

BELHELVIE BANTER

Balmedie: Whitecairns : Belhelvie : Potterton : Blackdog



Edition 35

June 2018

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EDITORIAL

I'll not make the same mistake as I did when I mentioned the weather in the last Banter editorial. I waxed lyrical at the signs of warmer spring weather but by the time Banter was delivered, we were back in mid-winter with snow

and ice. Thanks again to our intrepid distributors throughout the Parish who soldiered on in all climes to get Banter out to more than 3,200 homes. So all I'll say is have the umbrellas at the ready, just in case, and enjoy your summer.

Balmedie comes to life at this time, thanks to the efforts of Better Balmedie. Belhelvie Village too is looking for gardening volunteers, so I hope they will soon manage to have their own "Blooming Belhelvie" group. In fact, the whole Parish is alive and kicking as the lighter nights stretch our days. This is Sand Bothy season. With an abundance of activities offered and refreshments available, this wee building has become a hub of community activity, thanks to the efforts of local volunteers.

We wish Mr. Ken McGowan adieu and all the best as he retires after many successful years as Head Teacher at Balmedie Primary School to relax and enjoy his summer without the thought of the new term. When August comes, we'll say hello to Mr. Dougie Ford, the new Heedie, whose head will no doubt have been buzzing all summer at the thought of the new term!

We are also saying hello to wind turbines in our sights and the new AWPR's roads and junctions crisscrossing our Parish. Our cover photo by Alan Smith captures our community's changing landscape. It's hard sometimes to keep up with it all. One change will be very welcome though – these long warm, sunny days that summer brings. It does, doesn't it? Should I have mentioned it?

Jess Petrie, Editor

BANTER DATES 2018-19				
Edition:	AUTUMN (Ed 36)	WINTER (Ed 37)	SPRING (Ed 38)	SUMMER (Ed 39)
Deadline for articles & ads	Friday 20th July 2018	Friday 19th Oct 2018	Friday 25th Jan 2019	Friday 26th April 2019
Delivery begins	Saturday 18th Aug 2018	Saturday 17th Nov 2018	Saturday 23rd Feb 2019	Saturday 25th May 2019

The work involved in producing The Belhelvie Banter is all done voluntarily. At the time of going to press, the information within this edition is understood to be correct, but no responsibility can be accepted by the Banter Team for any errors. We do our best!

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A5 PAGES	SINGLE EDITION	FOUR EDITIONS (paid in advance)
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Readers – it would help greatly if you would mention Belhelvie Banter if you get in touch with individuals or companies after seeing their adverts here.

INVERURIE PANTO – UP THE CREEK... WITHOUT A STORE Can you help?

After 16 years, the Inverurie Panto is losing its scenery store and is looking for a new location. They need dry storage space, 1500 square feet or bigger (ideally 15 feet tall) to store their theatrical stage sets, props and associated equipment. They say they're not too fussy though. They'd consider any location in or around Aberdeen and are hoping that we may have what they're looking for in Belhelvie Parish.

They'd like a long-term lease - this would be ideally suited to an empty or disused agricultural shed or barn.

If you have something you think would be suitable, or know someone who does, please contact Keith Donaldson on 07813 520222.

BANTER WEBSITE

Thanks to our wonderful volunteer Philip McHardy who is a Balmedie resident, we are now bang up to date with the Banter website at belhelviebanter.org. We hope you've had the chance to visit it. There, you can access all 34 past editions of Banter, should you ever have the inclination to do so! Philip also has his own company 'Red Doodle' which is worth a look if you're thinking of getting a website designed.

ALPACAS ON TOUR

Imants and Mabel Schneider rear alpacas on their croft near Balmedie. They currently have a herd of 48 animals and produce high quality yarn from the annual fleece harvest. This is then turned into beautifully finished products. Here Imants describes the hazards that can face these adorable, gentle creatures as they venture out of home territory.



It was a beautiful sunny day so we decided to take four of our Alpacas out for a beach trek to give them an exposure to a different environment than just the four boundaries of our croft. However, we were a little apprehensive as to how they might react in a completely strange, unknown environment. Nevertheless we set off with fingers crossed.

We managed to get the trailer parked close to the South car park at Balmedie Beach. People interested to see and talk about these very unusual visitors to the beach immediately approached us. The alpacas did look rather worried and unsure about their surroundings and must have been wondering what was yet to come.

We headed towards the beach along the slatted path but immediately the four intrepid explorers felt that this strange surface was maybe not for them to walk on. Eventually we managed to move them on and we headed towards the sea. Every turn in the path presented new fears of predators like pumas that could jump out any second. Fortunately they were lucky and the greatest predator encountered was only a wee Terrier. However, a new threat was looming as we went closer to the sea. The roaring ocean was something they had never experienced before but as the noise only increased very gradually as we grew nearer, they came to accept it was safe enough. Then just as we approached the beach we were confronted with a very steep sandy drop, which clearly would not be easy to descend. Having got this far we decided that we had to have a go. The first two alpacas went down in a somewhat undignified manner slipping and sliding down the bank. The next two realised they would have to follow if they were to stay with their friends. Down they came with trepidation and luckily all survived without incident.



Waves, sand, noise, paparazzi, people, dogs, flotsam – all quite new to them. However they took it all in their stride and made for the water where they paddled contentedly. They were having a great day out. We were very impressed and pleased with people's sense of responsibility as they put their dogs on leads when they saw the alpacas. The tide was coming in so we made for the Eigie burn and prepared to get back. However, there was more danger to come in the form of the wooden bridge with murky, muddy bogs on either side and of course no safety rails. This was a nail-biting crossing for us as the slightest thing could have spooked the animals. However we made it across as the alpacas behaved like real troupers.

Around the Sand Bothy there was such a lively buzz. We worried that the alpacas would be nervous and intimidated. It was quite the opposite in fact - they were happy to indulge in cuddles and kisses from anyone who chose to pet them. It is almost impossible not to fall in love with such calm, soothing beasts that simply ooze warmth and friendliness. To experience so many new situations and unusual sights in such a short time must have been stressful. From crowds of people to funny paths, sand dunes, steep slopes, waves, dogs, paparazzi, drones, remote controlled cars, loud children, just about everything you can think of that is normal to us but for alpacas as a first experience, it must have been daunting. Surprisingly, they were quite relaxed and interacted well with everyone, soaking up all the attention.

We felt we had achieved a bit of a record. We set off at mid day from the South car park and after 4 hours had covered the challenging distance of 1.92 miles! How much slower can anyone get? All the attention we got had something to do with that. We hope it made a day at the beach more enjoyable for everyone.

If you are interested in seeing the alpacas in their home environment in Balmedie please feel free to contact Mabel by email mabel@highland-alpacas.co.uk or by mobile 07761 913191 to arrange a visit. We would be delighted to show you the rest of the herd and you can also see some products made from their stunning fleeces. Also, if there are any spinners or knitters in the parish wishing to try some raw alpaca fleece or yarn, please call Mabel for details.

Imants Schneider



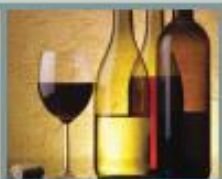
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SCHOOL'S OUT FOR MR McGOWAN!

It's been a very busy year so far in Balmedie Primary and as I write this, we've just said good-bye to our headteacher, Mr Ken McGowan.

Ken arrived twelve years ago and I spoke to him regarding his thoughts and recollections about his time here. Casting his mind back, Ken recalls being shown round the school for the first time and thinking how impressed he was with its location and potential.

Once installed as headteacher, Ken set about forging close links with all his staff, children, parents and the wider community. He was proud of the HMle report published in 2011, which stated,

'The school has a very clear sense of direction. The headteacher has very successfully built a culture where staff are enabled to lead developments across the nursery and primary school.'

Mr McGowan is also proud of Balmedie's reputation for marrying traditional learning i.e. basic numeracy and literacy along with technological advances such as the use of ipads to complement teaching and learning.



Ken has also been the driving force behind many of Balmedie Primary's numerous fund raising events. Many charities have benefited throughout the years with the most notable being Comic Relief and our Red Nose Day activities.

When I asked Ken what he would do in retirement, he gave me with what can only be described as a look of incredulity! No wonder - having his wife, Morag, two children and three young grandchildren to occupy his time, he'll want back to school for a rest!

Hopefully, Mr McGowan, you will get time to watch your beloved football team (Celtic). Thank you for all the hard work you have done at Balmedie School. The children, staff and parents join me in wishing you well for the future and we hope you have a long and happy retirement.

Steven Milne



Congratulations to PETTENS, the winning team in this past term's house points competition at Balmedie School. Well done everyone!

