

# BELHELVIE BANTER

Balmedie : Whitecairns : Belhelvie : Potterton : Blackdog

*On behalf of Belhelvie Parish*

# Thank You!

**to all of our Key Workers**



EDITION 43

JUNE 2021

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## EDITORIAL



Who would have thought this scary image would become such a common sight to us all? But at last, Banter is back! It's been a strange time over the last year, but won't we appreciate a little bit of normality when life comes back to normal, albeit not quite the normal we're used to? For those who have tragically lost loved ones however, nothing will be the same again. We send our condolences to those who have found themselves in sad circumstances due to Covid.

You'll find this edition of Banter is full of thank-yous, with everyone becoming so much more appreciative of what we often took for granted before. To support our local businesses as they emerge from Lockdown, we are giving free advertising this edition – and we hope that readers will buy local to help out businesses that may be struggling.

We would like to thank Paul Collier who has been doing a wonderful job organising Banter distribution for over 10 years – and now deserves a rest! Good luck for the future Paul. Taking over distribution will be Pamela Carle – we're so glad she volunteered.

Although we still have some way to go, it feels good to see light at the end of the tunnel and be able to enjoy the longer, warmer days. Our activities will still be curbed, but it will still seem like a new freedom. Enjoy moving forward, having learned lessons from this past year's different way of life. Let's work together to make the most of ourselves and our communities as we enjoy summer days.

**Jess Petrie, Editor**

*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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2021 BANTER DEADLINES	AUTUMN (Ed 44)	WINTER (Ed 45)	SPRING '22 (Ed 46)
Articles & ads	Fri 23 <sup>rd</sup> July	Fri 29 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Fri 21 <sup>st</sup> Jan
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*A big thank you to Keith Donaldson who has given freely of his time to design our cover. Keith's talents know no bounds – he's a Balmedie Scout Leader, produces the wonderful Inverurie Pantomime every year – and manages to keep down a job too!*



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## A WORD FROM THE DOC...

### What a Year!

It is a struggle to believe that it has been more than a year since I have had to do an article for the Banter. The Covid-19 Pandemic has been staggering in its impact as many of you will know from illness, loss of a loved one, the lack of social freedoms and the huge impact on the economy. Whilst there has been a focus on the impact on hospitals and intensive care, there has been an enforced and seismic shift in the way we have to work in general practice.

I now spend several hours daily wearing a phone headset, stuck in front of my computer screen, conducting electronic and telephone consultations. We are seeing people 'face to face', an expression barely heard just over one year ago, but I now wear my scrubs, mask, and if I need to examine your throat, a visor too! I also must not forget about the 'all protecting' plastic apron, or 'the pinny of power' as I have christened it. Thus protected we see the selected patients, who we consider at a low risk of having Covid, in the surgery.

The consequence of the enforced change, speaking to everyone at greater length on the phone, means that we take much longer to get through the waiting calls, hence the need to move to electronic submission of details (currently the eConsult system) to enable patients to give us information to start planning what we need to do to help. This system is far from perfect but has the huge advantage of not having to wait in a phone queue and means others do not overhear your request for your pile cream!

In a previous article I told you how staff are now asking many more questions when you phone. Indeed, the receptionist is now called a 'Care Navigator' and is trained to make sure that you are attended to by the right health professional, at the right time and place. It is important to realise that this is necessary, both to ensure we keep Covid cases out of the surgery, but also to gather details to help the doctor or advanced nurse practitioner prioritise who to call first. The staff are not being nosy and are so busy that your case details will be long forgotten by the end of a busy shift.

The staff in all GP practices have sadly had to put up with an enormous amount of unpleasant behaviour and indeed abuse over the phone and occasionally in the surgery from some who seem not to understand that we have had to change everything because of the pandemic. In the first six months all GP staff did not take any public holidays and often worked longer hours. Sadly they have received no public acknowledgement for their efforts. The job may not be as 'sexy' as an intensive care nurse, but the huge demands placed on the system often start at the front line of general practice, and I would like to thank all the staff for their hard work, in all practices, not just my own.

