

Westhill Bulletin

Winter 2023
Issue 176

The background of the poster is light blue with white snowflakes and a subtle pattern of small white dots. At the top, there are two golden bells with red and green holly leaves. In the center, there is a bright blue starburst light. At the bottom, there are green Christmas trees, a white snowman, a red robin, a red mug, and a blue sheet of music with a trumpet and musical notes.

*Westhill Christmas
Community Event*

WESTHILL SHOPPING CENTRE
SATURDAY 2ND DECEMBER

MUSIC AND CAROLS WITH BRASS BAND
TREE LIGHTS SWITCH ON
FREE HOT CHOCOLATE AND GOODIES
FREE SANTA'S GROTTTO AT THE
SHOPPING CENTRE | 2.30PM TO 4.30PM

*Bring the Family and
Enjoy a Community Event*

SEE THE NEXT PAGE
FOR MORE DETAILS

The logo for Westhill & Elrick Community Council, featuring the letters 'WE' in the top half and 'CC' in the bottom half, all within a white square with a blue border. Below the letters, the text 'Westhill & Elrick Community Council' is written in a smaller font.



Rockin' around the Xmas tree

Join us at Westhill Shopping Centre
Sat 02 Dec 2:30pm til 5pm

Meet Santa, 2:30pm - 4:30pm

Capture the memory of meeting Santa with a free selfie - Disneyland queues likely - **strictly limited to a 2-hour period overall** as we have the real Santa and he's very busy!!

Meet Jingle Pawz, 2:30pm - 4:30pm

Give your Furry Festive Friend their own jolly experience with a visit to Jingle Pawz for a photo and a treat

Festive Refreshments (all free) 3pm - 4:30pm

Hot chocolate, mince pies & goodies supplied by our friends at the Holiday Inn West and other local businesses. Westhill & Elrick Community Council serving hot chocolate.

Pop along from 3pm and visit SensationALL's Binky Bus, play some games and more...

Do you wanna be a Snowman?

Put your face in the hole and become a snowman!

Dress code

It's guaranteed to snow, so **wrap up warm** (and this is Scotland so Jack Frost will definitely be nipping at your nose) Christmas jumpers, long johns, hats, scarfs, gloves, antlers, reindeer ear rings, candy cane ties - all recommended but not essential

Donations

Your money is no good here!
(unless you would like to **make a donation to charity** for our local charities)

Bring the family and dogs and enjoy a Community Event with Westhill Shopping Centre, and Westhill and Elrick Community Council

see WECC or Westhill Shopping Centre Facebook pages for more details

Granite City Brass Band,
music and
Carol singing
from 4:15pm

The
Annual
Christmas
tree lights
switch on at
4:30pm

CHRISTMAS TREES
FOR SALE!



Sponsored by Signs Express, Holiday Inn West and Frogbox Marketing

Please note that filming/photography will be taking place at this event for promotional and archival purposes. The photographs and recordings made are likely to appear on our website and social media pages

Westhill
Shopping Centre

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Disclaimer: The inclusion of adverts in the Bulletin does not imply that WECC promotes or endorses any particular business or service.

SUBMITTING ITEMS FOR THE BULLETIN

We distribute over 5000 copies of the Westhill Bulletin quarterly to houses and businesses in Westhill and surrounding villages. We offer good advertising rates and are keen to support local businesses and services.

Adverts and articles for the spring issue should be sent in by **Friday 2nd February**. The Bulletin will be distributed from 1st March.

All contributions or enquiries should be emailed to:
westhill.bulletin@gmail.com

Telephone enquiries re adverts or articles to:

Bulletin Editor – David Ritchie on 01224 744058 or 07989 637461

Articles should be submitted as **Microsoft Word** documents attached to an email. Articles larger than 600 words may be edited.

2024 advertising rates:

Eighth Page £35, Quarter Page £62, Half Page £100, Full Page £190

Inside Covers £220, Back Page £252

(There is a small additional one-off charge for new adverts and when changes are made)

For more details on advertising see www.westhillelrick.org/bulletin

BULLETIN DELIVERY

The Bulletin is delivered by an army of dedicated volunteers. More deliverers are always required to replace retiring helpers and add to the pool of relief helpers.

If you can spare an hour or so four times per year to help deliver the Bulletin in your locality or nearby then please ring David Ritchie on 01224 744058.

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Westhill & Elrick Community Council

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Elected Councillors

The four Aberdeenshire Council Ward 13 Councillors named below are ex-officio members of the Community Council. They attend the monthly meetings when they can but do not have voting rights. They put articles in Bulletin about current topics (see pages 7 to 12). They are also ex-officio members of two other nearby Community Councils in Ward 13.

Councillor Fatima Joji | Councillor Ron McKail | Councillor Craig Miller | Councillor Iris Walker

Community Council meetings are held on 2nd Thursday of each month at 7pm in Holiday Inn West, Westhill and are open to all residents of Westhill & District

The agenda is placed in the noticeboard outside Nisa a week before the meeting and posted on the Westhill website www.westhillelrick.org

If you would like to join the meeting remotely a Zoom link can be sent - contact weccsecretx@gmail.com

OFFICE BEARER'S REPORT

As I type this report, heavy rain is falling again after a brief respite following several days of heavy rain and high winds and a Met Office amber warning. Fortunately, our area was luckier than communities just a few miles south. It's a stark reminder of how important it is to have a strong resilient community which we tend to have here.

Since the last Bulletin, the Community Council has been very concerned to hear of the potential closure of the Westdyke Leisure Centre and reduced opening hours at the Swimming Pool. We were pleased to hear that the lease of the Westdyke Centre has been reassigned to Denman Pre-School and they are now running the Centre. This is a big undertaking and WECC appreciates the efforts of the previous committee and staff at the centre and wishes the new management every success. See page 86 for details of the activities now available at the Centre. On the swimming pool, WECC hopes that once the changes settle down, there will be the opportunity for users to have more influence on how the pool is managed.

Sadly, these are two examples of the financial pressures that public services are under and the increasingly important trend of communities taking more of a part in organising facilities and activities – community empowerment.

Preparation is underway for the Christmas Event on Saturday 2nd December. WECC and the Shopping Centre Management are again collaborating to bring you a wonderful community event. See details on front cover and inside front cover.

A bid was submitted to the Transition Fund participatory budgeting exercise, for funding to help with some improvements at Larg Park, following concerns expressed by local residents a year or more ago. Even if the bid is not successful, WECC hopes to gradually introduce some improvements here.

Liaison continues with Mears and other service providers in relation to the temporary residents at the Hampton by Hilton hotel.

Work has been completed on the paths at Carnie and more is planned at Denman. This is covered in another article on page 70.

Work continues on the Community Action Plan and there will be some further community engagement events in the new year, to validate the findings and conclusions, before adopting a plan and getting on with trying to make it happen. If you are interested in getting involved in this process, please get in touch.

We are keeping a watching brief on two major proposals to the west of our community – the Hill of Fare Wind Farm and the Kintore to Tealing major power line. If you have any thoughts, positive or negative about these, please let us know as it will help WECC to decide whether we should object or remain neutral when the time comes.

A few members of WECC had a very constructive meeting with Total Energies a few weeks ago and hope that a good working relationship can develop on a number of fronts in the future. We are keen to forge links with businesses in our area.

WECC still has two vacancies and the position of chair is vacant. Please get in touch if you are interested. We can co-opt people who are residents or who own or work in a business in the area. We would particularly like to see some younger people joining the community council.

Community Action Plan for Westhill and Elrick

What is a Community Action Plan?

Community Action Plans are developed by communities following a resident's survey which itemises the communities' priorities for the years ahead.

During the summer months Westhill and Elrick Community Council carried out its Community Action Plan survey in which residents were asked to identify the local issues that they would like to see being improved or developed within the Westhill and Elrick area. The survey involved a number of specific questions including areas such as public transport, housing and community, buildings, streets and spaces, play and recreation, facilities and amenities. The survey was highlighted on both our website and Facebook page. In addition to this survey, we also spoke to several focus groups and the combined comments were analysed and the findings identified.

Survey results

The survey identified some areas which could be improved however it must be noted that residents were very positive about living in Westhill: they commented on its community spirit and family friendly atmosphere, the number of walking and cycling routes, the availability of shops, the proximity to green spaces and the countryside, the swimming pool and the new orbital trail.

The specific issues that were identified by residents were:

- improving Denman Park and Carnie Woods
- the need for a community hub
- a sports village
- playparks needing maintenance and the development of a major central playpark
- activities for young people
- establishing walking trails
- public transport concerns
- the shopping centre

The next phase of the Community Action Plan

Having collated this information, we are currently working on how the Community Action Plan will be taken forward with achievable and realistic targets. In order for this to come to fruition we are keen for volunteers and local organisations within Westhill and Elrick to assist us with this process. We will be regularly keeping you up to date with our progress but if you as an individual or an organisation would like to become involved with any of the issues mentioned above or would like some further information, please don't hesitate to contact us at planningwecc@gmail.com.

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Councillor Iris Walker (Westhill & District)

Building Your Own Home – Aberdeenshire Self-Build Register

The Scottish Government would like self-build homes to become a more mainstream housing option. As such The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 (Section 16E) now requires Local Planning Authorities to prepare, maintain and publish a list of anyone with the intention of acquiring land for self-build housing across the planning authority's area. The council will then have a duty to consider this information when preparing the next Local Development Plan.

The Aberdeenshire Self-Build Register is now live on the Council website and asks people to provide their basic information and what type of plot they are looking for. This will not result in an offer of land being made, but the Council will use this information to inform policy and future land use.

Alongside this register, the council have created a self-build guide which gives people basic information about self-building and signposts to more in-depth information. Self-building is a rewarding but complex process, so information provided is just a starting point and it is advised that professional advice is sought.

The register along with basic information on self-build is available at the following link: <https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/self-build/>.

Aberdeenshire Bus Forum

In a move away from the area-based, face-to-face bus forums, the council have arranged the next forum as an online meeting covering the whole of Aberdeenshire. The meeting will take place on Thursday 7th December from 7.30-9pm. Questions can be submitted in advance and to register for or log into the meeting, please see the graphic here. The aim of the forum remains to engage on bus service matters with representatives from the council's transport unit and Stagecoach being on hand to give updates and answer questions from members of the public.



Online Bus Forum – winter 2023

Join us on Thursday 7th December at 7.30pm – 9pm at Aberdeenshire Council's Online Bus Forum.

You can register in advance or join by clicking [here](#). Alternatively scan the QR code or join via MS Teams Meeting ID: 397 787 032 428 Passcode: cBQIQf



Scan this QR code or click [here](#) to register for the event



Stagecoach

submit any questions here



slido

We want to hear from you and let you know what's happening to Aberdeenshire bus services. If you have a comment or question, it will help us if you can submit it beforehand: use passcode **#Bus23** on [Slido](#) or scan this QR code before the event.

Council budgets and transformation of services

Earlier in the year, when the 2023/24 budget was set, it was also agreed that work would continue to balance future years revenue budgets through a planned transformation programme. Aberdeenshire's child population and people of working age is in decline, whilst the region's pensionable age population is set to increase by 28% by 2030, much higher than the rest of Scotland which averages at 23.6%. This has potentially huge implications for the rising costs of social care, housing, benefits and service delivery in general. By 2027/28 there is an anticipated funding gap of almost £92 million. This financial picture is further compounded by rising inflation, pay awards and supply chain issues for capital projects. Through consultation feedback and data collection, a number of themes have been identified as overarching pillars of the council's transformation strategy – organisational design and operational structure, buildings and estate, external collaboration and partnership, big data, digital and technology and transport – all areas which will see a huge amount of activity over the next few months. Communication to individuals and communities affected by any changes will be key.



