

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

WEST CALDER & HARBURN



RECOVERY & GROWTH

WEST CALDER HUB HELP GROUPS BOUNCE BACK

The focus of our update for this Spring newsletter is Recovery and Growth. We have been working closely with our groups to help them recover and rebuild following the impact of the pandemic and are delighted to share with you a spotlight on a few of them.

Go to Page 4 for HUB spotlights and more.



This newsletter is funded, collated, designed and distributed by West Calder & Harburn CDT with financial support from Harburnhead Windfarm.

All wording is supplied by each individual organisation. If you want your organisation to be included in the next issue then email mhairi@westcalder.org to book your slot.



KEEPING OUR TOWN TIDY IN STYLE

The Trust has managed to boost the local dog waste bin tally by 7!

Using Town Centre Funding and following on from the bag dispenser project by Parkhead Primary staff and pupils, we thought we'd include Bag Dispensers as well and ran a competition for pupils to produce artwork to decorate the bins. We were delighted with the response and think you will agree they look brilliant.

Winners of the art competition will be published in the next issue.

Lookout for these new bins now!



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ST.MARY'S POETRY SUCCESS

St. Mary's Primary School recently held their annual Scots Poetry Event. This is an exciting event which the children look forward to each year. All classes worked hard, over a number of weeks, to learn a Burns or Scots poem off by heart. Finalists were then chosen from the in-class heats to go forward to the final competition, which, this year, took place virtually. The overall winner received the prestigious Robert Sorbie Memorial Trophy which is engraved and displayed in the trophy cabinet at school.

Congratulations to the winners:
1st Place - Lola from Primary 7
2nd Place - Aine from Primary 4
3rd Place - Connor from Primary 3



(Pictured - Lola and Aine. Unfortunately Connor was absent for the photograph)

Polbeth Harwood with West Kirk of Calder

Message from the West Kirk Minister

Dear Friends

The bright yellow daffodils in the landscape around us can only mean one thing – Easter is around the corner! The pale colours of winter are slowly fading away to make room for the bright colours of spring! And I don't know how you feel about it – but to me it's always as if something inside me feels lighter this time of year – it's almost as if you can feel the change you see in nature, inside of you too!

And in a way, that is exactly what we celebrate during Easter. It began with the very dark end to Jesus' life – when he died on a cross and a big stone was rolled in front of his tomb. The whole world went dark that day. But only for a short time. Because when that stone was rolled away three days later, a light started to shine that is still shining brightly today. Jesus is alive! Jesus is the light for the world.

And if we make a point of walking in this light, we won't get stuck in the deep, dark corners of despair we can so easily find ourselves in. If we only focus on what is going on in the world, there is not much light to be seen: the pandemic isn't over yet, the Russian invasion of Ukraine is casting a shadow over the whole world, and in our personal lives we so often experience things that seem to drain every last drop of colour out of our lives...

But please remember – no matter how dark it is around us, or within us, it won't ever be as dark as it was for Jesus, for 3 days, in a tomb. But that stone is rolled away now – forever – so that all of us can live in the light. Let's hold on to this and never allow the darkness to consume us.

Easter is a time to celebrate new life, new possibilities, new opportunities. So instead of giving in to the darkness, let's pray for peace and love and reconciliation. And do everything in our power to make life better for those around us, because in a time where so many things are taken out of our hands, this is something we can do!

May God bless all of you this Easter.
Nanda

Easter at the Church of Scotland West Kirk of Calder and Polbeth Harwood Church

What a privilege to be able to have all our Easter services again this year!

Please join us:

Sunday 10 April – Palm Sunday – Polbeth Harwood Church, 10am

Thursday 14 April – Maundy Thursday Service and Communion – Polbeth Harwood Church, 7pm

Friday 15 April – Good Friday Service – West Kirk of Calder, 7pm

Sunday 17 April – Ecumenical early morning Easter Service – Auld Kirkyard, West Calder – 7am

Sunday 17 April – Easter Sunday Service – West Kirk of Calder, 10am

All other Sundays worship takes place at the West Kirk of Calder at 9:45am and at Polbeth Harwood Church at 11:15am. All are welcome! Lots of fun for kids every Sunday too!