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BEACH CLEAN UP



Well done to a group of Balmedie School pupils, teachers and parents who came along one Saturday morning in March to do their bit to clean up the Balmedie Beach area. They met at the Sand Bothy, and, organised by teachers Mrs Mackie and Miss Patrigeon, everyone ferreted their way across the area with bin bags and pickers and successfully managed to remove a huge

amount of litter and rubbish. Our lovely Balmedie Beach is now much more attractive - thank you everyone!



BELHELVIE VILLAGE COMMUNITY GROUP

So many villagers attended the Belhelvie Christmas Tree gathering and commented on how lovely it was to see community spirit in action. It would be a great idea to try and get a Belhelvie Village Community Group together as there are so many other projects that could take off when everyone works together. Do think about getting in touch if you would like to be part of the group – it would be a great way to get to know fellow villagers and discuss the topics around Belhelvie. If you are interested, please contact Raymond: raymond.m412@gmail.com mobile: 07526601925 or Annie: annie.grant@hotmail.co.uk mobile: 07848 805992.

PARISH THREADS

Wind, Sand and Stars

Everything is but a path, a portal or a window opening on something other than itself. Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, 1939.

Belhelvie, previously lightly scribbled upon by roads and bridleways, now has the firm imprint of dual carriageway roundabouts and a wind-farm offshore at Black Dog. All the previous wandering journeys lie underneath this dramatic coastal statement creating our very own parish palimpsest. With its five habitations a hand spread on a map, Belhelvie has always been an area for wandering with a history of connections and strangers passing through. Beaten tracks appeared as there was a need for



them. We know that when Samuel Johnson and James Boswell rode from Marischal College through the parish to Slains Castle in 1774, Boswell recorded that the road beyond Aberdeen '*grew more and more stony and was naked of all vegetable decoration.*'

By the 1820s the road had been improved and mail coach passengers in the cheap seats on top would have been bumped and jostled up the coast road from Aberdeen to Ellon. Wrapped up against the brisk wind they would have looked out over bleak dunes to the German Ocean and up to the Beaker burial mound at Hare Cairn. There would have been much relief when the coachman pulled the team up at the Blairton Inn for warmth and refreshments. It was the feet of the Beaker people 2000 years B.C. who made the first lines of desire between shelter, work and food-sources. Not much had changed by 1890 when James McBey, walked the 15 miles from his grandparents' forge near Foveran to Aberdeen to buy a paint box and brushes. At the same time Rev. William Temple travelled all over the area on horseback to compile a history published as 'The Thanage of Fermartyn'. He reported that the land of Belhelvie was stony and poorly drained and there were many cobblers but barefoot children.

In 1926 the parish was a section of a healthy hike north to Ellon for W.M. Henry a teacher at Aberdeen Grammar School. In his 'Byways Round Aberdeen' he describes the land north of the Mildren Burn as being, '*away from the frousty accumulations of domestic hibernation, the sea of chrysophrase broken only by a line of snowy breakers below a pearly lather of cloud*'. Remember that if you will! Up to the war it was enough for parish children to be taken by charabanc for their annual picnic along meandering tracks down to Black Dog or to the hill above Ardo for tea and races.

Would St Colm recognise this land now with all the changes wrought upon it? St Colm was Belhelvie's 6th century Christian tutelary, the protector of our area. His

name remains in the old Belhelvie Churchyard but his memory has faded and his name didn't travel to the new church at Drumhead. Most things fade into the darkness black holes (even Steven Hawking) although recently on a visit to an observatory I was shown the four bright moons of Jupiter. Callisto, Io, Europa and Ganymede. '...and the view we are seeing now,' a young scientist enthused breathlessly into the telescope, 'is the same that Galileo saw in 1610.' 'Unless' he added, in an attempt to be amusing 'Elon Musk's Tesla roadster is passing by.'

I have continued with the writing of my family's history and maybe by the time Elon Musk has set up his settlement on Mars my great grandchildren will be appreciating it. To add context to my mother's story I have been adding events that occurred during her lifetime. For instance in the year she was born, 1921, Amelia Earhart bought her first plane. As usual, life has a way of adding odd synchronicity. Just as I was finishing the text there was news that bones found in the Pacific had been re examined and are now considered to be those of the long lost aviator. I could never have predicted that the stories of Mum and Ms Earhart would intersect in such a curious way? Then I remembered the story of the man who was interviewed for two available jobs. He lost to the other applicants: a Mr Fische and a Mr Kettle. He said afterwards he could never be sure why he didn't get the job.

Mary Cane



VOLUNTEERING FOR ALL

Saturday 2nd June 11am – 1pm

Balmedie Congregational Church (next to Co-op)

As part of national Volunteers' Week, this event is being hosted to share and celebrate the wide range of groups and people locally who give their time in so many ways.

It is human nature to feel good after helping someone out! Volunteering can also help you gain valuable new skills and experiences and boost your confidence!



If you, or someone you know would like to find out more about volunteering in the local area, have a chat about the opportunities or how to get started – come along! There will be stalls, lots of information, presentations and cake (of course!).

Everyone is welcome to come along. Find out about the various forms volunteering can take and how much fun it can be. Come and join in – we look forward to seeing you there!



If you would like a stall, or more information please contact Lorna Sandison, AVA Development Officer email lorna.sandison@avashire.org.uk or telephone 07964 036 605.



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INSPIRING IMAGINATIONS



We're delighted to hear of yet another success story from Balmedie Parish. Balmedie resident, Alison Farrell (Ally) runs the "Creation Station" Aberdeen North and Shire and recently received the "Highly Commended Best Franchisee Award".

Mum to two young girls, and with a degree in Design and Craft, Ally delights in immersing herself in all things creative. Here she writes for Banter, sharing how she has been inspired to become a successful, award-winning businesswoman and how she is committed to inspire others.

I have worked as an Interior Decorator and ran a small craft business called Ally Auch Designs, where I designed and made personalised wedding horseshoes. I loved the creativity within my roles, however I really wanted to do something that would allow me to share my skills, love and passion for arts and crafts, which would provide me with the flexibility to work around my two daughters and share in their adventures as they grow up.

I now run The Creation Station Aberdeen North and Shire and it has been such a roller coaster ride! It is really exciting, fun, hard work, sometimes scary, challenging and occasionally it can be a little bit stressful when I am doing something new for the first time, but on the whole, I find it extremely rewarding. I run regular Baby Discover, Little Explorer and Family Fun classes in and around Aberdeen. These classes include children from as young as 5 months old all the way up to 15 years old, doing everything from painting with jelly to embossing and puppet making. We often have adults join in the fun too - I love inspiring imaginations and encouraging creativity in young and old.



Running my own business means that I have the opportunity to get involved with some wonderful local events – The Creation Station will be offering awesome arts and crafts activities at the Balmedie Summer Fete on Sunday 27th May 2018, 12 - 4pm, where we will also be collecting donations for the local radio station Northsound 1's 'Cash for Kids' campaign called '500 Faces'. I am Face no. 204 and I have pledged to raise a minimum of £100 for Cash for Kids with the aim to help raise £50,000 to aid local deprived and disabled children. I am also really looking forward to us providing entertainment for children at the local 'Enjoy Music Festival' on 2nd June 2018 at Hazelhead Park, Aberdeen.



The great thing about running your own business is that there are so many options for you to run and expand on your activities - I am really look forward to launching more classes in the future – I hope to establish a regular adults Creative Crafters class and another after school Create Club later this year – if you are interested or would simply like to know more, visit my Facebook page "The Creation Station Aberdeen North & Shire" or have a look at my website at:

<http://www.thecreationstation.co.uk/alison-farrell>

You can also email me at allyfarrell@thecreationstation.co.uk

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THE SAND BOTHY



While our main concern is the upkeep of The Sand Bothy and what goes on there, we are also interested in Balmedie Country Park in general. We have now started working with staff of Aberdeenshire Council to see if together we can improve access to the park and beach, signage and information and facilities in general.

We are planning a map and a leaflet of the park, which will define the walks across the heath and dunes and give information about interesting features.

We are keen that people of all abilities can access the park and beach, and to that end we have started raising money to buy all-terrain wheelchairs to lend out to people who can transfer from their own chairs.

For people who are dependent on their own wheelchairs, we will arrange more visits from Pony AxeS so that families and carers can enjoy the experience of being on the beach together.

We want to stress that all of this will take time, and we are just at planning stages. The purchase of wheelchairs and hiring of other services will be dependent on the generosity of the public and charitable funders.

We love being here in a building, which is restored for public use, and want everyone to be able to enjoy Balmedie Country Park. We are just a small team, so if you can help with any of this, or have any ideas, please get in touch.

Events at The Sand Bothy

We had a lovely day for our Easter Egg Hunt - thanks to all who came along. We hope you enjoyed your day, with the extra bonus of a visit from our local alpacas!