With the vaccine programme progressing well, we are beginning to see a small chink of light at the end of what has been a very long, dark tunnel. Whilst we will soon be

able to meet up, socialise again, go out for a meal and see family for the first time in ages, the effects on the health care system will last for years. Waiting lists have mushroomed and it is more important than ever to try and keep yourself fit and avoid becoming a patient.

A silver lining of the pandemic is the many more people I see out walking, many with new dogs. It is a shame that it took a pandemic for some to heed my constant nagging about keeping active! Given the backlog of cases there will be a continued incentive to try and keep fit and work off the lockdown pounds. Another gain is I hope that a whole year of not seeing anyone for coughs and colds means that we have all learned how to cope with more minor illnesses without contacting the doctor. If you do think you need advice about minor conditions, then the new Pharmacy First initiative is your first 'port of call'. Pharmacies can now see you and provide a range of medications at no cost to you. A good example is the ability to get hay fever medicines direct without waiting for a prescription, so save time and try this first!



The past year has seen changes which will affect us all for a long time to come, and I do think that aspects of how we work in general practice will be changed for good. We are likely to retain the more detailed information gathering before you even speak to or see a health care practitioner. Many cases will be sorted over the phone or by electronic messaging, saving the need to travel to the surgery, and when we do see you, it may be after tests are arranged so that the doctor has results of tests available at your consultation, saving you from having to make multiple visits and (hopefully!) leaving your doctor or nurse appointment with a clear plan and therapy.

Keep active, be sensible as restrictions are eased, and when invited, please attend for your Covid jab. We have gone through an extraordinary year, please let's try and avoid a repeat!

**Dr Alasdair Forbes**



## **A LOCKDOWN ACROSTIC**

by Lily (8) & Ben (4)

**L**ots of time away from school.

**O**nly allowed outside a little.

**C**ancelled birthday parties.

**K**eeping in touch online.

**D**reaming of normal life.

**O**pening up again.

**W**onderful days ahead.

**N**ever forgetting those we lost.



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- Disposal of unwanted and expired medicines





## PARISH THREADS

### *All Sewn Up*

Dear Belhelvians

I have decided to wind up the writing of Parish Threads, at least for the time being. After ten years of wandering the parish past and present, the time has come to hang up my quill pen and the Belhelvie time travelling cloak.

It's been fun fellow Banterers. I have enjoyed the chance to write about so many interesting things. Thank you all for accompanying me on that journey.

From the owl perched on the mantelpiece, to the White Cairns fireball that gave the maid at the White Cairns Hotel such a fright. From the new tarmac roads built over pathways trodden by the Beaker people to the women carrying salmon to market from the Balmedie icehouse. In woven and folded layers of time, we have been able to imagine those Belhelvie women passing through the dunes at Blackdog where the Wapenshaw was being staged. Nearby at the same time, we could see the measurement of the flat five miles by the men from the Ordnance survey as they begin their mapping of Scotland.

Inland we have witnessed planting the fancy the new crop of neeps to replace bruised whin as our spring fodder crop. We have watched the evolution of the building we now call the Sand Bothy and enjoyed an ice cream. Together we look out to sea at the wind turbines and hear the tap tap tapping of hammer on an anvil as the Rev. Forsyth makes the world changing percussion cap, just so he could sneak up on the ducks in Belhelvie. We have heard explosions from the quarry for a century, and seen John Buchan's son plant trees in 1950 we can still see around Potterton today. Our parish of Belhelvie: similar but unlike all others. I have tried to describe the challenges of change, that appears in the guise of its wily sibling progress.

I hope in some small way these stories have contributed to our collective understanding of our place, Belhelvie, our very own treasure. I shall continue to be an observer, but as I explained in the 2014 Parish Threads 'Wild', every dog has its day, and this dog is no different.