Calder Kids

Every Wednesday from 9:30 – 11am we have a carer and toddler group who meet in the West Kirk of Calder Hall.

Holiday Club

From 1-5 August Polbeth Harwood Church & West Kirk of Calder would like to host a Holiday Club again, like we always did before lockdown. From 10:30-12noon primary aged kids can come along to Polbeth Harwood Church for lots of fun and games. But in order to make this possible, we need volunteers... Do you think you could maybe help us host this amazing event? (No previous experience required.) Please get in touch with Nanda if you do! jonandagroenewald@gmail.com



Spring is in full swing at the Garden. The snow drops and daffodils were the first to flower but now there is something new to discover every day. Our trails (and car park) are always open for everyone to explore.



We have a new name for the site, we will now be known as **'The Community Woods and Garden'**, this will replace 'Garden for Life'. Although 'Garden for Life' was chosen by local primary pupils and has served us well we feel the new name better reflects what we are.

This year we have more activities than ever before. That is partly due to our growing staff team. We have two new part time Development Officers; Sarah who also leads volunteer groups at the John Muir Trust, and Stephanie who specialises in eco and art therapy.

Volunteer Opportunities

Join us for our **Woodland Wellbeing** sessions every Wednesday from 10am-12pm. Each session is a mixture of art making and eco-therapy activity and will take place in our beautiful woodland space. The sessions will offer a place to connect, explore and create with nature together.

Some of the activities will include creative drawing with trees, natural dyes, and land art. All levels welcome, no prior art experience required, just a sense of curiosity! We'll end every session with a cup of tea and a chat in the woods.

When we spend time in nature, we can improve our physical and emotional health and feel more connected. Our sessions will offer a safe and creative space to do so!

We have a limited capacity for this group, so please do get in touch soon if you are interested or know of anyone who might be interested in joining the group. Please contact info@pwccg.co.uk to sign up or for more information.

Our **regular volunteer sessions** currently run on Mondays mornings 9:30am to 12:30am, Monday afternoons 1pm to 4pm and Fridays 9:30am to 12:30pm. We grow vegetables and flowers, maintain the site, woods and paths, and much more. These groups are a great way to meet new people and become connected with your local community, learn new skills and have some fun in the outdoors! We are always happy to welcome new volunteers. To sign up or find out more contact us info@pwccg.co.uk.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday 21st May **Charcoal making and drawing workshop** 12pm to 3pm £6 per person
Learn how to make charcoal around the open fire then you will have an opportunity to draw with your charcoal.



Saturday June 25th **Mothly Coffee** 7am - 9am £6 per person

The night before staff will set up some moth traps around the site. Join local experts first thing to empty the traps and identify the moths. All moths are released unharmed. There will be an introduction to moth identification as well as bottomless coffee (and tea of course).



Saturday 9th July **Summer Open Day**
Plants for sale, pop up café and kids activities. This is a great opportunity to meet our volunteer team to find out about what we do.

No previous experience is required for any of our events. Further details will be announced on our Facebook page. To book email info@pwccg.co.uk or contact us via Facebook

Thanks to John Findlay, West Breich Farm for donation of potatoes to our community kitchens.

How to use you use an old wheelbarrow (photo) George Johnston. Glebe road.



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH





West Calder Community HUB Board of Trustees and staff would like to introduce Eddie Dunlop, our new HUB manager. Eddie comes to us with a wealth of experience across the public and third Sectors, with specific expertise in Project and Change Management, Partnership Development and Fundraising and is a former board Member and Trustee for several voluntary sector organisations. Eddie has a keen interest in the governance of third sector organisations and is a passionate advocate of partnership working across sectors to increase and support local service delivery.

A SPOTLIGHT ON SOME OF OUR GROUPS

"Are you a Brass player? Looking to return to playing? Don't worry if you haven't played for years. West Calder Brass Band welcome players of various abilities and ages and we might also be able to provide you with an instrument. We rehearse at West Calder Community HUB on Tuesday evenings between 7.30 pm – 9.30 pm, under the baton of our Director of Music John Cunningham. We play popular and classic tunes with a focus on entertaining the local community through concerts.