Councillor Iris Walker – Westhill and District
phone 07876 475272
email cllr.i.walker@aberdeenshire.gov.uk



Councillor Craig Miller

Asylum Seekers

I wrote about the asylum seekers being accommodated in Westhill in the last Bulletin which generated a significant amount of email traffic.

I am grateful to all who wrote, the majority of which was positive, although there is no denying that a number of people raised concerns regarding this issue. It is important for us, as councillors, to be aware of concerns and issues that residents have, and I was glad to have the opportunity to investigate some of the concerns that were raised.

I would like to reiterate that it is important for any residents who have first-hand knowledge of criminal activity, or anti-social behaviour to report these incidents directly to the police. Whilst it is useful for me to be made aware of these incidents, there is little I, or other elected representatives, can do in terms of holding people to account – this is the job of Police Scotland.

Having said that I have been reporting issues that I have been able to substantiate at the regular meetings held between Aberdeenshire Council and the hotel management.

Similarly, I have reported incidences of reports made to me that have turned out to be incorrect when investigated, in an effort to counter some of the rumours that are circulating around the town.

At the time of writing the number of asylum seekers has reduced and is currently 20% lower than the peak we had in the summer.

One of the challenges lying ahead as we enter the winter season is ensuring that the asylum seekers have activity to keep them occupied. Once again, I commend the local community groups who have been actively engaging with the hotel management to provide not only material needs, (clothing, toiletries, etc.), but also investing their time to provide educational opportunities and indeed sports facilities which has been greatly appreciated by all. These activities have included ESOL (English for Speaker of Other Languages), indoor cricket, indoor rugby, rock up and ride cycling, Duke of Edinburgh awards participation and football sessions.

Anyone who has time on their hands and would like to assist with any of these activities should contact any of the community groups or myself to volunteer.

Donations of clothing continue to the local church and with the onset of winter anyone who has unwanted warmer clothing can drop this off where it will be gratefully received (see page 46).

I would also like to thank Police Scotland for their contribution to alleviating safety concerns around this issue – they have not only increased their visible presence in Westhill during this period but in mid-November held their first drop-in session at the local library to address specific concerns from residents. At the time of writing, it is unknown whether further sessions will be held but if they are they will be advertised in the usual manner, and I would encourage any local residents who have concerns to drop in and seek reassurance from the police as to how best to manage these.

Councillor Surgeries

Councillor Ron McKail and I are continuing to hold monthly surgeries at Westhill Library. These are held from 10.00-11.00 on the 2nd Saturday of each month. Whilst no appointment is necessary, you can contact either of us to set up a specific time if you want to guarantee availability. If you are unable to attend the surgery, I am happy to arrange meetings at mutually convenient times if you contact me directly. The next surgery will be held on Saturday 9 December at the library within Westhill Primary School.

Councillor Craig Miller
Cllr.c.miller@aberdeenshire.gov.uk | [Craig4Westhill](#)
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Ron McKail, Councillor for Westhill and District

Business Gateway – What Does It Do?

If you are a business or thinking of setting up a business, then Business Gateway can help and support your ambitions. Business Gateway Aberdeen City & Shire is fully funded by both councils locally and provides valuable support from start-ups to growing businesses. The service provides 1:1 advice tailored to the business along with support on various topics, including digital, taking on employees, developing sales skills and expert help; the service also hosts various workshops and networking opportunities. Business Gateway works with any business at any stage of its journey, and the support is not just for start-ups. The service is free and open to all new or existing businesses. For more information contact the team at 01224 946519, by email to aberdeenshire@bgateway.com or the web link is <https://www.bgateway.com/local-offices/aberdeenshire/local-support>.

Notes from Garioch and North Marr Community Safety

1. Million Pounds Monthly Scammed in Grampian Area

In the Grampian area it is estimated that approximately £1million monthly is scammed and scamming accounts for 50% of all crime. A typical example being by a phone call supposedly from 'your' bank with the message your account is being compromised and you need to transfer the money in your account to another account. This new account will not be accessible to you having been set up by the scammer. The phone contact will be untraceable, the location could be from anywhere in the world and your money is lost. On receipt of these suspicious calls the course of action is not to engage with the person who is about to take your money; contact your bank; and report the crime to Police Scotland.

On a similar vein an item for sale advertised on social media could possibly mean it is not available and is a scam. Sensible advice suggests not to pay up front until you see the 'goods'.

2. Rural Crime

Examples of rural crime in farming areas are: Leaving expensive equipment such as quad bikes in an easily accessible location resulting in the vehicle being stolen; equipment/power tools/fuel/bicycles suffering a similar fate from unlocked or insecure sheds and outbuildings. Not unusual for the same property to be targeted on more than one occasion. Sadly, what happens in the rural area can happen in Westhill. Protect your property by keeping it secure.

3. Sextortion

This is a new expression for me but refers to the distressing online crime where the victim has shared nude/explicit images of a sexual nature and then is coerced/blackmailed by the predator.

Councillor Surgeries

Along with Councillor Miller, our surgery is held in Westhill Library on the second Saturday of each month from 10:00hrs to 11:00hrs.

Wishing you and yours a very Merry Christmas and a Happy Healthy and Successful 2024

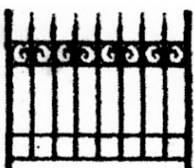
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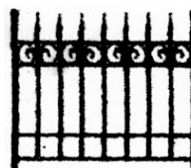
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Councillor Fatima Joji

I am delighted to take this opportunity to share a few updates since the last Bulletin. As we approach the winter months and start using our grit bins, please remember you can access grit bin services through the Aberdeenshire Council website. These services include; request a grit bin to be filled; report damage to a grit bin; request a grit bin to be moved; request a new grit bin. To find this service from the Council homepage, please scroll down to Roads and Travel and choose Make a Grit Bin Request or Report Damage. If you have any issues logging a request, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Storm Babet

I would like to thank all our crucial health services and community groups for their support to residents throughout Storm Babet. The storm saw some services in Westhill being suspended due to the extreme weather conditions which caused huge levels of disruption, with residents being advised to avoid any travel to the South of Aberdeenshire, which was sadly, very badly hit. Locally, it was great to see a fantastic level of support throughout the community from neighbour to neighbour.

As councillors, we received timely and efficient updates on Storm Babet from Council officers. Due to the efficiency of the Storm Babet bulletins, we were able to share the most up to date information and guidance. It was noted by some residents that this was particularly helpful for safety. If you are online, I would like to encourage you to follow Aberdeenshire Council pages in future! For any road traffic updates, I would recommend Traffic Scotland who provide live information on incidents and road closures, which was particularly useful during Storm Babet.

NHS Grampian: Staff Parking Concerns

I have received a few campaign emails about NHS Grampian Staff Parking concerns, some from residents in Westhill.

I am advised by some residents in Westhill that the NHS staff working on the Foresterhill site use the Lady Helen Parking Centre, the multi-storey car park next to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

Understandably, the multi-storey was originally built for patients and visitors, but during the COVID pandemic, 700 spaces in the top half were opened up to staff. This, I'm aware, made a huge difference, and is now part of daily life.

Following the decision to revert to patients and visitors, I would first like to share that I have great sympathy for staff. Some of my councillor colleagues and I were advised that the decision to give staff access was only temporary. We have been contacted by residents to speak to NHS Grampian about this decision.

Following a response from NHS Grampian given to a colleague, our understanding is that the car park was privately-funded by the Wood family and they insisted that there be some sort of clause that the facility be for patients and visitors only. This was subsequently adopted into the planning conditions when the application to build went before Aberdeen City Council. As it is a planning permission requiring change to allow staff, this suggests that it is the Wood family and/or Aberdeen City Council who would require to be lobbied to change either the deed or the planning conditions, and not NHS Grampian. As such, a request that I table a motion at Aberdeenshire Council to change the planning permission granted by another local authority would be ruled 'ultra vires' by the council's legal officer.

If you have any issues, I am eager to help and available to contact by phone 07787 955311 or by email cllr.f.joji@aberdeenshire.gov.uk



Westhill A2B is a council operated minibus service providing travel for shopping or other local services or facilities. The service is free to use and is available for people that have difficulty walking, people with other disabilities or residents who don't live near a regular bus route. It operates Monday to Friday in Westhill, Elrick and Kirkton of Skene. First pick-up from 8:45am, Last drop-off by 4pm.

You must book your journeys on this door-to-door service and can book up to 7 days before travel or 14 days for health-related trips, but no later than the day before travel. To make a booking please call the A2B dial-a-bus hotline on **01467 535333** or email a2bdialabus@aberdeenshire.gov.uk.

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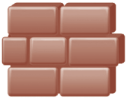
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- Westhill Service Station shop in Elrick



End Polio Now

Crombie School and Dunecht Primary have both been involved in our End Polio Now campaign. The students of Crombie School contributed their purple fingerprints to a collective heart, symbolising their commitment to eradicating polio before the whole school walked a mile in aid of End Polio Now.

Dunecht Primary took part in a walk for End Polio Now. Every pupil eagerly participated, and they went the extra mile by donning something purple to show their support for the cause. This collective effort not only raised awareness but also showed the power of a community united in a common purpose.

Both sets of pupils received their own purple Crocus corms. These corms will soon find a home in the soil, and when they bloom in the spring, they will serve as a vivid reminder of the ongoing battle against polio.



RYLA

Two pupils from Westhill Academy, Matangi Sankriti and Connor Hendry, shared their transformative experiences at the Rotary Youth Leadership Award (RYLA) camp in the Cairngorms. They gave us a wonderful talk at a recent meeting of our club.

Matangi and Connor believe that the skills and insights gained at RYLA will not only enhance their current activities but also significantly influence their future career choices. These two senior pupils showcased the broad reach and impact of RYLA, offering a chance for local youths to grow and develop through such programs.

Their participation in RYLA was made possible through the sponsorship of the Westhill and District Rotary Club, which exemplifies the positive impact Rotary Clubs have on the local community.

Community Gardening

Another great team effort between Westhill Shopping Centre, Westhill and Elrick Community Council, Aberdeenshire Council and our own Rotarians.

The old bedding plants in the barrels by the living wall/roundabout at the shopping centre have been removed and the winter pansies installed.

Bon Accord Centre Raffle

Additionally, the Rotary Raffle at the Bon Accord Centre is an event to watch out for in the coming weeks. By participating, you can not only win a Suzuki Swift but also contribute to the noble cause of supporting the Charlie House foundation.

If you would like to find out more about Rotary and give something back to the community either by becoming a Rotary member or simply to lend a hand with some of our projects, then please get in touch – Secretary@Westhill.rotary1010.org or take a look at our Facebook page [facebook.com/westhillrotary](https://www.facebook.com/westhillrotary).





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One of the best things about late November and December is getting into the festive spirit, and I can't think of a better way to embrace the season than shopping for unique Christmas gifts on a European city break, somewhere with a fabulous festive market. I've chosen a couple of must-visit Europe Christmas markets for 2023, with some continuing into early January if you want to keep the festive feels going.