Other dates for your diary are:

Sunday 20th May - Meditation Walk – Free – 11am to 1pm

Saturday 21st July – Fun Day with RNLI – times to be confirmed

Saturday 18th August – Puppets and Picnics - times to be confirmed

We will be organising workshops throughout the year so watch out for details on Facebook, or posters in the shops and Library

New volunteers are always welcome - please get in touch via Facebook or phone 01358 742396

Rosie Nicol



A WORD FROM THE DOC...

All Change... Yet Again!

It was a long, dreich and at times cold winter, so it was a relief when spring crept in. Now we await summer. As I write there are some promising signs of warmer days, but we all know not to hold our breath! I do hope that you are all trying to move more and eat less, even though New Year resolutions are now as distant as the new offshore wind turbines are not!

Many of you will be aware that there is now a much-heralded new contract for GPs in effect. This has taken some time to negotiate, and indeed is not yet complete as we have only started phase one. The plans for phase two are, to say the least, *complex*, but will result in significant changes for patients if all goes as planned.

The backdrop to the contract is also quite complex, as there has been huge concern for many years at the lack of doctors choosing GP as a career. In the last decade there has been a large expansion in consultant numbers, but the number of GPs has been steady, with a continuing fall in full-time GPs. The situation is complicated by the increasing number of GPs who choose to, or for family reasons need to, work part-time. Many younger doctors, it is thought, also do not like the idea of running a business, being responsible for employing staff, owning and maintaining a surgery building and the extra work away from patient care that this all entails. Many people do not realise that a GP in a partnership is usually NOT salaried by the NHS, but works as an independent, self-employed, contractor.

To try and address this the new GP contract will recast the GP as an “Expert Medical Generalist”. This is to try and make becoming a GP appeal more to younger doctors and send a message to patients about the role of the GP in the primary care team. It is also hoped that this will help address the negative image of GP that sadly still pervades in the hospital setting. A recent survey of medical students throughout the UK found that over 90% reported denigration of GPs by consultants and academics working in hospital or universities.

For patients this will mean that the changes that have already started will continue to gather pace. You may not see a GP when you attend your practice, as you may be “signposted” (to use the “in” term in management speak!) to see another health professional. This has good and bad effects. The role of the GP in continuing patient care will be fragmented and patients may end up having to make multiple visits instead of one. An example would be a patient attending for a review of a chronic condition, say high blood pressure. Currently a patient will see their GP or practice nurse for this annually in the autumn. At this visit they will have a BP check, review of medication, perhaps a blood test arranged and if eligible a flu jab. As well as all this, you may well wish to ask about something else, if seeing the GP, and this will be

addressed at that time. A good example of such a question is the current issue about the pros and cons around having a prostate (PSA) blood test. A GP will view this as a straightforward consultation, and usually deal with this and the routine aspects of the review all at one visit. Under the new system this will all change.

The patient may see a pharmacist for a BP check and drug review, then need to make an appointment with the vaccination service for the flu jab and, if needed, an appointment with the phlebotomy service for the blood test and when they mention that they wish to ask about the PSA blood test for the prostate they will be told that the need to see their GP to discuss this. With this new scheme one visit has become possibly four!

No wonder change can be regarded rather skeptically! To quote the American author Charlton Ogburn (sadly not the ancient Roman Pertinax): *"We trained hard, but it seemed that every time we were beginning to form up into teams we would be re-organised ... a wonderful method it can be for creating the illusion of progress, whilst producing confusion, inefficiency and demoralisation."* I am sure all NHS staff will recognise this!

The changes that are planned are not without potential problems. It is evident that the well-intended steps to try and improve the situation for GP recruitment may have unintended consequences for us all. These new services I have alluded to will be commissioned and run by the new Integrated Joint Boards, and there are significant challenges ahead for these new organisations.

Currently practices are, overall, run very efficiently, and tend to have low management costs. This is not something that can be said about much of the health care system in the NHS. This observation is borne out by the problems health boards met when they have had to take over the running of GP practices.

There is a long way to go on this road and what transpires at the end of the phase we are now in is not yet clear. I hope that this helps give you all a flavour of what is happening, and that patients will have a voice in how things shape up.

On that note I would like to share that the RCGP in Scotland has vacancies on its patients' body, P3. This committee ensures that RCGP policy has a patient voice and input, as the RCGP in turn advises policy making in Scotland. If you are interested contact RCGP Scotland at 25 Queen Street Edinburgh, EH2 1JX, telephone 020 31887742 (I know that's a London number but the RCGP has a centralised phone system.)

Fingers crossed for not only the weather, but also for the brave new world of General Practice. Hope we will have plenty long sunny days to look forward to, so there can be no excuses about getting out for that long walk!

Dr Alasdair Forbes



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BELHELVIE VILLAGE NEWS

Christmas Tree Lights

First off, we would like to say a big thank you to those that have generously contributed financially and with other forms of support to date, be it practical help, collecting donations or supplying equipment to make the inaugural event last Christmas a great success.

We have raised £170 to date, with local awards promised amounting to a further £750 towards the installation of an independent power supply to enable the tree to be lit from the start of December through to January every year.

The fundraising target for this project is £2500 from which £1800 will be paid to Aberdeenshire lighting department for the provision of a Haldo pillar (socket to you and me) before they will install the unit to supply the electricity for the tree lights.

We wish to send a heartfelt plea to those of you in the village who have not yet been able to contribute and would like to support the project, you can in several ways:

Cash donation via Graham Cadgers Garage during weekdays or;

On-line payment to the Belhelvie Community Trust (CLYDESDALE BANK Sort Code 82.40.00 Acct # 8016636) Reference 'Christmas Tree' or;

Cheque written to 'Belhelvie Community Trust' with 'Christmas Tree' written on the back.

The Belhelvie Community Trust are kindly recording and holding the funds raised for this local project. We hope you can find it possible to donate, no matter the amount, large or small, it all adds up towards the target and will be greatly appreciated.

We need to reach our target by August, so that the system can be installed for the start of December. We would also like to add that an electrical safety certificate is required before a connection to the pillar is permitted, so if anyone can help do this (ideally for free?) would be much appreciated.

Annie Grant and Raymond Moffat



Belhelvie Village Planters - Would you be able to help with planting out the village tubs and beds? Or could you help with collecting plants with a trailer in June. If yes, please could you get in touch with Raymond at 6 Park Grove, Belhelvie email raymond.m412@gmail.com, mobile 07526601925.



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BLACKDOG NEWS



Blackdog are getting all geared up for their annual Community Gala. Last year's was a great success with a variety of activities on offer.

This year's gala is looking to be just as entertaining. Come along and support the local community. The many treats on offer include - a barbecue, beer tent and bouncy castles for the kids. Such a project needs many helping hands, so if you can spare an hour or so on the 23rd June between 11am and 3pm, please email kerry.mann@hotmail.com



BLACKDOG COMMUNITY GALA

SATURDAY 23RD JUNE

BLACKDOG COMMUNITY PARK



.....
11AM - 3PM
.....



COME ALONG & ENJOY THE BBQ, BEER TENT,
BOUNCY FUN, KIDS CORNER AND LOADS
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Summer is finally on its way and we're getting ready for the **Balmedie Fête**. We have lots of stalls, displays & fun for all the family.

With all the sunny weather we're expecting over the summer, why not come and enjoy the great outdoors - don't forget we are here to provide refreshments and food - you can maybe even treat yourself to a cheeky prosecco, cider or beer..... **We'd love to see you !!!**

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POTTERTON COMMUNITY GROUP

The **PCG** meet on a bi-monthly basis on the Second Monday of every 2nd month from 7.15pm – 8.30pm in the Stead Inn Restaurant. The aim of the group is to look at projects to improve the local environment and increase access to local activities to bring the community together. Meetings are open to all residents to attend.

Our **Monthly Pop Up Café** continues on the last Saturday of every month from **10.00am – 12.00noon in the Stead Inn Restaurant**. The café is run by local volunteers serving and providing home bakes as well as fresh hot pancakes made on the premises. £3 for Adults, £1.50 for Children for unlimited drinks, pancakes and home bakes.



The **Belhelvie Community First Responders** came along to the February and April Pop Up Café's to help raise awareness, hold CPR Training demonstrations, speak to local residents about volunteering and fundraise for essential training equipment.

Knitting for Babies Born Sleeping

A group of Level 4 Health & Social Care Students of North East Scotland College came up with the idea of "Knitting for Sleeping Babies" as part of an Enterprise Unit of their course. They put out a call on Facebook looking for volunteers to help knit blankets, hats and cardigans for still born babies. The **Potterton Knit and Natter Group** took up their call and have been knitting items

Over the past few months. These items will be donated to Rubislaw Ward at Aberdeen Maternity Hospital. If you are interested in Knitting for this good cause, you will find more details on the Facebook page "Level 4 Enterprise – Knitting for Babies Born Sleeping"



The **Potterton Knit and Natter group** meet every Monday afternoon from 2.00-4.00pm in the Potterton Community Centre – Everyone Welcome.

