," I think - "Can it really be that simple?"

The answer is no. I call orthopaedics the next day. They tell me there's a four-month waiting list to see him! What goes through my head when I hear this cannot be repeated in the pages of a family magazine but my hopes have been raised and dashed - again! It's a sare fecht.

My hip gets even worse. I complain, again - believe me, you have to keep at them - so they send me for a scan.

Weeks later, the surgeon summons me. I expect him to examine my foot, which hasn't really healed properly, and I'm fair worried he'll put my operation off again. Much to my surprise, he doesn't as much as look at the offending appendage but instead shows me the new scans: the ball of my femur has now almost completely disintegrated. He casually announces I'll be getting my new hip in just a few weeks time and gives me a date - well, if this isn't the best news ever, and a huge weight off my shoulders!

December arrives and finally I'm wheeled into the operating theatre. The deed is done and, though I've been warned I'll be in a lot of pain afterwards, it's not too bad at all - my Christmas has come early!

A few hours after the op, I'm given my normal meds plus a huge syringe of liquid morphine. "Oh, I wonder if it will give me a buzz," I think, squirting it into my mouth. Sadly, the only effect it has is to make me sick as a pig and I flat refuse to take any more. Morphine? Gads, min.

The next day the physio comes round - a right cheery chappie - and gives me some exercises to do. They're hard, my movement has been restricted for a long time, but the secret to quick recovery is to do exactly what the hospital tells you. They know what they're on about!

They let me out after four days in Woodend but I can't immediately start walking outside as instructed because there's snow on the ground. It's great to be home, though.

The snow melts. Over the next few weeks, my wound heals nicely. I'm able to quit painkillers completely. Small triumphs like putting on my socks without using a gadget remind me how easy it is to take these things for granted.

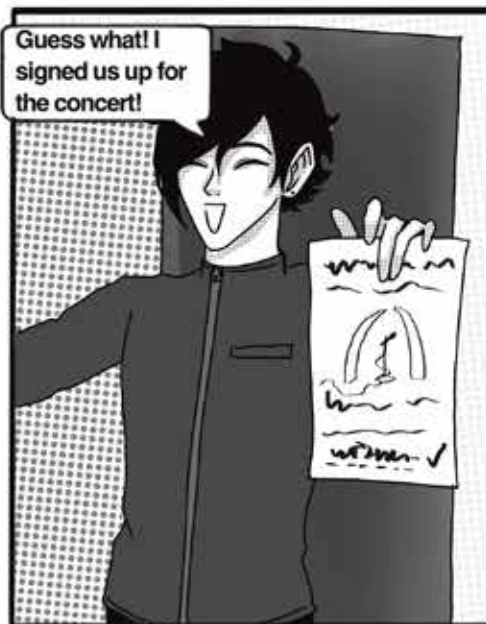
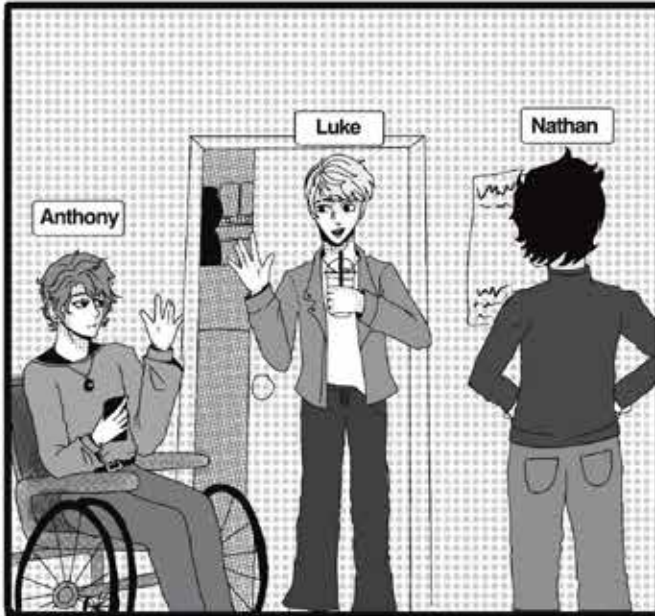
I gradually increase the length of my walks until, one glorious day, I manage to climb the hill with the dog. We couldn't be more delighted - I'm on the mend!

I practise my daily exercises rigorously and within just a few weeks, I'm walking nearly two miles a day. Spring arrives and I'm out cutting the grass, which I wasn't able to do for nearly two years, and now, nine months down the line, I'm fair enjoying this new lease of life.

Last week I even managed to go out dancing, which is, given the state I was in for so long, no small miracle in itself. My new hip is brilliant - God save the NHS! - it's just the rest of me that's falling apart now. It's true what they say, ye ken - auld age disna come itself!



# Don't Luke now



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