BERLIN, November 27th to December 31st – Weihnachts Zauber is a favourite among Berlin's Christmas markets. Rated for its ambience and its tented artisan village, with local wood carvers and other craftspeople showing off their skills. There are also performances by jugglers, fire eaters, and musicians, and traditional German dishes served in a heated restaurant area. Other top sights to see in Berlin are Museum Island, the Brandenburg Gate, and Checkpoint Charlie.

KRAKOW, November 24th to January 1st – This southern Polish city is full of character all year round, with its well-preserved medieval centre. But it's especially charming at this time of year when its main square, Rynek Główny, is taken over by market stalls, street performances, folklore shows, and live regional music. Sample Polish treats such as Grzaniec (local mulled wine) and crispy pork knuckle, and don't miss the famous Christmas Crib Contest dating back to the early 19th century.

PRAGUE, December 2nd to January 6th – Of all the Czech capital's Christmas markets, the one in the Old Town Square stands out for its spectacular cathedral views. As well as snapping up local crafts, you can feast on national specialities such as roast pork, gingerbread, hot mead, and Trdelník (a kind of cake wrapped around a stick, topped with sugar and walnuts) while listening to carols and other live music. The castle, cathedral, and Charles Bridge are also unmissable.

Or why not take in several Christmas Markets on a river cruise? The perfect way to soak up the festive atmosphere and visit several markets.

If you would like to know more or simply need help with travel plans, contact me via the advert on page 76 or follow me on [Facebook/Instagram](#) for updates.

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Heather Reynolds, Travel Counsellors



BILL'S GARDENING CORNER

It was lovely to see the autumn colours shining with gold red and brown, and the berries hanging. Sadly the berries didn't have the usual flavour and taste, put that down to the unusual weather.

Now it's back to the end of season mundane jobs, summer bedding plants tidied up, and yes again – wash and dry your pots and put them in paper to keep them dry and away from mould. Don't store them in plastic as that encourages mould and is no use in the frost.

Yes it's that time of the year again, Christmas! – drop a few hints to family and friends that you would like a voucher so you could get something to please yourself.

On a different note we have had a welcome visitor this year; it's been quite a wee while since we had a hedgehog but it came in and settled down at the bottom of the garden in May and did us a great favour over the summer keeping snails and slugs down and getting lovely cat food twice a week.

Enjoy your garden, whatever the weather.

Bill



WESTHILL SENIOR CITIZENS GROUP

I hope that the wet weather hasn't affected you too much. At least the Senior Citizens meetings keep you motivated, social and active. Hopefully the winter won't be too harsh for us and you are able to continue getting out and about. We are very pleased to see so many people attending our meetings. Usually around 44 attend regularly but if everyone on our register came along we would have around 60, which is great.

If you do find yourself needing help (shopping, clearing paths, etc.) over the winter months and have no family, friends or neighbours who can help you out then please get in touch – as there are so many helpful people in our Westhill Community.

Hopefully you have not fallen victim to any phone or email scams. This is happening more and more and the scammers tend to target older and vulnerable people. Please DO NOT give your email, bank, or personal information out to anyone over the phone. If they say they are your bank then put the phone down and call your Bank on the number on the back of your bank card.

We re-started on Thursday 31st August and have been entertained by the Sweet Adelines; Cat Macpherson, Dan Greavy, Garioch Blend, Spectrum Musicians and had a session with exercises, bingo and games.

We meet in the Hall at the back of Trinity Church from 2.00pm until approximately 3.30pm. We have entertainment for an hour then refreshments. We have sanitiser and wipes on the tables. AGE SCOTLAND

have once more supported our Group and we are using this to supplement the Christmas party at the Holiday Inn.

Thursday 23rd Nov 2023 – 'B Naturals'

*Thursday 7th Dec – Christmas Party Holiday Inn.
Entertainers – Jim & Marisha Addison*

*Thursday 11th Jan 2024 (restart) – Don Carnie –
Singer/Keyboard*

Thursday 25th Jan – Donald Grassie – Musicians

If the weather is inclement and the schools and public places are closed then we will not be holding a session. We would let you know by email or telephone.

A2B dial a-bus have been amazing at helping our Seniors to get to and from the meetings. Many have said how helpful and accommodating the drivers have been. Thank you.

For many people the hardest thing to do is to get yourself out the house and come and try something new. Please come along and see how you enjoy our meetings.

If you need any further information please get in touch.

Contact: **Heather Cook** – 01224 741194;
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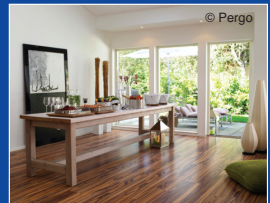
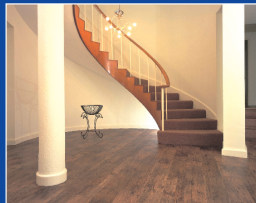


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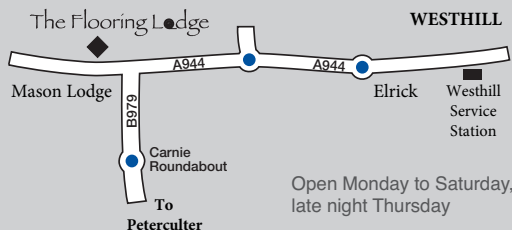
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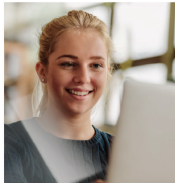


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Milne Hall, Kirkton of Skene

On 7th October we held a Variety Concert. A number of local groups and individuals gave fantastic entertainment. We raised £1000 that was given to local charities and included donations from The Hall Committee and local company i-Protect. The audience, performers and parents of the children all enjoyed the evening. It is hoped this can be repeated again in 2024.

To enquire about hiring, please email the booking secretary – milnehallbookings@gmail.com.

Future Events: See Facebook page for up to date details.

Regular Activities:

- Jazzercise, every Monday and Wednesday 9.45-10.45am and also Wednesday 6.30-7.30pm.
- Westhill Sooyang Do martial art group hold classes for children and adults on Monday evenings. Phone Chief Instructor Dave Bremner: 07970 188825.
- Skene Youth Club for Primary 1-7, Thursday evenings 6-7pm, October to April.
- Alba Black Belt Academies – age 3 to adult. Call 07818 200371 for details.
- Baby Sensory – Thursday mornings.

Milne Hall Management Committee is registered as a charity (SC045034).

Help wanted – if you feel you could contribute in any way in looking after and improving the hall, you will be made most welcome. Please contact 01224 742804.

Skene Fundraising Committee – Macmillan Cancer Support

We take this opportunity to thank all who have donated so generously to Skene Fundraising Macmillan Cancer Support.

We held another collection at Tesco Westhill on Saturday 2nd September, and raised £476.25. The Macmillan Coffee Morning was at Lyne of Skene Hall, Lyne of Skene on Saturday 30th September and we raised a fantastic amount of £1847.45.

On 8th October we held another Bingo Night at the Ashvale in Inverurie, and the Macmillan Burns Supper will be held on Friday 26th January at Echt Hall, please check our Facebook page for more details.

Please follow us on Facebook – [Skene Fundraising Committee-Macmillan Cancer Support](#) to read about these and future events. In addition we do place posters around Westhill with the next upcoming event(s).

To donate to Macmillan Skene Fundraising Committee go to macmillan-org.enthuse.com.

The funds raised by the committee remain within this area.

If you would like to be a volunteer or join our committee please contact me at the number below.

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SPEAR Physio Says.....

With Christmas coming up and New years fitness resolutions around the corner it's a great time to explore the benefits of Pilates.

Having a strong core is about how well our body can stabilise us and keep us balanced against gravitational or external forces during movement, such as movement from our limbs. There are many ways our body can compensate by using other muscles instead of your core to stabilise your body. This can lead to reduced quality movement and pain.

So how can we work on our core whilst making sure we do not compensate with other muscles like our neck and shoulders at the same time?

Pilates is a great way to mindfully learn to strengthen our core whilst learning to minimise compensatory movements. It can be adapted to suit any fitness level, or injuries, as well as athletic performance.

At SPEAR our goal is to support you in moving well so you can do all the things you love. We care about getting results, which is why our Pilates service is designed in a specific way so that you can see progress and help maintain strength, mobility and stability in the long term.

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1:1 Pilates – these sessions comprise an individualised assessment and understanding of how the body moves and what compensatory strategies you may be using without realising it. We go through foundational principals and exercises to ensure that you feel muscle activation in the right areas.

Group Pilates Classes – we currently offer different levels of classes which are run in blocks to help build on the exercises from the previous weeks. We also introduce you to the ovo ball and Pilates ring to strengthen your core further.

Private Pilates Classes – these bespoke classes are tailor made for a small group of friends/family. Let us know what you would like to work on whether it's general strength and conditioning, flexibility, relaxation or a mixture of everything!

Our bodies are incredible movement systems, that when well looked after allow us to do what we love and achieve great things and helps us feel healthy and happy. Pilates is a great way to look after our bodies and have fun at the same time.

With Christmas coming up what better gift for your loved ones than bespoke Pilates session to help them move and feel better.

For more information or to book any Pilates sessions please get in touch with our Pilates team pilates@spearphysiotherapy.co.uk.

To book a physiotherapy appointment call 01224 900102 or go online www.spearphysiotherapy.co.uk.



ASHDALE HALL (WESTHILL DRIVE)

HALL NEWS

Our family Ceilidh was a great success. We had a Primary school age disco and we will have another on December 22nd.

FUNDRAISING

We are planning fundraising later this year, including a Christmas Craft Fair and others in 2024. But we really need people to join the fundraising committee and help come and organise.

We applied for funding for Pickleball equipment and have put on some free sessions. Pickleball and Badminton can be booked for £20 an hour.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

We are desperately looking for extra local people for the Committee. Please contact the Hall if you are interested.

AVAILABLE FOR HIRE

We have various time slots available during the week for let, please email the Hall if you are interested in making a regular booking or for parties/events. Our event prices have not changed in four years for those looking for a bargain. Contact ashdalehall@hotmail.co.uk.

Monthly Tea Dances are on the 2nd Friday of every month 1.30-3.30pm from April to October.

WESTHILL MARKET (9am–1pm, 1st Saturday of every month)

Our monthly market is held at the Hall Car Park and we have stallholders selling fish, bakery items, local fresh meat, pies, vegetables, loose tea, jams, fudge, eggs, bespoke cards, crafts, jewellery and more.

We really need the support of the local community for the Market to be able to continue and to expand as stalls will only come back if more local people come.

Most of the products at the Market are locally sourced and made, with little or no food miles involved. Come along to see the fantastic quality and choice of the goods on offer and help the environment.

HALL CLASSES AND EVENTS

We offer a wide program, for full details please see the next page and our online timetable: <http://www.ashdalehall.co.uk>. These are also displayed on the Hall noticeboards.

ENQUIRIES

For enquiries or to book the hall/meeting rooms or Badminton and Pickleball Courts, please e-mail Adrian Hidalgo [Facilities Manager] at: ashdalehall@hotmail.co.uk or call the Hall on **01224 740137**.

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Are you local? Have great ideas? Interested in building community spirit?



Then join our well-established Management Committee Team or Fundraising Team.

For more information, please contact the office on ashdalehall@hotmail.co.uk or by calling **01224 740137**.