If you wish to join the **Potterton Walking Group** please feel free to come along to the Potterton Re-cycling Centre at the meeting time on the day of walk. If you wish further information in advance of the walk, please e-mail Chris Schenk aberdeenschenk@gmail.com The group have a car share arrangement for walks further afield.

Date	Time	Details of Walk
15 th May	1.00pm	Forvie NNR: Guided Walk with Ranger Dave Brown
5 th June	12.00noon	Fittie thru docks and visit to RNLI
26 th June	12.00noon	Peterhead Prison Museum Visit
17 th July	12.00noon	Balmedie Beach & Sand Bothy



The **Potterton Indoor Bowling Club** have had an excellent first winter season with regularly around 12 -14 members from the local area meeting weekly. The indoor bowlers have now ceased for the Summer Outdoor Season, but will be back from 4th October, meeting on a Thursday afternoon between 2.30 – 4.30 pm in the Potterton Community Centre.

Everyone Welcome - £2 per session. If you wish more information about the next Winter Season starting in October, please contact John Hutcheon 01358 743463



Potterton Adults Art & Craft Group
meets fortnightly on a Tuesday evening from 7.30 – 9.00pm in the **Stead Inn Restaurant**.

You can bring along your own crafts or join in with the group activity. £3-£4 per class to cover basic materials. Class dates and activities are advertised on our Facebook page "Potterton Community". Some examples of classes to be held over the next few months include: Boxed Frames, Embroidery, Needle Felting, Button Art, Painting etc. For more information contact Caroline Anderson 07920280212.

7-a-side Football Goalposts – Panmure Gardens Play park

Following a request by the Potterton Community Group, the Aberdeenshire Council Landscape Services have now replaced a set of goalposts in the Panmure Gardens Play park with a new set of 7 Aside Football posts in time for spring.

Potterton Orchard.



Local volunteers got together on Saturday 14th April to plant Potterton's very own Orchard, behind the wild flower meadow on Panmure Gardens with a mixture of Apple, Pear and Plum Trees. Organised by members of the Potterton Planting Group, Fiona Scott and Thom Cooper led the group of volunteers, Caroline & Marc Anderson, Kerry and Aaron Dobby, Susan Tuccaroglu, Chris Schenk, Jean Hopkins, Paul & Mairi McKeown and Councillor Paul Johnston in an afternoon of digging and planting trees.

Local children Macy, Lucy, Tylan, Willow and Samuel also had fun helping out. The Potterton Community Group would like to thank Aberdeenshire Council Landscape Services for providing the trees as well as additional seat benches, which will be placed in this area over the next month.

The **Potterton Planting Group** hope to work on additional planting within the meadow, to provide a peaceful area to stop for a seat and enjoy the flowers, trees and wildlife. If you are interested in joining the planting group please contact Fiona Scott on fmscott40@gmail.com



Following the success of Potterton's **"PICNIC IN THE PARK"** over the past few years, the Potterton Community Group are organising another event this year on a larger scale. It will take place **on Saturday 23rd June from 1.00pm throughout the afternoon.**

Bring along your own picnic (and bottle!), picnic blanket or camping chairs and the group will provide some additional tables and gazebos. The group will organise some games throughout the afternoon, from 7 aside football, rounders and some "Sports Day Games" and "Welly Wanging" with our local Minion. This is a **free event** organised to bring the local community of "all ages" together.

Caroline Anderson

on behalf of Potterton Community Group

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1st BELHELVE RANGERS

Last term we made waffles, tested a new activity for Girlguiding, and finished the term with a pizza party. The Rangers started back on Tuesday 24th April in Balmedie. We kicked off with a chocolate themed night: making chocolates and learning about issues surrounding the manufacture. The Rangers have also said they want a trip to a trampolining park, so we'll leave that to the end of term. With the good weather (hopefully) coming in, we'll try to spend as much time outdoors.

We'd love to welcome new members. Rangers are for young women aged 14 to 18 years old and we plan our activities based on what the members want to do. Please give me a call (01224 703335) or drop me an email (s.osbeck@rgu.ac.uk) if you are interested in joining us.

Susan Osbeck

POTTERTON BROWNIES

3RD Belhelvie Pack

The Potterton Brownies tell us what's happening in their pack, as we move into summer.

We've been very busy since the Spring Banter and we've all gained our communications badge. We had to learn the finger spelling alphabet (BSL) and the phonic alphabet and had to make a poster about Brownies.

We joined all the Rainbows and Brownies and Guides from the whole of our District at the Aberdeen Sports Village for a day. We got to try lots of their activities, the Aqua Run, trampolining, athletics, parachute games, scavenger hunt, orienteering and field games. It was ACE!

We are now getting ready to go on our annual camp. Our Theme is Moana this year. Some of our older Brownies are going to a Transition Camp to find out about guides. We've had our planning Pow-Wow for this term so have lots of things to look forward to!

If you have any queries about Potterton Brownies, please contact:

Katherine Hebron-Scott

katherine@hebron55@gmail.com

ZUMBA GOLD

Every Monday 9.45 – 10.30am in the
Forsyth Hall (behind Belhelvie Church)
£3/class, inclusive of after-class coffees

For further info contact: Janette 01358 742100





Beavers, Cubs, Scouts & Explorer Scouts

SUMMER GARDEN FAIR

All sections of the Balmedie Scout Group have been working hard to get ready for their Summer Garden Fair on Saturday 23rd June, from 2 to 4pm. As well as raising money for charity, this provides them with the opportunity to complete their gardening badge, which counts towards their Community Impact Badge.

The fair takes place at the Potterton Community Centre where Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, and Explorer Scouts will be selling plants they have grown and items they have made. Balmedie House residents have also been helping. Come and see a selection of crafts, planters and bird-feeders – as well as flowers and vegetables they have grown themselves.

Teas, coffees and home bakes will be available at a cost of £2 for adults and 50p for children. All proceeds from the Fair will go to charity.

As you can see from the photos, the Cubs have certainly enjoyed getting to grips with growing things.



So do come along and pick up a bargain –

Saturday 23rd June

2-4pm

Potterton Community Centre

All for Charity!



BALMEDIE BEAVER SCOUTS

Beavers are looking forward to the summer weather and started the term exploring outside doing an egg box scavenger hunt. We have lots of exciting activities planned including both a family camp and a local camp for the older Beavers. We will be doing different badges including the gardening badge so need the good weather. Another activity Beavers enjoy is delivering the Banter. Look out for us in the streets around the school at delivery time - you will certainly hear them!



Here are Balmedie Beavers with Beaver leaders, photographed after a very busy outdoor activity session. Beavers at Balmedie is very popular (for ages 6 to 8). They meet on Wednesdays at Balmedie School at 6.00pm. If you would like to join, you can put your name on our waiting list. For all Scouting enquiries please call 07743844040 or email balmedie@gordondistrictscouts.org.uk

Elaine Neil Beavers Leader

BELHELVIE BOWLING CLUB



The bowling green is now open for the season so we are looking forward to lovely summer days to enjoy some games. We welcome anyone who is interested to come along on a Monday evening at 7pm or a Wednesday afternoon at 1.30pm and give bowling a try.

If you would like to know more, do get in touch: phone 07729 817718 or email marion.donald@btinternet.com. You can also get info from our website

www.belhelviebowlingclub.com

Marion Donald Secretary

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Community Council and from all quarters of the community. We really do appreciate so much the efforts made on the association's behalf.

With our AGM behind us, two new committee members join the team, Gordon Jackson & Johnathan Russell. So it's onwards and upwards. Going forward, our future plans are to landscape around the Leisure Centre and create a new play area for the patrons of Beachside Coffee Shop. Our main intention however is to secure and make better use of the land, whilst we fundraise to develop it further.

We need to secure funding to refurbish the old kitchen/office area to make it a proper reception area, repaint the whole building internally and extend the existing Fitness suite. In partnership with Middlefield Wasps and Aberdeenshire Council, we will help repair and maintain the small toilet block within Balmedie Country Park. We will create another two 7-a-side grass football pitches along with another full size pitch and extend the car park. We also aim to widen the access road down to the pitches

for emergency vehicles. Again, with the help of Middlefield Wasps, we intend to build a larger football Pavilion to accommodate both boys' & girls' football teams. Another possibility to consider to protect the Leisure Centre's future would be to build a new sports hall, then convert the main hall into a Soft Play Barn along with a sensory area and party rooms.