If you are interested, please contact Victoria Robb on 07824995159 or westcalderbrassband@hotmail.co.uk



Baby and Toddler Group



West Calder HUB Baby & Toddler Group

Our group meets on a Thursday morning (term time) 9:30am – 11am in the Youth Café within West Calder Community HUB. £2 per week which includes tea/coffee, biscuits and snack for each child.

All preschool children welcome, along with well behaved adults too. We are very grateful for the ongoing support of the Community HUB and to have been awarded funding which helped us provide new toys for the children which they are thoroughly enjoying. We love meeting together while the kiddies all play and would welcome new members to join us. If you have any questions, please contact us on our Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1476368096091412/>

West Calder Judo Club is a voluntary run club which welcomes everyone regardless of their level of fitness or experience to learn the sport of judo while having fun.

Interested? Why don't you come along and try it for yourself? The club meet in West Calder Community HUB on Monday 18:30-19:30pm (Juniors) and 19:30-20:30pm (Seniors) and Wednesday 19:30-20:30pm (Juniors) and 20:30-21:30pm (Seniors)

Sessions are £1 per night with your first session being FREE! If anyone requires further information please message our Facebook page, email the club at westcalderjudoclub@gmail.com or contact Stephanie on 07936699138



Our Community Shop is located in the lounge area in the HUB and is open to anyone in the community. Our target aim is to help reduce food waste, and by receiving products from M&S, Scotmid, Foodbank and soon Morrisons, we always have a great supply of food, toiletries, and home cleaning items.

Prices are low, with the majority of items being on a donation where possible.

If you sign up to a free shop membership, you will be in the running to win a free hamper EVERY MONTH! So, come by and have a look and grab a bargain.



OPENING TIMES

Tuesday
Thursday
& Friday
9am till 2pm!

**THE
BRUNCH
CLUB**

Hot Rolls

Bacon roll **£1.50**
Egg Roll (fried or scrambled) **£1.50**
Bacon and Egg roll **£2**

**Toasties
£2.50**

Toasted sandwich with up to 2 fillings
Tuna
Ham
Cheese
Onion
Chicken
Sweet Chilli Chicken

Hot Food

Soup and butter roll **£2**
Chips **£1.50**
Add cheese or gravy for an extra **50p**

Drinks

Tea/ coffee/ can of juice **£1**
Orange juice **50p**

Kids Meal deal

Chicken nuggets, chips & beans
with a carton of juice **£3**

All of the above are available Sit in or Takeaway

THE BRUNCH CLUB IS DELIVERED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WEST CALDER COMMUNITY HUB & WEST CALDER & HARBURN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST

WC&H CC are still in talks with West Lothian Council Planning and local councillors regarding the siting of the new roundabout on the A71.

We will also be working with West Lothian Council on the Parking Strategy Consultancy Brief. The Community Council continues to be heavily involved in the planning of housing developments, within the area.

Contact Joan O'Donnell Chairperson if you have any queries
jmwod162@outlook.com



**Expanding community
volunteering at West Calder HUB**

West Calder Community HUB is looking to expand the number and range of people volunteering their time in the community.

With funding from the Scottish Government's Volunteering Support Fund we have recruited a part time Volunteer Co-ordinator to lead this work - David Hansen who will be meeting local groups and establishing plans to help people volunteer for a variety of roles. An initial project is to find volunteers to collect unsold food from a shop in Ladywell and bring it to the West Calder HUB for use.

David will be working to recruit, train and support volunteers to work on projects. He will also network with individuals and organisations, to enhance the services offered by West Calder HUB and organise community events.

If you would like to volunteer, or have a project you are hoping to recruit volunteers for, then please contact David by d.hansen@westcalderhub.org



Have you heard of The Calder Witch Hunt?

Between 1643 and 1645 at least five women from Calder Parish were executed for “witchcraft”. They were worried {strangled} and burned at the stake on Cunnigar Hill at Mid Calder. All the accused were women and the witch hunt crossed local boundaries to involve others from nearby parishes, most notably South Leith and Carnwath. On Wednesday the 13th of April 1643 the Calder kirk-session appointed a new minister, 22-year-old Hew Kennedie. Almost as soon as he was ordained Kennedie, along with local nobleman Sir William Sandilands and kirk bailie James Sandilands, began a ferocious mission to eradicate witchcraft from Calder parish. Over the next two years ordinary parishioners were humiliated, imprisoned, and tortured for what we now know was an impossible crime

The Calder Witch Hunt is a community project supported by West Calder and Harburn Community Development Trust and West Lothian Museums Services. We hope to discover more about accusations of witchcraft at Calder during the 17th century, build a local history resource, provide the people of West Calder and Harburn with opportunities to participate, and commemorate the lives of the people who were affected.