Greetings from Vinespring Church! Right about now the autumn leaves have fallen, the storms have hopefully long gone, although we all continue to bear with the sweeping winds and the lashing rains, as the cold snap of winter alerts us to that time of the year when all is great and jolly. It is always a delight to witness the changing seasons, but not just the physical climate, but also the social and spiritual environment. The changes prepare us for what may be coming next, giving us a decent enough time to prepare not just for things that are about to happen, but the conditions within which they will take place.

Presently, any casual observer would attest to the fact that we are indeed living in rather unprecedented times. From the recent pandemic to international migration crises; from national political crises with global implications, to terrorism, wars, and rumours of wars in the Middle East and other parts of the world. It can be difficult for the ordinary citizen to bear up under the weight of all the dark and dreary events of our day. In addition to all these, families and individuals are still struggling to cope with the cost-of-living crisis. And, migrants and asylum seekers continue to arrive, seeking a better future for themselves and their families. Various government institutions are stretched to capacity, both in personnel and finance; and the authorities are having to make difficult decisions about complex situations with real life consequences for the future of their nations. The times and seasons are indeed changing, and doing so on the speed lane, so to say.

At Vinespring Church we believe these times are quite prophetic and should focus our minds on what God our heavenly Father may be asking of us. In the book of Matthew, chapter 24, verses 3-8, Jesus was asked by his disciples what the signs of His return would be. In his reply, Jesus first warned his disciples against deception. Then He went on to state that the signs of his physical return to this earth would include wars and rumours of wars, and nations rising in conflict against other nations. That sounds very much like 'now O'clock!'. We are encouraged to seek peace, to pursue it and to be peace makers. But regardless of what outcomes our efforts in these areas may yield, we cannot afford to lose sight of that primary warning for the times we live in: Do not be deceived. Every believer and all people of good will must endeavour to stay in the path of truth and light as the days grow darker upon us.

For this reason, we have continued to meet, to teach, and to be witnesses of God's Word. Our recent sermon series explores the concept of truth, deception, discernment, and the knowledge of Jesus Christ. We would like to extend an invitation to anyone who may want to learn more or explore Christianity with us. Our weekly meetings continue Sundays at 11am and on Wednesdays at 7.30pm. For details please visit our website at www.vinespringchurch.co.uk or our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/vinespringchurch. To all residents, we would like to wish everyone a lovely Christmas celebration, filled with joy, hope, and victory. May Jesus Christ, our reason for this season, bring you peace and joy for always.

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Tax on Rental Properties

If you're renting out a property then it's important to make sure you are claiming all the legitimate expenses you can so as to minimise your tax bill each year. It is important to file accurately and on time to avoid any penalties and interest.

Most of the time, when people do not fill out a tax return for a property, it is because they are making a financial loss and think a return doesn't need done. This unfortunately isn't the case and it may be that a taxable event still occurs. There are many common misunderstandings about what can be claimed. Even in the case where no tax is due because of a loss a return should be filed so you are able to utilise or/and record those losses. Filing can also prevent an HMRC inspection as they will know a property is being let but don't know if it's profitable or not.

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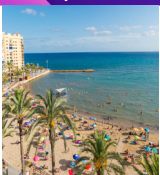
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6 SCOTT SKINNER SQUARE BANCHORY



Kingshill Parish Church

On a recent visit to New Lanark, I came across this quote by Robert Owens, the man behind the remarkable community built there. *“Has the infant any means of deciding who, or of what description, shall be its parents, its playmates, or those from whom it shall derive its habits and its sentiments?”*

These words perhaps resonate with us as we are faced with the horrifying news of children killed and injured in Israel/Palestine. Children who have no choice as to which side of a border they live, find their very existence threatened. And it happens in other war zones too. Think of the children removed from Ukraine or those kidnapped by Boko Haram. Our hearts break, especially as we approach the season of Christmas, with its focus upon one child, born in Bethlehem.

Of course, Jesus is no ordinary child. There is nothing accidental about his birth – about who his earthly parents were, or when and where he was born. It was planned long beforehand and is a fulfilment of God’s promises to His people. As Paul puts it: “But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.” Jesus is born into our world that we might be welcomed into a new family, with a heavenly father, whose love for us is beyond measure. And like any family, we come to resemble those around us – in our habits and in our sentiments.

One of the titles given to Jesus, centuries before his birth is Prince of Peace. If he simply stays a child in the manger, there is no way of him living up to it. But Christians believe he is the one who has overcome death and we worship him as the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. We put our hope in him. We join with countless Christians down through the ages who cry out – *Come, Lord Jesus, Come*. That is what advent is all about – preparing for Jesus’ coming, not only at Christmas, but in the future. For when he returns, the wars and conflicts which blight the lives of so many children will be ended, once and for all.

Why not join us as we celebrate his birth and look forward to his return? You will find details of our services below and on our website www.kingshillparish.com.

May we take this opportunity to wish you a Merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year when it arrives.

Rev Stella

Westhill Library News

Opening Times/Contact Info

Tuesday	10am-7pm
Wednesday	10am-7pm
Thursday	10am-6pm
Saturday	9am-1pm

T: 01224 472871

E: westhill.library@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

W: www.livelifeberdeenshire.gov.uk/libraries

Spotlight on: Libby now available on Sonos Speakers!

Downloading the Libby App and using your library membership allows you to borrow eAudiobooks to listen to.

Millions of households are filled with the high-quality sound of Sonos wireless home sounds systems daily, and now those houses will also be able to enjoy audiobooks through Libby. We're excited to announce that Libby is now integrated with your Sonos speakers, enabling you to enjoy all your borrowed audiobooks without the need for headphones or Bluetooth.

Using the Sonos App, users can play the audiobook on their Loans Shelf on their Sonos speakers throughout their house. The Sonos App is available for iOS, Android, MacOS, and Windows users.

For a step-by-step guide on the set up please visit: www.livelifeberdeenshire.org.uk/libraries.

Westhill Writers Forum

The library have welcomed a new social group that offers writers of all levels and genres a place to support each other in their writing.

The group have been meeting on a Wednesday evening and have been working on writing, editing and critiquing skills.

The Westhill Writers Forum encourages every member to write, improve and enjoy their writing.

For further information please email shanej lodge@gmail.com.

What's On?

Whether you're a reader or not, there's plenty to keep you occupied at the library and you're guaranteed a warm welcome when you visit.

Christmas Themed Lego Club for 5 to 12 year olds

Saturday 23rd December 9.30am – 12pm
Drop in, no booking required

Scrabble Club for adults

Wednesdays 10.30am – 12pm
Drop in, no booking required

Bookbug for pre-schoolers

Thursdays 10.30am – 11am
Booking essential

To book and for details of all our activities please visit: www.livelifeberdeenshire.org.uk/libraries.

*For a taste of everything we're up to, please follow us on Facebook.
We hope to see you in the library soon!*



Public Access Defibrillator locations in the Westhill Area



Accessible 24 hours, 7 days a week

- McDonald's Westhill (inside to left of counter)
- Premier Inn Westhill (inside at reception)



The below are unlocked by a code which will be given to you by the ambulance call centre when making an emergency call (999)



- Westhill Dental Practice (on wall outside main entrance)



- Westhill Shopping Centre (on wall to left of Nisa)



- Westdyke Leisure Centre (on wall outside main entrance)



- Westhill Swimming Pool (on wall to left of main entrance, behind the bike racks)



- Elrick Service Station (on wall to left of side entrance)



- Trinity Church (on wall to left of front entrance)



- Milne Hall in Skene (on wall to right of main entrance)



- Scout Hall (on side wall facing road, behind the bike racks)



- Westhill Community Church (on wall outside main entrance)



- Westhill Golf Club (on wall to left side of entrance)

- The Happy Barber Mason Lodge (on side wall facing car park)

- Crombie Primary School (on wall to left of main entrance)

- Skene Primary School (on wall to left of main entrance)

Accessible during opening hours only

- Abercrombie Smile Design (inside)

- Abercrombie Dental Practice (inside)

- Marks & Spencer (inside)

- Costco (inside)

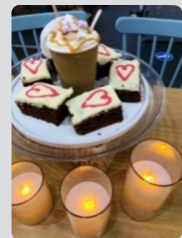
- Tesco (inside)

- GPH (inside)



We anticipate that you will enjoy a weekly home bake and coffee at this Kirkton of Skene destination, along the footpath from Westhill and Elrick.

Bothy 57's beverages, home-made soup, hot food, scrumptious home bakes, soft drinks and ice cream are served both from the door and inside, heated by the log burning stove on the colder days. Jill and Steve look forward to sharing a warm welcome.



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All are welcome





WESTHILL BOWLING CLUB

With our outdoor bowling season having ended in September there is not much bowling news to report.

Late September and October is generally a time when we can get some work done on the green to see it through the winter in as good a condition as possible to be ready for play in April.

Whilst we managed to get a lot of the necessary work done, the torrential rain of storms Agnes, Babet and Ciarán put a halt to the final touches. Let's hope that the winter weather is kind to us and doesn't cause too much frost damage to the grass.

In earlier articles I gave details of our successes and some of our near misses on the green so there is no mileage in looking backwards but we are looking forward to the 2024 season starting in April. However, one notable success that we should highlight is regarding the number of new members we have added over the past year. Over twenty have been added for 2023 and I believe all have enjoyed the experience and hopefully, like me, are looking forward to the 2024 season.

As we approach Christmas many of you will have the perennial question of "what will I get (you add the name) for Christmas". I know that in my family we have this same stress every year.

So here is an original suggestion for you. Get them a membership of Westhill Bowling Club. It's good for any age from about 10 upwards, male or female. It will be gift that never stops giving for many, many years. The lucky recipients will enjoy gentle outdoor exercise, great camaraderie, friendly sporting activity and the chance to meet a much larger circle of friends. We have friendly matches as well as competitive matches against other clubs in the Aberdeen area and the wider Aberdeenshire area which gives even more opportunity to expand horizons visiting different locations.

All this and you will have enough change out of £50 to buy a gift card (change out of £10 for juniors). What's not to like.

If you or anyone you know would like to come and join us and be part of our ongoing story of bowling in the Westhill area please do not hesitate to get in touch by email robert.mutch@btinternet.com or telephone 07562 696193 and I'll send you the necessary details.

Westhill Bowling Club wishes you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



1st Skene Girls' Brigade

We currently have 22 girls in our Company but we have no waiting list and are always looking for more girls to join us.

Our Explorers entered a Divisional Competition recently and won, and our Juniors also entered and came in second. We were delighted with all the girls who took part and they enjoyed joining in and meeting new girls from other companies.

The girls take part in a variety of different activities each week including games, crafts, singing, competition work and badgework also.

We had two ladies from Guide Dogs visit us and the girls learnt a lot about the work the Charity does. We are having a Sponsored Step with the monies going to the Guide Dogs and this is part of the Juniors Badgework this session.

Our Dedication Service took place on 29th October and we attended the Remembrance Service on 12th November.

We are also going to Inverurie Town Hall for our Annual Panto Visit which this year is Rapunzel and Leaders and girls are looking forward to this.

Any questions please do not hesitate to contact myself: *Fiona Cumming (Captain)* on **07792 471199** or email fionacumming26@icloud.com.





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Cycling Without Age Scotland (CWAS) is an intergenerational project that helps people who are isolated or have mobility issues to get outdoors. Without volunteers of all ages, aptitudes, abilities, skills and interests, CWAS simply could not deliver this unique, free experience.