Lastly, nothing says summer more than a Village Fete! It's a tradition that spans generations. So whatever you do this summer, make sure you mark down the date: Sunday 27th of May 2018 from noon to 4 pm. We hope you can join us - so please come along and support your Village Fete and the valuable work it does in keeping local traditions alive.

It's been a busy time at Balmedie Leisure Centre and we would like to acknowledge the fact, that we are extremely fortunate we continue to enjoy widespread and committed support from Aberdeenshire Council, elected members, Belhelvie



Summer Fete
Balmedie Leisure Centre
Last Sunday in May
12pm to 4pm

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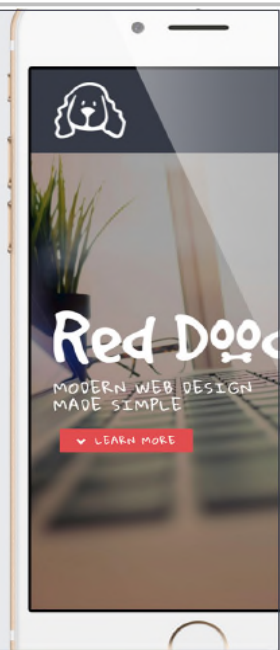
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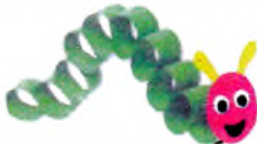
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BELHELVIE CHURCH of SCOTLAND

Our annual **Memorial Service** will be held on Sunday May 27th at 11am. This is a service where we remember those from our parish who've passed on during the year, specifically those whose funerals Paul has conducted. Their names are read out and representatives of their families are invited to come and light a candle in their memory. Once those candles have been lit, any other folk who are carrying the pain of bereavement are able to come up and light a tea light in memory of their loved one too. Many folk find this a helpful milestone along the way, and anyone in the parish who's dealing with bereavement is welcome to attend.

We are hoping to run a Children's Holiday Club from Wed 15th to Friday 17th August in the Forsyth Hall from 10-12 each morning. The club will cater for children entering P1 to those entering P7 after the summer, and there will be a small charge of £5 per child to cover some of our costs. Come and join us - great fun was had at last summer's camp, as you can see in the photograph below.

During our three days we'll be exploring some of Jesus' stories using music, songs, fun, games, crafts and challenges. Places are likely to be limited, so if you're interested please be in touch soon. More information will be put out through the school nearer the time.

Finally, please remember to 'friend' us on Facebook to keep up to date with what's going on in your local church of Scotland, and if you have the time and interest, you could check out our webpage which is belhelviechurch.com

Rev Paul McKeown 01358 742227
pmckeown1@btconnect.com



Please see Banter "Dates for your Diary" page for details of what exciting springtime events are in store at Belhelvie Church.



BALMEDIE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

11am every Sunday at the Wee Kirk in
Rowan Drive, Balmedie
A Scottish Charity – Number SC 022803

As well as our weekly church service, our Wee Kirk beside the Co-op also hosts many other activities.

Wednesdays at 11am a Ladies Group meets for coffee
Wednesday mornings, Better Balmedie use it as their Tea Bothy
Wednesdays from 6.30 to 7.30pm there's the Children's Craft Club
Fridays from 10am to 11.30am we have under 5's Group & Messy Play
Friday 3.30 to 4.30pm there's our embryo Boys' Brigade (with Girls)
Saturday mornings, Better Balmedie again have their tea break here.

You would be very welcome to come along to any of these groups. Our building may not be huge, but it is here and is available to the community. It is ideal for small groups and anyone wishing to book it for one session or on a regular basis, please phone Catherine on 01358 743114

FUND RAISING

Recently we ran a Spring Fair, which was a successful event and we thank everyone who supported. Folks are pleasantly surprised once inside at the size of the building.

<p>MINI GALA</p> <p>At the Wee Kirk</p> <p>28th July 2018 – 11am to 2pm</p> <p>Various stalls planned</p> <p>If you would like to book a stall, contact Diane on 07850 235215</p>	<p>SUMMER PLAYScheme</p> <p>For school age children</p> <p>At the Wee Kirk</p> <p>Mon 6th to Fri 10th Aug 2018</p> <p>10 – 11.30am (£2/ day)</p> <p>To book a place, including the day away for those who attend, contact Catherine on 01358 743114</p>
---	---

SIERRA LEONE Our Church continues to sponsor the work of Kids Action, in Sierra Leone. Over the years, our small donation has mounted up. We have donated in excess of £4,000. Big thank you to all.

Rev. Andy Cowie (01224 703248)

POTTERTON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

1st Sunday of each month at 6.15pm at Potterton Community Centre

Have you noticed how Red Tape continues to grow? Updates in PVG (Police checks), new European Data Protection Laws - all to be adhered to. Be it a large Corporation or a tiny group, the same huge amount of work is needed to implement the changes. This is all as a result of consequences - someone, somewhere, misbehaves or endangers people, young, old or in between. Frequently, from a small group perspective, it appears our political masters like to use sledgehammers to crack nuts.

But 'consequences' in our personal lives tend to be a nasty word in today's society. No longer is there fault in a divorce, no longer do you have any responsibility for your actions – it is always someone else's fault. Even in road accidents, insurance companies like knock for knock – that way both lose no claims entitlement. It goes on. But we know there are consequences and personal responsibility.

Even in our Faith today, I question when I hear the devil made me do it - No we do it! We all fail, none of us are perfect. It is why the bible stories are so important. They teach forgiveness, a new start and God's Love. If we accept that, then perhaps we will be willing to acknowledge our own failings and ask for God's help. It's free.

YOUTH

Young people from our church joined others from different churches in the area for a Fun Day at Noah's Ark in Perth. Everyone enjoyed ten-pin bowling; Crafts for All; Soft Play and the older ones got the chance to do karting.

CHILDREN'S CRAFT CLUB

I need help to get a Children's Craft Club up and running in Potterton. This would probably take place after school. If you have an interest and can help, please call me.

MINISTRY

Like every other denomination, Congregational Churches struggle to find and train enough new Ministers. We have embarked on an experiment, to change the style of Ministry Training from academic to 'on the job' - an apprenticeship-style training (non-stipendiary - unpaid). It was decided not to have any age limits and be as open as possible. Our denomination's own course will still be available, through an English University, or a Scottish Degree. In the East of Scotland, we have quite a few people showing an interest. So... interesting times lie ahead.

But what about you? Have YOU considered a call to the Ministry? Speak to your own Minister or give me a call.

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way we can!***

Please accept our warm invitation to the events listed below:

Tunes & Crafts

White Horse Inn

Wednesdays 1:30–3pm

Thursdays 10:30–12noon

Pre-school group – including snacks for the children and craft materials.

Coffee and cakes also available.

Please contact Tineke at:

tinekewintour@hotmail.com

Family Fun

White Horse Inn

First Saturday of every month, 10:30 – 12 noon

Bouncy castle for pre-school children and bacon rolls for parents

Next dates: 2nd June, 7th July, 4th August

Sunday Meetings

White Horse Inn

Last Sunday of every month, 3.30pm

To learn more together about how amazing Jesus is

Absolutely everyone is welcome

Next dates: 27th May, 24th June, 29th July.

www.balmedie-newhope.com

gwintour@hotmail.com

Graham and Tineke Wintour



BELHELVE SWI

When this Banter is being read we will be looking forward to our summer break and before that, our visit to the Heritage Centre in Tarves with a cuppa at The Murly Tuck, the lovely café next door.

Unfortunately, our numbers are decreasing. We would be delighted to have some new members, so do come along and join us for friendship laughter, learning new crafts, talented tutors and interesting talks. There are also opportunities to take part in further activities outwith the Institute such as rural holidays, summer schools and walking weekends.

We meet on the 2nd Wednesday of the month starting again in September when we have a talk organised by an Aloe products representative. Eigie House lounge provides a warm, comfortable venue for our meeting and there is a ramp with easy access for the less able.

The Whist which is held on the 4th Wed. of the month (excluding our summer break in June, July and August) is needing an injection of new players, so if you can play or wish to learn, do come and give it a try. We are a very friendly group. For any further information please get in touch with me at 01358 743173.

Elaine Strachan



Email: aberdeencentral@babysensory.co.uk Tel: 07827 448016

Facebook: www.facebook.com/babysensoryaberdeencentral

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Manager: Lyndsay Fleming

email: manager@linksnurserybalmedie.co.uk

Tel. 01358 743094

BETTER BALMEDIE



The long, cold, windy winter is over and spring plants have been in bloom brightening the village. As you can see in the photograph above, Better Balmedie is hard at work, digging, planting, building, clearing, in an attempt to bring summer colour to our village.