We have secured funding from The Trust (and have applied for additional from other funders) to have a range of community events over the next year. These include a website, artwork, photography, poetry, video, workshops, a play and a weekend event in June with a pop-up museum, exhibitions, talks, presentations and music. All this is underpinned by professional transcription of the original historical records which will be preserved for posterity.



Drawing by Abbie Short, James Young High School

What to expect this year:

May 2022 Community and school workshops, photography & poetry projects.

May 2022 Full Website launch

June 10 -13 2022 Pop-up museum, art and photography exhibitions, talks, presentation, music & community workshops.

All at West Calder Community Hub (The Community Centre) with detailed schedule to follow.

August to December School and community workshops and touring exhibition

September 2022 The Calder Witch Hunt - a play by The Harburn Players community drama group

You can find out more at www.calderwitchhunt.co.uk

And follow us on Twitter @CalderWitchHunt

If you are interested in being involved in this fascinating project in any way, please do get in touch at cdt@westcalder.org, via the twitter handle above or through facebook at facebook.com/WestCalderandHarburnCDT

Parkhead Children's Gala Day

Parkhead Gala Club

We are pleased to announce that we are able to have our Gala again this year.

It will be held on **Saturday 4th June** at Hermand Park.

Our brochure will be on sale from May giving all the relevant details.



What's been happening at Harburn Village Hall...?

Over the past 2 years the Hall has undergone major building works and renovation. Phase one of the Harburn Hall Centennial Project has now been completed with the extension and refurbishment of the Hall providing greatly improved facilities.

The past couple of months have seen final improvements with a new kitchen fitted and landscaping of our outside spaces.

The Hall now has a fantastic, upgraded kitchen that is suitable for catering. There is a commercial dishwasher, fitted hot water boiler, fridge freezer, two ovens and large hob. It is also fully equipped with crockery, cutlery and glassware.

The garden landscaping has also been completed and, as you can see from the photo, it gives great additional outdoor space when booking the Hall for family parties, celebrations, and other functions.

Getting together at the Hall...

Despite the continuing pandemic last year saw a number of successful events at the Hall. The famous Harburn Quiz night, Ceilidh, and Craft Fair all took place. Two performances of the pantomime went ahead with great success and the postponed dates are now planned for June - Oh yes they are!

You can see photos and news about these events on our FaceBook page: @Harburnvillagehall
The dreaded COVID disrupted our regular bookings but we're pleased to report that Keep Fit, Yoga, SWRI, Craft Classes and Lunch Club have all now resumed, and we have lots more planned for the spring and early summer including:
23rd & 24th April: The Harburn Litter Walk
13th May: The Harburn Quiz Night:
16th & 18th June: The Harburn Players Pantomime (matinee and evening performances on Saturday)
19th June: The Hooch at the Hall ceilidh
Find out more about the Hall and our events...
FaceBook: www.facebook.com/Harburnvillagehall
Website: www.harburnvillagehall.com
To enquire about booking the Hall please contact: harburnvha@gmail.com

The Good Connections Community Wellbeing Project launched its social prescribing service in summer 2021. Since then, our Community Link-Worker Amy has been supporting people in our community to find services, opportunities, and groups available locally that can help improve their mental health and wellbeing. We have been working with a range of partners, locally and across West Lothian, to find the right solution for each person referred through Good Connections. This has ranged from finding volunteering roles for people looking to build confidence, supporting people experiencing loneliness to access social groups and activities, and helping people experiencing mental health or social issues to identify appropriate support and advice services.

The capacity of our service has until now been fairly limited due to COVID-19 restrictions on many social activities and opportunities. However, as we move into summer 2022, we are seeing a big increase in face-to-face groups and services opening up again, so there are lots of opportunities going on right now that Amy can help you to access.