Our volunteers transform lives and combat loneliness and isolation by enabling people to enjoy the benefits of the outdoor environment through trips on our pioneering ebike Trishaws.

But there's more than that: the rides provide social interaction, enable new friendships, improve health and wellbeing and integrate communities. Every volunteer plays a vital role. When it comes to the rides themselves, not only do the passengers benefit, so too do the volunteer Trishaw Pilots, our riders. They do so, not just by being outdoors enjoying some of the most beautiful scenery that the UK has to offer and improving and/or maintaining their fitness, but also by playing a key role in this outstanding and heart-warming social and community experience.

The concept is simple, but the benefits are profound. CWAS is founded on the following five guiding principles: **Generosity**; **Slowness**; **Storytelling**; **Relationships**; and **“Without Age”**.

Generosity permeates every single activity in Cycling Without Age Scotland. **Slowness** – the gentle pace at which we ride – allows meaningful chat between passenger/s and pilot, the chance to enjoy properly beautiful scenery and to interact fully with passers-by. We are privileged to listen to the **Storytelling** of our passenger/s and then, with permission of course, share them with the worldwide Cycling Without Age family – and we share our own stories too! We create a multitude of new **Relationships** across all generations and all sections of society and watch them flourish and grow. **“Without Age”** underpins everything we do, as age presents no boundaries in Cycling Without Age Scotland. We engage with and bring together all age groups and, by providing stimulating new experiences and friendships, we help people themselves to age in a positive context.

CWAS' activity throughout Scotland is carried out by “Chapters,” the way we refer to our branches. Each Chapter represents a geographical area and its volunteers are recruited locally, so they really do play an important role in their own community.

Very excitingly, we have now established a Westhill Chapter, have taken delivery of our first Trishaw and are now recruiting volunteers to act as Trishaw “Pilots.” If you enjoy helping people and like being outdoors in your local community, then why don't you consider becoming a volunteer pilot for the brand new Westhill Chapter of Cycling Without Age Scotland?

Your commitment could be as little as a few hours per month to suit your schedule or more if you like; full training will be given to anyone who's interested. Please contact us by email at westhill-cwas@outlook.com.



If you are part of a group which looks after people with mobility issues or an individual who cares and wants more information, please do contact us.



Christmas Trees For Sale

We all love the smell of a fresh Christmas tree in the run up to the big day; well Westhill & District Round Table will be selling beautiful Nordmann Fir Christmas Trees at Westhill Shopping Centre on Saturday 2nd December, 12.30pm to 5pm.

The trees will cost only £55 each! Delivery available for £5 in Westhill and Elrick area.

Each Nordmann fir tree began as a 3 year old Danish sapling which was planted just south of Methlick, Aberdeenshire in 2020.

Coming in at just over 6ft tall, it's perfect for your living room, bedroom, bathroom, hallway, garage, dining room or garden shed, wherever you want to put it!

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So all in all for £55, it's a deal, it's a steal and every penny goes towards helping local groups and charities in Westhill and the surrounding areas!

We will be situated next to Greggs, with a limited stock!

APPEAL FOR CLOTHING DONATIONS

A huge thank you to everyone across our community who has helped provide essential clothing to the asylum seekers. We really appreciate your generosity.

As the weather changes, many of the men need more substantial clothing. We are desperately looking for warm winter coats (Size S/M), waterproof gloves and more underwear.

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if you want to arrange a separate drop-off time.*

If you would like to give financially, you will find details at www.kingshillparish.com/asylum-seekers.html. With your help so far, we have been able to purchase trainers for the men and underwear, all of which have been gratefully received.



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Dr. Narra continued: 'We know that some people feel a bit nervous about coming back to a dentist and may not have been for a couple of years given the pandemic. We are lucky to have a great and friendly team of receptionist and nurses, therefore we can offer as much support as possible. At our Smile clinic, we offer intravenous sedation on a private basis, which many patients find helpful, particularly when getting implants, multiple restorations or during an extraction.'



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Westhill Tennis Club

The tennis is less frequent at Denman Park at this time of year, however the committee is busy planning for next year.

We are due to hold our AGM mid-November before the Bulletin goes to press. We are currently operating with a small committee so we are looking for additional volunteers to get involved. The roles don't require much time but are vital in allowing the club to continue operating. Please get in touch if you are interested.

Throughout the year, it has been brilliant to see the courts being utilised by members and the junior coaching programmes. We also held a successful club championships towards the end of the season and congratulations to all the winners.

Throughout the winter, our social tennis sessions for adults continue when the weather allows on Mondays from 7pm and Saturdays from 2pm.

Our half-year rates (until 31 March 2024) are:

Adult – £40, Family – £80, Couple – £70, Student – £20, Junior – £15, Child – £8

Packages can be found at: <https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/WesthillLawnTennisClub/Membership/Join>

Benefits of membership include:

- Free court time for members with online booking sheet
- Social tennis sessions for adults on Mondays from 7pm and Saturdays from 2pm
- Coaching opportunities for all members and organised coaching sessions for minis and juniors from a qualified coach
- Entry to the Wimbledon Ticket Ballot
- Social events throughout the season

Email: westhilltennisclub@outlook.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/westhilltennisclub

Website: www.clubspark.lta.org.uk/WesthillLawnTennisClub

Coaching: Vikki Paterson vikkpaterson@hotmail.com

Enjoy your tennis!



Westhill and District Gardening Club

The Westhill and District Gardening Club meet on the third Wednesday each month in the lounge at Trinity Church, Westhill at 7.30pm from September until May. In June and July, we have garden visits and no club in August.

We are always looking for new members to join us and find out about garden and nature related activities going on around the local area and the wider world.

We held the Inter-club gardening competition on 25th October. With 2 teams, Westhill and Dyce, it was a very tense evening with Dyce winning the competition by 3 points. Well done to Dyce.

On 15th November we welcomed Eric Jensen who gave a talk about Alpines of Austria Tyrol. The evening also included the members' photography competition which was judged by Eric.

13th December sees the annual floral arrangement demonstration by Ann Westwood, fantastic evening enjoyed by all.

17th January 2024 is our AGM.

If you would like any information on the gardening club, please contact:

Press Officer – Pamela Mitchell at mither04@outlook.com or

Secretary – Janice Kennedy at westhillgardenclub@gmail.com.



1st SKENE COMPANY THE BOYS' BRIGADE

We are now well into our BB year with all sections having healthy numbers and lots of fun, though new members are still welcome. In October the Boys' Brigade celebrated our 140th Anniversary. As part of the celebrations a baton, containing a message from the King has been travelling around the BB companies in the North Scottish Area. 1st Skene cycled with the baton from Westhill to the Bennachie centre, before climbing Bennachie and handing the baton to the 1st Inverurie company at the summit. We also had a coffee morning where we shared memories and photographs of the 1st Skene company in particular and BBs in general with present and former members.

As we move towards the festive season, 1st Skene BBs will once again be offering our Christmas card delivery service around Westhill and Kirkton of Skene. Collection boxes will be in Trinity Church and Skene Kirk. This represents a significant saving over the ever increasing cost of stamps.

Niall MacBeath, Company Captain

Contact: niall.macbeath@btinternet.com or via our Facebook page: [1st Skene-Westhill Boys' Brigade](#)



WESTHILL PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB

We started our 2023/2024 session in August taking advantage of the light evenings with location shoots at Fittie, Stonehaven and Union Terrace Gardens. A very loose brief was given to provide guidance and direction. At the end of the month, we held an informal show-and-tell to discuss the images taken. It's always fun to see the different approaches.

In September Martin Bennie, a recently published Deeside based photographer, came to the club and gave a well received, informative and inspirational talk. Martin also shared some of his favourite local locations and some further afield.

The highlight of October was a trip to the Huntly Falconry Centre where the focus was bird photography, specifically birds in flight. The Peregrine Falcon, the fastest animal ever recorded, certainly challenged our photographic skills! We were lucky with the weather that day but Storm Babet did disrupt some of the activities later in the month.

Now that the dark nights are upon us and the weather has turned colder, we will hold the November meetings indoors, at the Milne Hall, focusing solely on portraits. Well known Westhill based photographer Carol Leith will join us to give help and advice.

One final outdoor meeting of the year will be a trip to Aberdeen to photograph the Christmas lights. A Christmas night out is also planned.

We've been pleased with the number of enquires we've had from potential new members this season and look forward to welcoming more. If this sounds like something you would like to try please email

Westhill.Photography@outlook.com. We meet at the Milne Hall, Kirkton of Skene on a Thursday night from 7-9pm.

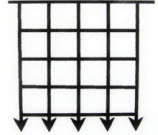




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In February 2019 the Legislation relating to smoke detection in your home changed. All domestic properties in Westhill could be affected.

You need to have the following:

- One smoke alarm installed in the room most frequently used for general daytime living purposes.
- One smoke alarm in every circulation space on each storey, such as hallway and landing.
- One heat alarm installed in every kitchen.
- All fire alarms are to be ceiling mounted and must be **interlinked**.
- Carbon monoxide detectors are to be fitted where there are carbon fuelled appliances (such as boilers, fires, open fires, heaters, stoves or a flue).

The Regulations came into effect in February 2022.

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Community Action Plan for Kirkton of Skene

UPDATE

A 'Stakeholder meeting' has been held, as part of Aberdeenshire Council's formal process for recognising a Community Action Plan (CAP). This involved members of our CAP steering group meeting with representatives of Aberdeenshire Council and Dunecht Estate.

Aberdeenshire Council has agreed to support each of the priority issues which had been identified through the residents' questionnaire:

Traffic and road safety

The Council's Road Safety Unit will undertake site assessments to identify hazards and consider what measures can be taken to mitigate risks.

The appearance of our public spaces

In due course, we will need to establish a residents' group to develop plans for improvement, especially of the car park. To support this, the Council will provide advice and assistance for planting, sustainability, waste management and Christmas lights. The Council's EV Charging Points Project will consider the level of need for points in our village.

Playground facilities

Government funding may be available for Playpark equipment suitable for children under 14 years of age. The Council's Principal Office for the Environment and Sustainability will work with Skene School to develop a plan for improvements. We would need to seek other funding for any exercise equipment for older children and adults.

Paths in the countryside surrounding the village

The Council's Environment Planner department will support us to establish a Community Paths Group. There may be some funding available for path development. Dunecht Estate would like to work with our community in developing paths.

Keeping in touch

A formal Community Action Plan document will be written up with Council support and circulated to all residents. Updates on the CAP process will continue to be provided in the Westhill Bulletin and on noticeboards beside the Milne Hall and Bothy 57. These will include opportunities for the community to get involved in the issues described above.

Meanwhile, if you have any questions/comments, or would like to get involved, please e-mail us on KirktonOfSkeneCAP@gmail.com.

Kirkton of Skene CAP Steering Group

A Business Association for Westhill?

Are you operating a business in Westhill? Would a Business Association be helpful to you?

Westhill & Elrick Community Council would like to find out if a **Business Association**, representing the interests of locally-based companies, is an organisation that Westhill businesses would welcome.

In general, associations give members opportunities to network, share resources, research opportunities, lobby local authorities and raise the profile of the area with all kinds of initiatives. Inverurie and Stonehaven Business Associations are good examples of this.

So far, I have met and spoken to the local (and very friendly!) BNI members who were all in favour.