Over the past three months volunteers have been busy clearing leaves from footpaths ensuring drains may run clear. Vegetation that overhangs footpaths in the summer has also been cut back. Several fallen trees have been removed and cut into logs. These are for sale at £2.00 per bag with free delivery within the parish - phone Wishart on 01358-742884 to make arrangements.

The ground behind the Congregational Church has finally been levelled off. A perimeter fence will be erected soon, storage sheds built and a Community Garden constructed. There is a busy summer ahead. If you would like to volunteer your services, no particular skills required just a willingness to work, please come along to the Congregational Church by the Co-op on a Wednesday or Saturday between 10.00 and 12.00 where you will receive a warm welcome and tea/coffee and biscuits.

A few litter picks have been organised recently and one, in conjunction with the Brethren Church saw twenty volunteers at various locations collect thirty bags of rubbish. Big thanks too to residents who pick litter whilst out walking on their own. Every little helps.

Many thanks to folks who regularly place their change into collection boxes in local shops. *Many a mickle makes a muckle* as they say. We were delighted when one person donated twenty pounds! All your donations, big or small, are greatly appreciated and help us to continue our work to keep Balmedie Better and Beautiful.

Allan Jeffrey

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BALMEDIE BEACH WHEELCHAIRS

What are we doing?

Belhelvie Community Trust and The Sand Bothy are working with Aberdeenshire Council to improve access to Balmedie Beach. Because of the dunes system it is not always easy to get down on the sand, especially if you have a disability. We now have use of a big store, the Sand Bunker, which is in Balmedie Country Park, on the way to the beach. We are working with PAMIS (promoting a more inclusive society) and Pony AxeS to provide a range of ways of accessing the beach. To achieve this, we need to buy some all-terrain wheelchairs to lend out for sessions to families and carers of children with disabilities.

What do we need?

- **MONEY:** To get started with one chair, a hoist and a phone, we will need around £5,000. To provide a variety of chairs so that we can cater for a range of disabilities we would need around a further £10,000. We are dependent on donations and charitable funding to buy the chairs and hoist, so we would be grateful for anything you can give.
- **VOLUNTEERS:** We will need help to run the project, arrange bookings, maintain access and chairs, and generally support families who are using the project.



Help us achieve our target

We have a Just Giving Page where you can donate on-line. You can also give donations to The Sand Bothy volunteers on weekend afternoons. To donate or volunteer you can ring The Sand Bothy (leave message) 01358 742396 or contact us via The Sand Bothy Facebook page.

Belhelvie Community Trust is a Charity number SC045563

HAIR Shack



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ANYONE FOR TENNIS?



Fancy yourself as the next Andy Murray? Did you know that we have a tennis club not too far away? The Udney Tennis Club is run by volunteers and they would welcome new members of all abilities, young and old. They're a friendly bunch too. They play on the two, all weather, floodlit courts in Pitmedden. Tim Gilpin, the President of the Club tells us more...

There are club sessions on Sunday morning and Thursday evening for some social tennis. Your modest membership fee will cover these club sessions as well as any individual bookings you make yourself throughout the year. You can practice against our multi-function ball machine and there's also the opportunity of competitive tennis in the Club Championships or league matches, plus other tournaments throughout the season. Coach Graeme can answer any questions you have about your technique or sign you up for a coaching block. Junior and adult coaching is available for all age groups if you're interested. Have a look at our website where you will find lots more information: www.udnytennisclub.co.uk. You can also email us at info@udnytennisclub.co.uk or phone 01651 843627.

Bring your racket along at 10.30am Sunday, or 7.30pm Thursday, and 'try before you buy'! We'll show you how welcoming we can be and you can play a few sets of tennis too. We'll even lend you a racket if you don't have one. We can give you a membership form when you come along or you can download one from our website.

Hope to see you on the courts!

Tim Gilpin



COFFEE HAVEN (Pop Up Café)

First Tuesday of every month from 10.00 to 12.00 in the Forsyth Hall. Home bakes, teas and coffees, all for a donation towards the care of Brilian, our sponsored girl in Kenya.

There is ample parking and easy access for those with reduced mobility. A wheelchair and assistance is also available. We also have toys to amuse little ones. All welcome!

Marianne Wray

IMPROVE YOUR SPINE, HELP YOUR BOWEL!



Every organ in our body is connected through our spinal cord. Our lungs know to breathe and our digestive system knows how to work thanks to the communication from the brain (and mind). These 'orders' arrive and affect the cells of the organs. This keeps us alive and, thankfully, is automatic!

The spine is really the link between the mind, the brain and organs and they all communicate. Any interference, for example due to a small segment of the spine not moving as it should can cause pressure, congestion, inflammation, swelling resulting in interference in that all important message. In this case, the bowel may give signs and symptoms or may just degenerate a bit and give problems in the future.

The body's general functioning depends on the spine. The twelfth thoracic vertebra (T12) nerves communicate with the small and large intestines. The first lumbar vertebra (L1) connects with the intestines and imbalances that create constipation and indigestion. If the basin holding the small and large bowel is distorted, it makes sense that the contents will suffer! All the more reason to ensure the pelvis, the foundation, is the best that it can be.

When stressed, the bowel becomes agitated, leading to inflammation and diarrhoea along with what can be unbearable, colic. Persistent aggravation may lead to parts of the bowel not responding. This gives the unpredictable signs and symptoms of diarrhoea alternating with constipation with colic leading to more anxiety and more stress. High levels of stress have been proven to make pain worse.

Logically, back pain is usually present, too. After strain, specific injury or disease itself, the body accommodates by adjusting the posture to its most pain free position.

Compensation gradually builds up until the body cannot accommodate any more change. This is when some extra stress can cause it to break down at its weakest part: in this case the bowel.



Touch therapies help to goad the body's own pharmacy into action and allow the body to heal itself. Osteopathy and Remedial Massage maintain or restore better structure and thus, better function in the bowel. Reflexology allows the bowel to be worked through the feet! All this is non-invasive so definitely worth a try. Diet and keeping the gut biome at its optimum is necessary too – but that is another story. Happy bowels usually mean a happy YOU!

Maggie Brooks-Carter DO, RN, SMT

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NATURAL BELHELVIE

With summer on the doorstep and the days of the 'simmer dim' only weeks away you have plenty of time to enjoy the wealth of natural goodies on offer in Belhelvie Parish. It is the very fact that we do get the 'simmer dim' this far north that brings us birds like swallows, martins, warblers, and cuckoos, all swarming north for their simmer, sorry summer holidays. With the sun barely having time to put on its goonie before taking it off again, there is loads of daylight in which mums and dads can feed hungry bairns. The young of small birds are like our own wee ones, and cannot last without food through the long hours of darkness that occurs farther south, hence they all come to visit us.

I have mentioned before about the difference between swallows and martins, and all that you need to do is to look where they nest. Swallows inside a building – an open garage, old shed, but *always* inside. Martins build their mud nests tucked up against the soffits and the wall underneath the eaves of a house, or something similar, but always *outside*. If you live near the quarry in Belhelvie you might see sand martins, a browner colour than house martins, and these birds dig a tunnel in a bank of sand or earth, therefore they may breed in the quarry.

As I write, the swallows etc. are still on their way, but birds that are permanent residents hereabouts point us towards the summer. Already I have seen and more to the point heard skylarks taking to the air and singing their wee hearts out as they soar higher and higher, before suddenly swooping down in a series of dives. The beginning of April is early for them to be serenading from on high but by the time that you read this (you *do* read it don't you?) there will be lots of them on the go. They are superb songsters that appear to have an endless supply of melodies to offer. They favour open grassy areas, fields and the like, but also moorland as long as it is dry. If you get a close look you will note that they are larger than a sparrow, with white underparts and streaky brown above. One distinguishing feature is a small but prominent crest of feathers on the head. They nest on the ground in a tussock of grass and use dried grass to form their nest. You might confuse them with the meadow pipit, that is found in similar places, very slightly smaller but it does not have the crest on its head, and they do not fly up into the sky singing either. Refer to that bird identification book that Santa put in your stocking last Christmas.



The delightful primrose will be on its way back to bed for the summer by now but a close relative the cowslip will be flowering (pictured). Sadly, this beautiful native wildflower is much scarcer today, I have old books that give recipes for cowslip wine! Wow, you would not get very drunk on all of the cowslip wine made today. It is a member of the primula family and originally a plant of grassy meadows where cows wandered around chomping at the vegetation. The common name (one of many) relates to the fact that it grew in places where cows left 'sharny dubs'

(cowpats). These were once referred to as simply 'slips' or cowslips, and the plants growing close by were given the same name. A shame for such a lovely flower. Take care if you go looking for them, and do not 'slip' up!