We are also happy to announce that we will be expanding the Good Connections Community Wellbeing Project to include a programme of wellbeing activities in partnership with Polbeth & West Calder Community Garden and Wellbeing Scotland. This will include the introduction of new activities that local people looking to improve their mental and physical wellbeing might like to take part in, such as...

West Calder Wellbeing Walking Group

Art Therapy Group

Wellbeing Library (in West Calder Community Centre)

Through our partners at the Community Wellbeing Scotland & The Bridge Community people who contact the Good Connections will also be able to access:

Garden, charities Project, Project

Fast-tracked counselling services

Life skills courses

Woodland wellbeing group

Garden volunteering sessions

Men's and women's peer support groups

This is definitely not an exhaustive list of all the support and opportunities that our Good Connections Project can help you access. Get in touch with our Community Link-worker Amy to book a 1-to-1 appointment where you can discuss any issues you are facing at length in a confidential, safe and non-judgmental environment and together you can find the options that might work for you. For any enquiries about the groups and services mentioned above, or to book a time for a chat with Amy, please email goodconnections@westcalder.org or phone 07502884983.





From a WhatsApp group to a registered Scottish charity, Easter Breich Wood is officially owned by the community.

Easter Breich Wood Community Group (EBWCG) is a registered Scottish Charity (SC051201) and owner of Easter Breich Wood, a 19-hectare woodland situated near West Calder and Seafield, bordered by the River Almond and the Breich Water. The woodland is frequently used for walking, cycling, running and horse-riding by local people, and is home to a diverse range of wildlife. The paths that pass through the woodland are part of the Shale Trail, which is a 25km route from West Calder to Winchburgh, commemorating West Lothian's shale mining heritage.

In summer 2020, during the pandemic, a 'for sale' sign appeared at the entrance to the woodland near Oakbank Cottages, by owners Green Action Trust (GAT). A group of neighbours set up a WhatsApp group to see what they could do and so the Easter Breich Wood Steering Group was formed.

Through early discussions within the Steering Group, it became clear the Group did not want to see the woodland sold to a new private owner, and so began their journey to purchase the woodland on behalf of the surrounding local community.

Later in 2020, the Steering Group secured initial funding from the Scottish Land Fund (SLF) to carry out a feasibility study with the help of consultants Community Enterprise to explore the community's aim to buy the woodland. EBWCG also became a Scottish Charitable Voluntary Organisation (SCVO).

On a sunny day in June 2021, the Steering Group organised a coffee and cake fundraising event at the woodland, to raise money for the community group, and to meet with and share the Group's funding application progress with local people. Soon after the event, the Steering Group submitted the Stage 2 funding application to the SLF for consideration at their committee meeting later in the summer/early autumn.

In September 2021, the Group went from a voluntary association to form a registered Scottish charity (SCIO) and mounted a campaign through email and social media to register as many members of the local community as possible as supporters of the charity and also gained the support of local councillors and Members of the Scottish Parliament. The Group were overwhelmed with the amount of support gained, with around 300 local residents in the weeks and months that followed.

Later in September 2021, the Stage 2 funding application was approved by the SLF, meaning EBWCG secured funds to purchase Easter Breich Wood on behalf of the community. Since then, the Group have proceeded to carry out legal and conveyancing matters relating to the wood in order to complete the purchase of the woodland from previous owners, GAT.

Easter Breich Wood Community Group would like to extend their thanks to each and every person who has supported the group during the application process, and we hope you continue to enjoy the beauty, peace and wildlife the woodland has to offer the local community. We are so grateful to WCHDT for all their help and support throughout the process so far, and we look forward to working closely with the Trust in the coming months to coordinate management of the woodland and host volunteer days and events. We are hosting an event on Saturday 23rd April to officially launch the woodland as a community owned space, and would love for you to join us, at the Oakbank Cottages entrance to the woodland, from 10am.

**Our Lady and St Bridget's
West Calder**

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Palm Sunday 10th April
10am Palm Sunday Mass

Holy Thursday 14th April
7.00 pm Mass of the Last Supper
9.45pm Night prayers in the church

Good Friday 15th April
3.00 pm Solemn Liturgy of the Lord's Passion.

Holy Saturday 16th April
8.30 pm The Solemn Easter Paschal Vigil.

Easter Sunday 18th th April
9.30am Mass of Easter Sunday