If this is a group you would like to see set up in Westhill, please send a brief email to me. Your views would really be appreciated.

Thanks!

Elaine Manley, Westhill & Elrick Community Councillor | elaine@elainemanley.co.uk

Denman Ponds Nature Restoration Project – Update

Following pollution incidents within the Denman Park ponds earlier this year, Aberdeenshire Council has secured monies from the Scottish Government Nature Restoration Fund for a project to treat the surface water entering the ponds and to bring the three ponds back to health. The invitation to tender has gone out with a return date of 13th November.

Unfortunately, all three ponds now require the removal of contaminated silt which will involve the cutting back of the trees and shrubs along the banks of the ponds to gain access to the ponds. The original proposal was to create one water treatment wetland pond, however the project now allows for the establishment of three water treatment wetland ponds using a range of Scottish wetlands plants.

Alder, Willow and Hazel trees will be planted to replace trees removed during the works, however, in order to assist in the monitoring of the ponds water quality, the majority of the ponds banks will be given over to the establishment of wild flower grasslands which, along with the flowering wetland plants, will help support insect pollinators. This wild flower and tree planting would also help support the Arnhall Moss Discovery Trail and provide opportunities for the Westhill school pupils to assist with some of the planting works.

All being well the project works will take place in January to March 2024.

The Denman Park ponds receive their water from the road drains in those areas of the town from Morven Crescent near the golf course in the north, Westhill Drive in the east, to Westwood Grove in the west.

If you live in the middle section of Westhill then you can help improve the ponds water quality by checking that your roof and garage rainwater drains are not connected to any washing machines, toilet or kitchen outfall pipes. Likewise people doing external painting, waterproofing or cleaning works must not pour the leftovers or the water used to clean the brushes and rollers into the kerbside road drains as this will flow into the ponds.

In the meantime, Scottish Water is continuing to investigate the surface water drainage system to identify any current sources of pollution arising from wrong connections, inappropriate fluids poured down a road side rain water drain and are taking actions to prevent these problems.

If you do see and smell pollution in the water at the Denman Ponds please can you phone the following care lines.

The Scottish Water helpline is **0800 0778778**.

The pollution hotline number for SEPA is **0800 807060** and the SEPA online reporting platform is www2.sepa.org.uk/EnvironmentalEvents.

For more information about Arnhall Moss contact Steven Gray, Environment Planner (Projects), Aberdeenshire Council, Gordon House, Inverurie, AB51 3WA, Tel: **01467 538510** email: steven.gray@aberdeenshire.gov.uk.



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Compass Directions

Local medical charity, Camphill Wellbeing Trust (CWT), launched Compass in September 2020 to transform the former Waldorf School site on Craighton Road into a centre demonstrating practical solutions for healthy and sustainable lifestyles. Thanks to the support of our **local community** and over **7530 hours** donated by **770 volunteers**, our project continues to grow.



Drivers Wanted!

Thanks to the arrival of our **new e-vehicle** funded by the Scottish Government's Just Transition Participatory Budget, we are now able to offer transport to Compass for our volunteers or Skills for Health [social prescribing] participants who do not have their own car / bicycle and who are unable to use public transport. The vehicle is also used to deliver **weekly produce to Torry Medical Practice** for residents of the local area to pick up and enjoy freshly harvested, organically grown produce.

We are now looking for **volunteer drivers** who would be interested in **lending a few hours a week** to support this aspect of the project. Drivers must be happy to interact with a range of people, confident in driving an 8-seater e-vehicle and be reliable. A clean UK driving licence and PVG check is also required. Get in touch today if you would like to help us to help others by providing free transport to the activities we offer!

Organic Produce:

Over the summer we've harvested 550kg of our organically-grown fruit and vegetables and made these available to the local community and to patients of Torry Medical Practice. We still have some of our harvest available. Contact us at garden@cwt.scot to find out more or visit our **Produce Pop-Ups: every Thur 2pm–4pm, Fri 10am–1pm and 1st Saturday of the month, 10am–4pm**. You can also find a selection of goods at Murtle Estate outside the Camphill Medical Practice between Monday–Friday, 9am–5pm.

Firewood for Sale!

We also have firewood available! Sold in bags (£10.50 each) or per m3 (£105), the firewood has been harvested and seasoned from the Compass site as part of our tree management plan keeping local resources available to the local community!

Join us!

If you'd like to learn more about Compass, discover ways to live sustainably and help support a local project, come along to one of our volunteering sessions:

- ☑ **Weekdays: Wednesday** (1.30pm–4pm) or **Thursday** (9.30am–12noon)
- ☑ **Saturdays:** volunteer days take place on the first Saturday of every month (9.30am–4pm).

www.compassberdeen.org.uk or email: compass@cwt.scot
<https://localgiving.org/charity/CWT/project/CWTCcompass/>
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About Camphill Wellbeing Trust: CWT is a medical charity providing an extended and integrative approach to health and wellbeing. It aims to address illness, build resilience and maintain wellbeing.



WESTHILL AND DISTRICT MEN'S SHED

make friends, share interests and help our community

Woodwork

The wood shop has continued to produce excellent work – the variety is amazing. We were commissioned to make a bench out of a redundant wooden bed frame. It looked magnificent, a real gem, from the wood working department.

The Shed carried out repairs on eight bird tables for Roxburghe House. These were refurbished using up-cycled wooden pallets to match the original construction. Very positive feedback and thanks were received from Roxburghe House.



Engineering

We are well known in the community and are getting a lot of mowers and trimmers donated to us. Now to make them work again!

Bridge, Clocks and Music Group

Bridge is played on a Friday morning, there have to be multiples of 4 and there are usually 12 playing. They are recruiting people who already play bridge, drop in to talk to them.

Clock repair ranges from Grandfather to wrist watches and you can get a new battery fitted to a watch. Just bring them in.

The music group meets every Wednesday at 5pm. Come and join them – they can teach guitar from scratch.



Opening Times

Monday 10am-4pm, Wednesday 2pm-8pm and Friday 10am-4pm.

Why not come along to the Shed and consider joining us.

SheShed: ladies only, is on a Monday evening from 6pm to 8.30pm.

***contact@westhillmensshed.co.uk | Tel 01224 917345 during opening times
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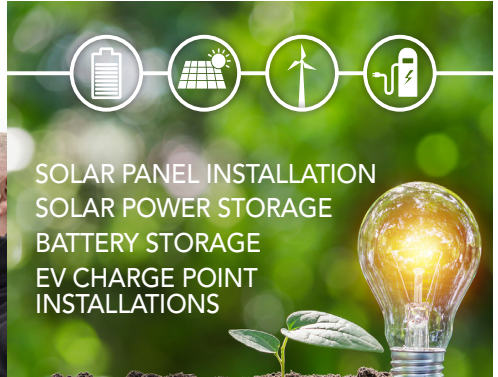
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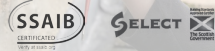
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We have been having a very busy time at Westhill Golf Club. Usually, you would expect that at the end of the season things would be slowing down but that doesn't seem to be the case this year. Yes, the main competitions are all over and we are looking forward to our Prize Giving in November, but play keeps on going for the hardy souls that brave the weather. The rest of us fair weather golfers will just enjoy the social events instead! There is plenty going on to keep us entertained over the winter.

If you have played the course recently, or even walked through on the Orbital Trail, you will have seen the progress being made on our new 4th green. Our greenkeepers along with (I am assured) willing volunteers have, with the assistance of a great team from Nicol of Skene, completely rebuilt the green. If the weather is in any way kind to us, we will be able to start playing on it next season and I am very much looking forward to seeing how it plays. The new two level green looks quite challenging and will help to improve our course even more.

It has been a busy year for the Juniors too and on Sunday 3rd December, we will be holding our junior prize-giving. As well as our prize winners we would like to thank all the parents and grandparents who have marked the scorecards and encouraged all the junior golfers. In preparation for next year we are looking for 1 or 2 new volunteers – if you think you might enjoy giving back to this great game, please contact: westhilljuniorgolf@gmail.com.

That's just a quick summary of some of the happenings around the Club, so thank you to all of our golfing and social members for your involvement, enthusiasm and support through the year so far!

Karen Templeton, Club Captain



Girlguiding **Westhill District**

At Girlguiding, our aim is to have adventures and we've certainly been doing that over the past few months. Earlier this year, some of our Guides & Rangers visited the World Association of Girlguiding & Girl Scouts (WAGGS) in Adelboden, Switzerland. They fell in love with the Swiss mountains, taking a cable car up a mountain and zip-lining down again.

Others travelled to Holland to take part in the World Jamboree of Guides and Scouts. A whopping 80 girls from the Gordon County took part in the camp – with opportunities to take part in challenges, outings to the local area, and evening parties.

Closer to home, we were delighted to celebrate 50 years of Scouting in Westhill with our friends in Scouts. Temperatures may have been low but spirits were high during a weekend camp at the end of September.

As we look to celebrating the festive season, we'll see units visit the Inverurie Panto (Oh yes they are!); taking part in a national Girlguiding trip to see the new Disney release, Wish; and enjoying a silent disco.

Of course, all this is not possible without our amazing team of volunteers and we're incredibly grateful to them for giving up some of their time to lead units. However, we have long waiting lists and we're looking for more volunteers to come and help. If you're interested in helping, please get in touch with westhilldc@gmail.com for an informal chat.

Westhill Paths Group November 2023 Update

Impact of Storm Babet

Within days of our contractor finishing the path construction work at Carnie Woods a few weeks early, the region was hit by Storm Babet which deposited around 100mm/4" of water on us in the course of a couple of days, giving rise to the heaviest amount of October rainfall recorded in the region in over 100 years.

For the most part, the new path surfaces at Broadshade/Golf Course and Carnie Woods held up well, despite the prolonged deluge, and that's due to the quality of construction, but the new entrance path from Carnie Crescent is currently flooded at time of writing (3rd Nov). An alternative route is possible, and flood waters will recede, but only if it stops raining! The contractor may revisit to construct a soak-away, but that will only be possible when the ground is a lot drier.

A section of the new path surface at the Golf Course will also need to be repaired, but again, only when there's a suitable weather window.

Elsewhere on the Orbital Trail, the soak-away at the north east corner of the Lawsondale pitches has flooded and presently covers the main path in and out of the woods. However, there is an alternative route through the field immediately to the east.

If you come across any other erosion or flooding issues on the Orbital Trail that prevent access or are particularly hazardous, please email me to let me know.

Active Projects

Carnie Woods Path Restoration and Upgrades

Although path construction was completed in September, signage, information panels and seating are still outstanding, but, weather permitting, these finishing touches will be completed by the end of November/early December.

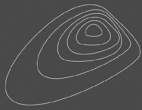
On behalf of WECC, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our funders for their support in making these improvements to the path network at Carnie Woods possible; the funders being Paths for All, Aberdeen City Council (ACC) and Aberdeenshire Council, with special thanks to ACC officials for providing procurement and project management support.

Boardwalk removal: it has been agreed with the Council's Countryside Officer that all 220m of boardwalk remaining in the woods will be removed with the assistance of volunteers. A number of readers have come forward to offer their help in this task, but we have decided to undertake a pilot project first, using a small team and trying out a range of tools and methods to see which work best before we ask for more assistance. If you would like to help and haven't been in touch previously, please email me to let me know.