Bob Davis

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BELHELVIE NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

The Belhelvie Neighbourhood Watch continues to operate within Belhelvie and there's always scope for you to set up your own scheme for your street or Neighbourhood! Full details can be found at www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk

As summer is here and we spend lots of our time in the garden, why not keep in mind that the design of your garden can improve the security of your home. This would certainly help out in winter!

Defensive planting

Boundaries of thick and prickly plants and shrubs are not easy to climb over. This makes crossing densely planted areas difficult to do quickly or quietly. Use plants and shrub beds to protect the following vulnerable areas:

- Under vulnerable windows.
- Around areas that could be climbed on.
- Around the boundary of your garden where there may be easy access from the outside.
- Along the entire boundary if your home backs onto open land.

Plants recommended for such use include: pyracantha, holly, mahonia, rose, gorse, berberis, blackberry and hawthorn

At the front of your home, the recommended **maximum height** of shrubs is 1M and the **minimum height** from the ground of tree canopies is 3M. This will reduce a burglar's opportunity to hide out of sight.

Lighting

As well as security lighting around your house, consider installing dusk till dawn sensor lighting in other areas of your garden, especially around sheds and outbuildings. Consider installing in areas of the garden that are shadowy and dark at night. Think about where a burglar might hide. You might also want to think about defensive planting in that area too. Do not use lighting in a position where it dazzles you or prevents you from seeing into the area beyond it.

At the rear of properties, consider using motion detection security lighting. Mount this type of lighting about 2.75M high with the sensor pointing downwards. Please consider your neighbours and don't use a light that exceeds 150W.

Other considerations

- Noisy and crunchy surfaces such as gravel and shingle can prevent someone moving around quietly. Consider using around outbuildings, shed and narrow passageways.
- Remove loose bricks and stones.
- Use concrete or mortar to secure rockeries and planters.
- Secure dustbins using a bicycle chain or d-lock fixed to a suitable point (such as a ground anchor).
- Lock your tools away.
- Speak to your neighbours and ask them to report suspicious activity to the police.

Enjoy your summer gardening – and stay safe!

Paul Collier

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BALMEDIE LIBRARY

Library opening times are:

Monday 14.30 - 16.30
17.30 - 19.30
Tuesday CLOSED
Wednesday 14.30 - 16.30
17.30 - 19.30

Thursday 10.00 - 13.00
Friday CLOSED
Saturday 10.00 - 13.00

We would like to say a big thank you to John Hopkins and Dave Purves for all their hard work creating a photo display and quiz here in the library, titled *Where is it? What is it?* The aim of the quiz was to identify where in the parish the photo was taken and describe what was in the photo. It was a huge success and great fun with families and friends getting involved and even driving round the parish to locate where the photos were taken. It certainly generated a lot of discussion in the library. If anyone would like to check the answers, come to the library. Thank you to all who took part.

Our winner was Adrijana Pavlovic, who achieved an amazing 93%. She is pictured receiving one of her prizes. She has also chosen a photo of Balmedie Beach, which John is going to take, print and frame.



Aberdeenshire Libraries Summer Reading Challenge 2018

This year's challenge starts on **Thursday 28th June** and runs until **Saturday 25th August 2018**.

Our Summer Reading Challenge is a fun and accessible activity for children of all ages and aims to promote reading, encourage progression, support curricular outcomes and involve children in a cultural activity. Children receive a stamp or sticker for each book they read and will receive a book prize after reading six or more books, depending on their age group. As well as the reading challenge, our libraries also run a creative competition. Ask at your local library or check our website for details:

<http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/libraries/young/summer-reading-challenge/>

The first Wednesday of each month (term time only), from 14.00 to 14.30, there is a **Rhyme Time** session for under-fives, why not come along and join in the fun?

Our **Knit & Natter Group** is as busy and productive as ever. They are a very friendly group and extend a warm welcome to new members. Apart from knitting lovely items for themselves they also knit & crochet items for various charities. They meet here every Thursday morning from 10.30-12.30.

Our **Lego Club** is proving to be very popular, there are a couple of spaces available for children aged 8 and over on Monday nights from 6.00-7.00pm. Please contact the library if you would like your child to attend.

For more information on Aberdeenshire Libraries, please visit www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/libraries.

Like us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/AberdeenshireLibraries>

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RAISING FUNDS

Three local teenagers Mairi McKeown, Emma King and Amy Simpson, pupils at Ellon Academy are busy raising funds to help finance their trip to Costa Rica and Nicaragua with World Challenge in the summer of 2019. Part of the challenge is showing entrepreneurial skills in raising funds for the trip and the girls will be organising several events in the community over the next year to help them towards their target, so watch this space! Thirty-two Ellon Academy pupils are set to join the trip, which will involve community work, trekking and cultural exchange over a four week visit.



Here the girls pose for a photograph with willing helper, Rev. Paul McKeown, at their recent Jumble Sale, which successfully brought them closer to their target. Look out for further exciting fund-raising ideas from the girls! We wish them every success.

BALMEDIE

FRIENDSHIP

GROUP

The Friendship Group is open to all residents over the age of 50 who reside in the parish of Belhelvie. We meet every second Tuesday in the Eigie House lounge from 2-4pm and have an interesting mix of musical entertainment and talks. We are always happy to meet new members. Here is our programme into Spring:

22 May

'Snowy' entertains

5 June

Entertainer Colin McKay

19 June

Outing to the Banchory area

28th Aug

Group restarts after summer break

For more details please contact:

Margaret Murison Secretary 01358 742285
or **Vic Deans** President 01358 743634



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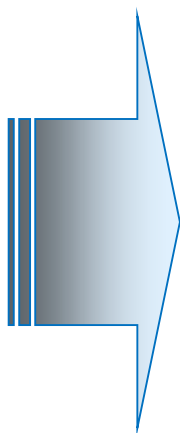
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ABERDEEN OFFSHORE WIND FARM UPDATE

Construction of the Aberdeen Offshore Wind Farm is well under way with multiple of the world's most powerful turbines and innovative suction bucket jacket foundations already installed. The eleven turbine scheme is due to be completed this summer.



The substation construction is also concluding with final mechanical and electrical works ongoing in preparation for the transportation of the clean electricity from the wind farm.

Community Benefit Scheme

Thank you to everyone who completed the EOWDC's £150,000 a year, community fund questionnaire. Your feedback has been collated and analysed by Scotland's academic expert in offshore renewable funds, Dr Claire Haggett, University of Edinburgh. Dr Haggett has prepared a report which is currently being reviewed and refined. The report findings will be shared shortly. Please contact Natalie Ghazi for any further information natalie.ghazi@vattenfall.com

Family Turbine Spotting Event



On Saturday 12th May we hosted a family event at Balmedie Country Park, with some of our community partners, to celebrate the ongoing construction of the wind farm. Thanks to all who joined us.

Natalie Ghazi



ALL CHANGE ON THE AWPR

The progress being made on the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route across our area can be clearly seen as the works continue towards completion. Road users are seeing the benefits of this with vehicles now using part of the new route between Tipperty and Foveran, as well as the new Blackdog and Balmedie Junctions. The newly-completed Blackdog junction will improve local access to Potterton, Belhelvie, Blackdog and Blackdog Industrial Estate, and also a number of local properties.

While work is taking place, we are getting more and more used to the changing temporary speed restrictions, diversion signs, lane closures and route changes, not to mention bus stop variations. Drivers in the area must be applauded for their careful driving and adherence to the restrictive measures

The project team is working hard to complete the remaining works so that the road can be brought into full operation. Traffic management will remain in place in some locations and will be phased to keep disruption to a minimum. With the aim of improving travel in the northeast, the AWPR is one of the largest infrastructure projects in Scotland. Once completed, it will include 58km of new road, 40km of new side roads, and 30km of access tracks. It will have 12 junctions, two river crossings at River Dee and River Don, and a bridge over the Aberdeen to Inverness Railway. It also will feature four major pipeline crossings, three wildlife bridges, and more than 100 other structures.



The new Balmedie junction opened to traffic on Monday 30 April 2018



The project had previously been expected to open during Spring 2018, but is now scheduled for completion this autumn. There have been a number of issues that have contributed to this, including the impact of severe stormy weather over the last three winters, and the collapse of Carillion.

Economy Secretary Keith Brown comments:

"I understand how highly anticipated this project is for those living and working in the region and the patience local communities have shown during the construction process, I would like to thank them for their continued patience as we enter the final stages of the project".

The total cost of the project is £745 million and during construction over 1000 jobs have been created. The downturn in the North Sea oil and gas industry has had a significant negative effect on the employment market in this area. Fortunately, the AWPR has provided new work for a considerable number of employees who were unemployed due to losing their positions in the industry. The AWPR is predicted to generate over £6 billion for the local economy with an anticipated 14,000 new jobs to follow over the first 30 years after the scheme opens.