Denman Park – extension of path network, bridging improvements and provision of additional rest areas

Final specifications and tender documentation has been agreed by the project team, with the work due to go to tender on Public Contracts Scotland imminently, in time for a contract to be awarded by the end of the year. Work is due to start in the Spring soon after the work on Denman Ponds is completed (see page 58), and would be expected to last for up to eight weeks.

Discussions are ongoing with the Council's Landscape Services team to improve the presentation of the planted areas in Denman Park, perhaps with volunteer support from the community. A meeting was held in the park on 2nd November and the Community Council took an action to present proposals to the Council that would cover joint working, including the scope and management of the voluntary effort. If you have an interest in tree and shrub husbandry and would like to get involved in some way, please contact me at prenticeg.wecc@gmail.com.



SKENE MEDICAL GROUP – Patient Info

As you are no doubt aware there has been lots of changes within the practice over the last few months. We have welcomed many new staff into our reception and administration team. Lots of work goes on behind the scenes in the practice that is vital to your health care and our new members of staff have picked up their roles, with all their different areas of complexity, really well, under the careful and excellent leadership of our senior management team. There have also been lots of new faces in the medical team and at a time of great pressure on GP services, and recruitment in particular, we are delighted to be in a position where most of our gaps have been filled and we are able to provide a comprehensive service.

On a sadder note for the practice, we are saying goodbye to Dr N'Dow who is going to retire after many years of dedicated, caring and professional service. We wish her the very best for a long, happy and healthy retirement.

It has come to our attention that some patients are requesting not to see some of our doctors based on their ethnicity or colour of their skin. This is completely unacceptable, and we would like to be clear that all our medical staff are highly trained and work hard to look after each patient they see. Whilst patients can choose to see a specific doctor they have built up a rapport with, we will not accept any requests or behaviour that could be regarded as discriminatory.

With the significant storms we have all experienced, it is clear that winter is on the way. Flu and covid vaccination programmes are now run by the Health and Social Care Partnership, not the practice, so please contact **01224 555333** if you have any questions about this. The practice will be open as usual throughout the winter period, except for the official public holidays of Christmas and New Year. As it approaches, we wish you all a happy and healthy festive season.



Winter's on its way but we're still running!

The dark nights are back and the temptation to stay at home, tucked up on the sofa is strong. However, it's even more important to keep moving when the weather turns colder so if you'd like to run with a group of like-minded people who'll keep you motivated through the winter months, come and join us at JogScotland Westhill. We meet at the top car park of Westhill Academy at 6:30pm every Monday and Thursday and have groups to cater for all levels of runner. Take a look at our Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/jogscotlandwesthill> or website <https://www.jogscotlandwesthill.org> for more details.

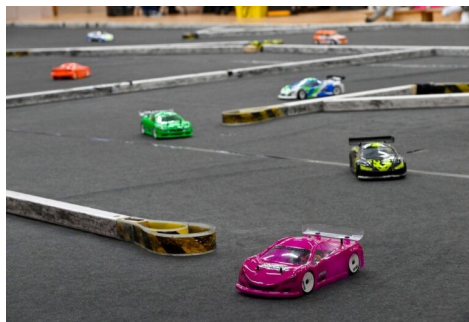
We're a social running club so we've been taking part in various activities in addition to our regular running sessions. We recently took over all the volunteer slots at parkrun events at both Crathes Castle and Hazlehead, and in December you'll see us taking part in our annual Santa Run. This involves running around the streets of Westhill dressed in festive outfits, stopping off for a few rounds of carol-singing, so look out for us at Tesco, Costco and outside the Holiday Inn.



We'll be taking a break over the festive season but will be starting afresh in early January and are planning another Couch to 5K programme – perfect for anyone who wants to start running or who hasn't run for a while and needs to ease themselves back in gently. Keep your eye on Facebook and the website for more information. We're always keen to welcome new members, so if you'd like to join us, just get in touch.

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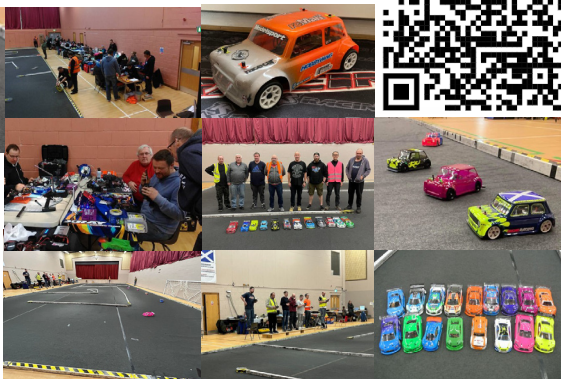


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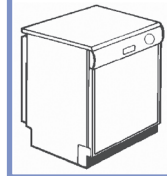
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It's been a busy autumn at SensationALL!

In October there was an exciting development at The Old Schoolhouse with a new path being laid in the garden. This is part of our project to create a wheelchair accessible sensory garden and we



are so grateful to FES FM Ltd of Arnhall Business Park, for carrying out the work free of charge! The next phase of the project is to install some specialist equipment which was generously donated by HSBC however, given the recent weather, we've decided that can wait until the spring!

This year's October holiday activities have been fantastic (with puppet making, Halloween crafts, Halloween Sensory disco, teen life skills and much more!) but we are now packing away the Halloween decorations and looking forward to Christmas! Look out for us at the Westhill Christmas Light Switch – on 2nd December as, we'll be there with a stall. Once again we are holding our relaxed Santa's Grotto and Christmas Fayre for our families at The Old Schoolhouse on 9th December, for which donations of tombola items and raffle prizes would be much appreciated.

Also in October, the team were delighted to attend the Celebrate Aberdeen Awards as we were shortlisted for 'Small Organisation of the Year', and our fabulous Family Support Practitioner, Jo Nicholas, was nominated in the 'Heart of the Community' category. Although we didn't take any trophies home, we had a brilliant night at the Chester Hotel, and we are incredibly proud to have been shortlisted from hundreds of worthy causes across the region!

SensationALL has been providing activities and specialist support for neurodivergent individuals and those with complex support needs of ALL ages for over 10 years but in 2023 we've received more new registrations than ever before! More and more families from all over the northeast are approaching us for practical advice, tailored social opportunities and developmental support for their loved one. Whilst we are working as hard as we can to expand our services, we are unfortunately struggling to accommodate everyone and have waiting lists running for several groups.

So... we need your help – please donate or fund raise for us this winter and your contribution will go towards the cost of more sessions in 2024. You could also attend one of our fundraising events – our annual dinner dance is on Friday 8th March 2024 at The Chester Hotel and there are still sponsorship packages available as well as tickets. Contact us at events@sensationall.org.uk to find out more.

For general enquiries about SensationALL's services contact info@sensationall.org.uk or visit www.sensationall.org.uk.



Finally, as ever, we are looking for volunteers, if you can spare a bit of time to help out please get in touch with volunteering@sensationall.org.uk.

Varapunya Meditation Centre – Hello Westhill!

Here at the Varapunya Meditation Centre in Kinmundy, a 20-30m walk from Westhill town centre or a 10m drive, we sometimes can feel rather isolated. Even though we are so near, our regular community and visitors, often are from Aberdeen and even further afield, as far as Dundee, Perthshire, Fife and Inverness. We recently held our annual Kathina celebration, and we had visitors from all over – even Southend in Essex! Yet, while our engagement with the small Kinmundy community is now well established, some walkers often stop and chat about the goings on at the cottage. Regularly, you may see our monks walking with 'alms' bowl, in the ancient tradition, visiting local Westhill families who wish to make food offerings.

Having been based in Aberdeen City, we have now been in Kinmundy since late 2016 and the Centre is well settled in our small cottage with surrounding fields, stables and barn. So, more recently, we have been 'reaching' out more, visiting the Rotary at their kind invitation, and some of their members have been to visit us. Schools also visit from Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. And we hope to visit the Men's Shed soon and they will come to see what we are up to too, we hope. Any organisation or groups are welcome to visit us. If you would like us to visit, tell you more of what we do and event, as charities together collaborate locally on projects, do let us know. Our motto is 'Helping Hands Healing Hearts' and we reach out to all communities of whatever faith or non-faith with that in mind.

A new venture we hope, starting late January, will be our first Mindfulness Meditation Course in central Westhill so watch this space for news of that! This is at the heart of all we do at the Centre – in this crazy world our minds become cluttered, anxious and stressed. And so, we live our lives worrying about what will be in the future and lots of blame/self-blame about the past. Our mental health is a huge challenge these days. The ancient teaching of Mindful Living and Meditation Practice offers knowledge, skills and practices which help us cope with this in everyday life. Even science and health professionals are accepting this, and we often work in collaboration with NHS Grampian and others in Aberdeen. *Our courses are free* simply because we believe the knowledge, skills and practices are so useful for our mental health in the world we live in. If you might be interested simply register an interest (with no commitment at this stage) by emailing meditationatvmc@gmail.com with just your name for now

On 5th November we celebrated the end of the rainy season, A Kathina Ceremony. The period August to October was traditionally when monks in Asia would stop wandering from village to village until the rainy season came to an end – usually around the end of October. This year it seems to have coincided with the end of the rainy season in Aberdeenshire too! The ceremony involved morning chanting, teaching and meditation followed by a community lunch. After lunch the community offers a new robe to the Abbot to start the new year of 'wandering' again. These days an Abbot of a temple is usually based there but will travel for teaching, for his own personal spiritual development and by invitation to other temples in the UK and overseas from time to time. Normally, he has no personal possessions nor food other than what is donated by the community to him or bought through donations made for those purposes.

Finally, we do, of course, also teach and practice the spiritual teachings of the Buddha in the SE Asia tradition. If you want to know, more contact the Abbot. And we are always in need of volunteers. If you feel able to help us in any way – website editing/development, plumbing, electrical work, roof repair, grass cutting, general maintenance and repair, again do get in touch with the Abbot on his mobile 07446 545545. And our website is here: <https://www.varapunyacentre.com>.

WECC COMMUNITY SUPPORT FUND

The current Westhill Bulletin business model has allowed WECC to generate surpluses from advertising revenues over production costs. Since 2011 WECC has chosen to make some of these surplus funds available as donations to local voluntary groups as finances allow, and around £41,000 has been donated to a wide range of groups over these last 12 years.

At the October 2023 round members agreed to make donations to Rotary Westhill to jointly fund a smart TV for Blackhills Court and to Scouthall Playgroup for construction blocks and storage trolley.

The next round of donations will be considered in February 2024. Closing date for applications is 2nd February. See <https://westhillelrick.org/people-make-a-place/donations/> for Guidance Notes and the Application Form or contact treasurerwecc@gmail.com.



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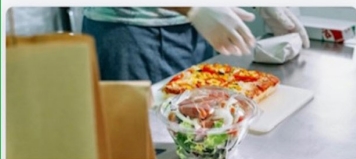
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WESTHILL COMMUNITY CHURCH



A very warm welcome for you to join us for any of our services and meetings. Sunday morning worship is at 10.30 am, followed by refreshments in the Green Pastures Café. If you are unable to attend in person please feel free to join us online, or follow the service later via our YouTube channel. Full details and links can be found at www.westhillcommunitychurch.org.

Church Office

You can call our office on 01224 737380 or email office@westhillcommunitychurch.org

Room Hire

We have rooms available for hire by both community and commercial groups. For more information please check our website or email bookings@westhillcommunitychurch.org

Food Bank

Contact the team on 07379 836380 or email foodbank@westhillcommunitychurch.org

Other Assistance

If you need assistance of any kind you can contact our team by calling Sandra on 07484 603593 or email sandramcgregor@westhillcommunitychurch.org



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QUOTE TO MAKE ONE THINK – Miracles are a retelling in small letters of the very same story which is written across the whole world in letters too large for some of us to see. C.S. Lewis, "God in the Dock" (1970)

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

A warm welcome to our services over the Christmas and New Year period

**17th December 10.30am
NATIVITY ALL-AGE**

**24th December 4.00pm
CHRISTINGLE FAMILY SERVICE**

**24th December 11.30pm
MIDNIGHT COMMUNION**

**25th December 10.30am
CHRISTMAS DAY ALL-AGE**

**31st December 10.30pm
COMMUNION**

**31st December 11.00pm
NEW YEAR CROSSOVER**



Westhill Scout Group has enjoyed a busy period the last few months and continued to celebrate its 50th anniversary with lots of events and opportunities for young people.

No sooner had the schools gone back in August and there was a cub camp at Lochter Activity Centre at Oldmeldrum.

Around 30 cubs aged 8-10 years from both Shere Khan and Kaa cub packs enjoyed a two night camp participating in scout activities and Lochter run activities. It was a weekend full of fun! Cubs had fun building rafts, launching rockets, kartie races, bungee runs, relay races, tug of war, climbing wall, zip wire, water zorbs, segways, off road driving, bouncy castle, target shooting, paddle boarding/canoeing, go karts and camp fires.

Westhill Explorer Scouts also attended to help run the activities and assist the younger cubs.

At the end of September members from our Scout troops enjoyed a Nights under the Stars camp within the grounds of Crathes Castle. The event was a joint camp between 1st Westhill Scouts and the 2nd and 3rd Westhill Guide units. Scouts (and Guides) did a variety of activities including crate climbing, backwoods cooking, bush craft, camp fire, archery, pioneering and astronomy. It was a great weekend.

Amazon Beavers had a great term which included fishing at Raemoir, a visit to Garlogie Mill, plus a visit from a paramedic to help earn their emergency aid badge. Meanwhile, Redwood Beavers enjoyed a mini beast hunt at Arnhall Moss, a visit from Sergeant Wade from Police Scotland to talk about how police officers keep communities safe, and they did some litter picking around Crombie school.

Our 50th anniversary parents night/scouting review was held at the end of September, along with our AGM. It was great to hear all about the excellent activities our sections have participated in over the last fiscal year. We welcomed previous leaders and committee members, and had a display of archive materials and photographs for the last five decades.

In October some of our Scouts and Explorers attended Cally Rally, which is a camp held just outside Inverness. Our young people had a great time doing water and land-based activities, they enjoyed a country and western themed disco and camp fire. The weather was very cold but everyone had a great time.

To keep up to date with our news/or get in touch, see our Facebook page and/or website: www.1stwesthillscouts.co.uk.





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- ✂ **Produce Pop-Ups:** firewood & organic food
- ✂ **Join us:** Wed PM / Thu AM / Monthly Sat

Find out more & get involved:
www.camphillwellbeing.org.uk/compass

 Follow us: [@CWTCcompass](https://www.facebook.com/CWTCcompass)



Compass
Craigton Rd, Cults
Aberdeen AB15 9QD

Compass is a project of local charity, **Camphill Wellbeing Trust**. The Trust provides
medical and therapeutic services to help patients and their families **address illness,
build resilience and maintain wellbeing.**

Camphill Wellbeing Trust is a business name of Camphill Medical Practice Ltd
A limited company registered in Scotland No.SC120539 Charity No. SC016291
Registered office: St John's, Murtle Estate, Bieldside, Aberdeen AB15 9EN



A. REID GARDEN SERVICES

All Garden Work

Trees & hedges trimmed and uprooted, removal of garden rubbish, turfing and fencing, patios, driveways and pathways. All types of gravel supplied and laid.

General tidy ups.



All types of landscaping.



CALL NOW FOR A FREE ESTIMATE
07742 635253



Trudi C. Deans Foot Health Practitioner

DipCFHP MPS Practitioner

Home Visiting Practice
Call for an appointment in the comfort of your own home.

Tel: 07598 382597

KEVIN ALLAN

PAINTER + DECORATOR

Interior & Exterior

Private & Commercial

Free estimates

Tel: 01224 743241

Mobile: 07753 380852

Email: kev.m.allan@googlemail.com

Joe's Gardening Services
All work considered

Joe Dalgarno
01224 917662
07517948896

JDDGardeningServices@gmail.com

175 Hilton Drive
Aberdeen
AB24 4ND

Paws and Claws Dog Walking and Home Boarding



SERVICES

1 hour dog walk – visiting local woods, forest trails or the beach

Puppy visits – approximately 30 minutes of indoor and outdoor playtime

Home Boarding – fully insured and licensed home boarder providing a home from home experience

Cat Care and any other pet care can be discussed to suit your requirements

- All dogs are transported in a spacious van
- Fully licensed Home Boarder from Aberdeenshire Council
- Fully Insured, Public Liability, Care Custody & Control & Key Cover

Tel: 01330 860709 / Mobile: 07762 489999

Email: mariemackenzie1@outlook.com



blue flame

Heating (Grampian)

Tel: 01467 622116

Mob: 07882 780345

blueflame.heating@btconnect.com

Local plumbing and heating engineer with over 30 years' experience.

- ∞ Gas/Oil/LPG Boiler Installations
- ∞ Gas & Oil Boiler Servicing & Repairs
- ∞ Cylinder/Gas Fire servicing
- ∞ Power Flush/CH water treatment
- ∞ Landlord Certificates
- ∞ All aspects of plumbing undertaken

No job too small

Accredited Worcester Bosch installer offering up to 10-year guarantee on selected new boiler installations (for a limited time only).



Aberdeen Indoor Bowling Club



Looking for a new interest?

We are one of the largest indoor bowling stadiums in Europe, with 12 rinks, a coffee shop, restaurant, bar and bowls shop.

Bowls is a unique sport that anyone can play at any age, ability or fitness level. Whether you want to play for fun or on a higher level bowls offers an opportunity for everyone.

Full and Social Memberships available. Free coaching available.

Looking for gift ideas for the bowler in your life then why not give an AIBC Gift Voucher these available from our Reception.



CONTACT US
ON



WWW.ABERDEENINDOOR.COM
EMAIL: a.i.b.c@btconnect.com

Tel: 01224 313961

**WHY NOT COME ALONG AN CHECK US
OUT AND ENJOY A FREE CUP OF COFFEE ON
PRODUCTION OF THIS AD**

**We are open from 8 am to 11 pm (9am on a
Sunday) and there is always a friendly club,
staff or committee member on hand to answer
any questions and to give you a tour of our
facilities.**

Aberdeen Indoor Bowling Club.
Summerhill Road, Aberdeen, AB15 6EE

Made with PosterMyWall.com

SCAFFOLD TOWER FOR HIRE

The Community Council has a scaffold tower which was bought to help with erecting the Christmas street lights. The tower is available for hire to Westhill residents. The platform working height is 2.73m.

Charges are £15 per day for 1 to 2 days, then £5 per day for each additional day, or £45 for one week. Transportation available at £10 each way.

For more information and to book the scaffold, call/text **David Ritchie** on **07989 637461**.



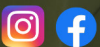
step & stone

HEALTH

Westhill Shopping Centre



PODIATRY
SPORTS MASSAGE
RELAXATION
THERAPIES
PHYSIOTHERAPY
AUDIOLOGY
YOGA
PILATES
BABY MASSAGE



@stepandstonehealth

01224 608703

www.stepandstonehealth.co.uk

admin@stepandstonehealth.co.uk

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

Aberdeenshire Council

All Enquiries	0345 6081208
Air Training Corps.....	01224 749151
Ardene House Vets.....	01224 740700
Ashdale Hall	01224 740137
Boys' Brigade	01224 742262

Childcare

Breakfast Club; After School Club; Holiday Club	07770 943723
Schools Out Club (Old School House).....	01224 465202
Church of Scotland Minister ..	01224 745955
Citizens Advice Bureau.....	01224 747714
Community Centre.....	01224 472874
Community Mini-bus.....	07989 637461

Dentists' Surgery

Abercrombie Dental Practice, NHS – Abercrombie Court, Prospect Road	01224 745447
Business, Private – Ashdale Drive.....	01224 742513
Westhill Dental Practice, Old Skene Road.....	01224 741339
Doctors' Surgery	01224 849400
Results	01224 849392
Repeat Prescriptions.....	01224 849393
Electricity Emergency.....	0800 300999
Gardening Club	01224 748045
Gas Emergency.....	0800 111999
Golf Club.....	01224 743361
Girls' Brigade, 1st Skene	07792 471199
Girl Guiding.....	07974 963717
Health & Social Care Office...	01467 537745
Lawsondale Pavilion.....	01224 742836
Library.....	01224 472871

Nursery

Bridges	01224 744741
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Childcare Info	0800 2983330
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Playgroups

Scout Hall.....	07717 442164
Denman Preschool.....	07727 617627
Pharmacy, Porter – Shops.....	01224 742742
Pharmacy, Porter – Surgery ..	01224 279489
Police (non emergency).....	101 or email..... contactus@scotland.police.uk
Post Office (Shops)	01224 740858
Post Office (Ind Est)	01224 740010

Primary Schools

Crombie.....	01224 472905
Elrick	01224 472910
Skene	01224 472915
Westhill.....	01224 472900
Secondary School, Academy	01224 087850
Scouts.....	01224 746773
Swimming Pool.....	01224 472872
Tennis Club.....	07929 191816
Trinity Church	01224 742512
Veterinary, Town & Country ...	01224 741685
Water Authority	0845 6018 855
Westdyke Leisure Centre	01224 743098
Westhill Bowling Club	07562 696193
Westhill Community Church ..	01224 737380
Westhill Men's Shed	01224 917345

**Did we get your
number right?**

**Are you missing
from the list?**



If you need any changes,
why not get in touch by email?

westhill.bulletin@gmail.com

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Westhill Swimming Pool

Wet and windy outside and you can't get exercise, no problem.

Your local pool in Westhill would love you to come and join a swim session. The timetable offers something for everyone. From the lane swimmer who powers through to the family who wants to play and increase water confidence. Locals have told us that the deep-water swim is great for their mobility and wellbeing.

Have you looked at our timetable or looked at which sessions you could attend? Our staff can help you find a session that suits your needs. To ensure a place in a session, you can book through our App or website. If you need help with booking, the pool staff can assist.

We are always pleased to see you - you can walk in and often you will get a space during a session. The pool offers a warm sitting area and Wi-Fi while you wait.

We have a suggestion box at reception please help us know your thoughts.

Timetable

(Via Facebook)



SCAN ME

Quiet swims – for those who are looking for a quieter session and available for all ages, it is aimed that these sessions are suitable for anyone who does not feel able to attend our busier sessions.

Deep water swim – suitable for anyone who is confident in deep water – this is a 15m length swim.

Attic Theatre
presents



*Beauty
& the
Beast*

Tale as old as time...

Tivoli Theatre 1st - 22nd December 2023

Tickets available from www.aberdeenperformingarts.com



Find Attic Theatre on Facebook