School Holiday Dates

June	Mon 4	Local Holiday	Balmedie, Ellon
July	Fri 6	Last day of School term	Balmedie, BoDA, Ellon
August	Tue 21	First day of Autumn Term	Balmedie, BoDA, Ellon

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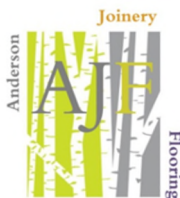
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Ambulance/ Police/ Fire Brig.	emergency	999
Police Scotland	non-emergencies	101
Fire Brigade	non-emergencies	01224 696666
NHS 24	(18.00 to 7.00)	0800 111 999
Scottish Gas	emergency line	0845 600 8855
Scottish & Southern Energy	emergency line	0800 300 999
Scottish Water	emergency line	0845 600 8855
ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL:	HQ, Gordon House, Inverurie	01467 628011
	CLlr Paul Johnston	07799 582879
	CLlr Jim Gifford	07766 497856
	CLlr Karen Adam	07388 956121
	CLlr Andrew Hassan	07388 956123
	Dog Warden	01467 628195
	Environmental Health	08456 081207
YOUTH ORGANISATIONS:		
Beavers (Potterton)	} All enquiries to Ian Thomson balmedie@gordondistrictscouts.org.uk	07743 844040
Cubs (Potterton)		
Scouts, Explorer Scouts		
Rainbows (Balmedie)		
Rainbows (Potterton)		
Brownies (Balmedie)		
Brownies (Potterton)	Claire via website www.girlguiding.org.uk	
Guides (Balmedie)	Pauline Wood	01358 743002
Rangers (Potterton)	Marianne McIntosh	01358 724231
	Katherine Hebron Scott	01330 833448
	Christine Coldwells	07766050457
	Susan Osbeck	01224 703335
CHURCHES:		
Belhelvie Ch. of Scotland	Rev Paul McKeown	01358 742227
Balmedie Congregational	Rev Andy Cowie	01224 703248
Potterton Congregational	Rev Andy Cowie	01224 703248
MEDICAL CENTRES:		
Scotstown, Bridge of Don	Cairfold Rd AB22 8LD	01224 702149
Udny Station	Woodside Terr AB41 6PJ	01651 842204
Danestone, Bridge of Don	Fairview St AB22 8ZP	01224 822866
Oldmachar, Bridge of Don	Jesmond Dr AB22 8UR	0345 3370510
Oldmachar, King Street	526 King St AB24 5RS	0345 3370510
Ellon	Schoolhill, Ellon AB41 9JH	0345 3371150
DENTISTS:		
Bridge of Don Practice	2 Balgownie Rd AB23 8JP	01224 703010
Grandholm Practice	Grandholm AB22 8BH	01224 701890
Kingseat Practice	Business Park AB21 OAZ	01651 260200
Oldmachar Dental Care	Jesmond Drive AB22 8UR	01224 827095
SR Rankin Dentist	30 Ellon Road AB23 8BX	01224 820775

SCHOOLS:

Balmedie Primary School	HT Dougie Ford	01358 742474
Bridge of Don Academy	HT Daphne McWilliam	01224 707583
Ellon Academy	HT Tim McKay	01358 720715

COMMUNITY CENTRES:

Balmedie Leisure Centre	Bill Murray	01358 743725
Potterton Community Centre	Joanne Murray	01358 727910
Belhelvie CC (Green Hut)	Joanne Murray	01358 727910

POST OFFICES:

Balmedie PO	Eigie Road, Balmedie	01358 742556
Potterton PO	Potterton AB23 8UY	01358 742670
Balmedie Pharmacy	Dickies, 3 Rowan Drive	01358 741226
First Responders	Marc Wood	07789 965236
Belhelvie Community Council	David Watson (Chair)	01651 328263
Belhelvie Community Trust	Rosie Nicol (secretary)	01358 742557
Belhelvie Banter	Jess Petrie	07763 314579
Balmedie Out of School Club	Lynne Fyfe	07920 295508
Balmedie House Eventide Home	Ann Reid, Service Manager	01358 742244
Balmedie Library	Maureen Muirden	01358 742045
Balmedie Friendship Group	Margaret Murison	01358 742285
Potterton Community Group	Caroline Anderson	07920 280212
Better Balmedie	Allan Jeffrey	01358 743851
Neighbourhood Watch	Paul Collier (Belhelvie)	07825 216233
Belhelvie Bowling Club	Marion Donald	07729 817718
Aberdeen Balgownie Rotary Club	Graham Donaldson	01224 744144
Scottish Women's Institute (SWI)	Elaine Strachan	01358 743173
The Sand Bothy Project	Rosie Nicol	01358 742557

KIDS' STUFF

Kindergym	These first 8 groups take place at the Balmedie Leisure Centre. For details, phone Shona	01358 743114
Messy Monkeys		
Fun-nastics		
Pitched		
Gymnastics Club		
2s Group	Lynne Fyfe Jeanette Lamb Catherine Cassie Maureen Muirden (Library) Diane Cassie Pauline Wood Linda Carroll Lyndsay Fleming Alison King	07920 295508 01358 742684 01358 743114 01358 742045 07850 235215 01358 743002 01358 741988 01358 743094 01651 869078
Baby Clinic (1 st & 3 rd Wed of month)		
Parent & Toddler (2 nd & 4 th Wed)		
Balmedie Out of School Club		
Mainly Music, Forsyth Hall		
Balmedie Craft Club		
Under 5s Rhymetime (monthly)		
Mother & Toddlers/ Messy Play		
Child-minder, Potterton		
Child-minder, Belhelvie		
Links Nursery, Balmedie		
Flowerpots Childcare, Kingseat		

Summer DATES for your DIARY

MAY	Sun 20	Meditation Walk	Sand Bothy	11.00-13.00
	Sun 27	Balmedie Gala Sunday	Leisure Centre	12.00-16.00
		Memorial Service	Belhelvie Church	11.00
JUNE	Sat 2	Volunteer Recruitment Event	Congregational Church	11.00–13.00
	Sat 23	Blackdog Community Gala	Community Park	11.00-15.00
JULY	Sat 21	Fun day with RNLI	Sand Bothy	
AUG	15-17	Children's Holiday Camp	Belhelvie Church	10.00-12.00
	Sat 18	Puppets and Picnics	Sand Bothy	
Weekly				
Mon		Golden Zumba	Forsyth Hall	09.45
Mon		Knit & Natter	Potterton CEC	14.30-16.30
Mon		Pilates (for over 60s)	Whitehorse Inn	11.15-12.15
Wed		Better Balmedie	Congregational Church	10.00
Thurs		Knit & Natter	Balmedie Library	10.30-12.30
Thur		Health Walks	Start Balmedie Library	10.00
Fri		Mother & Toddlers	Congregational Church	10.00-11.30
Sat		Better Balmedie	Congregational Church	10.00
Fortnightly				
Tues		Friendship Group (see article)	Eigie House	14.00
Tues		Adult Arts and Crafts	Stead Inn, Potterton	19.30-21.00
Wed		SWI (see article)	Eigie House	19.30
Wed		1 st & 3 rd Wed of the month - Bingo	Eigie House	19.30
Monthly				
1 st Tues		Coffee Haven	Forsyth Hall, Belhelvie	10.00-12.00
1 st Wed		Rhyme Time (Under 5s -term time)	Balmedie Library	14.00-14.30
3 rd Mon		Belhelvie Community Council	See article	19.30
4 th Mon		Belhelvie Community Trust	White Horse Inn	19.30
4 th Wed		Whist	Eigie House, Balmedie	19.30
Last Sat		Potterton Pop up café	Stead Inn, Potterton	10.00-12.00
Bi- Monthly				
2 nd Monday		Potterton Community group	Stead Inn, Potterton	19.15 -20.30
Youth Groups (during school term time)				
Mon		Lego Club	Balmedie Leisure Centre	15.30-17.00
Mon		Lego Club (Over 8s)	Balmedie Library	18.00-19.00
Mon		Cubs	Potterton CEC	18.30-20.00
Tue		Rainbows	Balmedie School	18.00-19.00
Tue		Cubs	Potterton CEC	18.30-20.00
Tue		Guides	Balmedie School	19.00-20.30
Tues		Explorer Scouts	Potterton CEC	19.30-21.30
Wed		Beavers	Balmedie School	18.00-19.00
Wed		Rainbows	Potterton CEC	18.00-19.00
Wed		Balmedie Kids Craft Club	Congregational Church	18.30-19.30
Thu		Brownies	Potterton CEC	18.00-20.00
Thu		Brownies	Balmedie School	18.15-19.45
Fri		Boys Brigade/ Girls Association	Congregational Church	15.30-16.30
Fri		Scouts & Explorers	Potterton CEC	19.00-21.30

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