*Thank you for your company along the way.*

**Mary Cane**

*Sad as we are to say goodbye to Mary, we celebrate the ten years we have been privileged to have her as Banter raconteur and wit. She has woven her stories and poetic meanderings throughout our history and countryside, bringing the past alive and encouraging an appreciation of the beautiful nature of our parish in her unique, whimsical fashion. We will miss your delightful musings, Mary, but wish you success and happiness as you continue your very creative journey in your own inimitable style. Thank you for inviting us along – we enjoyed the ride.*

*Editor*

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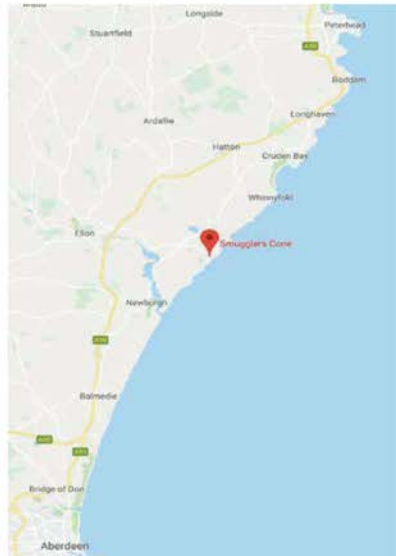


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## MOVING ON

We really didn't know what was in store for us in March 2020 as an epidemic fast became a pandemic, did we? It is perhaps fortunate that, as the First Lockdown came, few realised that restrictions to our lives would still be around a whole year later. Can you imagine that thought? Many have suffered throughout this time. There have been too many Covid-related deaths, and Long-Covid has brought lasting health problems for some. Many have struggled too, with mental health issues due to the necessary isolation. So, no, it may never be quite the same again.

However, change can be good - we should grab the positives and try to move on. What has impressed many is how our local communities have succeeded in forming cohesive support networks, looking out for friends - and neighbours, some of whom they hardly knew before. Now these slight acquaintances are friends. Around the parish, folk have been out walking, all respecting the distance rule, yet managing to share a friendly greeting. Something that did not always happen pre-Covid. Given that we were all basically instructed to keep ourselves to ourselves, we managed to extend our friendships.

So some good *has* come out of this time. Across the parish, people have gone that extra mile to think of others and everyone appears to be much more appreciative of that extra kind gesture shown. We have so many to thank for being there for others - unfortunately, restricted space will mean only some will get mentioned here. A big thank you goes to all in the parish for their efforts during these difficult times.

Of course, top of the list has to be our NHS workers, many of whom live in our area and have experienced first-hand the stress and long hours working in difficult situations to cope with the extra workload brought by Covid.

Medals are also due to teaching staff in our schools. During the past year they have either been in school, teaching keyworkers' children, or have been active online, coordinating home-schooling for pupils. Most parents, having had a taste of teaching and learning at home, are now in awe of teachers' abilities and organisational skills - coupled with a huge relief that children are now back in school!

Keyworkers cover many occupations. We are indebted to them all, from public health workers, bus drivers to social workers, from care home staff, energy services to the police.

In Potterton, residents have been grateful for the way Potterton Shop staff have supported their community, including accessing packages of flour during that first Lockdown when we were all filling the hours by baking banana bread! Marion and Jim Bruce and their daughter Jennifer, who run the shop, also saw to it that deliveries were made to those who were shielding.



Likewise, Balmedie residents have praised super-trouper Mario (pictured) in the Premier Shop who has been ensuring that essential provisions reach everyone whether they can shop personally or if they need deliveries. Thank you too to the Balmedie Co-op team who have provided a safe, friendly environment for shopping.

The Beachside Coffee Shop also had to close its doors, but the staff have worked hard to provide alternative ways of enjoying coffee, snacks and chat by improving their outdoor area with additional seating and shelters. The Cock and Bull have also worked hard to get round restrictions with providing a take-away service.

The staff at Balmedie Pharmacy (pictured) have been a vital lifeline for anyone needing medication, providing a delivery service, and making sure vulnerable shielding customers get what they need, safely. Library services have also stepped up to provide a delivery service allowing us to escape and lose ourselves in books.

Thanks must also go to our reverends in the parish, Paul McKeown and Andy Cowie for the support given to their congregations and the wider community, finding alternative ways to make sure that everyone feels included and able to worship. This has been important for so many.



How many of us are now so much more reliant on our wonderful posties and regular deliveries from couriers? We have needed online shopping but remember now that we are getting back to normal, our local businesses will need us too.

Lockdown seemed endless yet we managed to while away our time. Some of us were more productive than others. Some read copious books and some even started to write their own. Some took up knitting and sewing. Everyone was on the lookout for face mask patterns. One Balmedie resident ended up making hundreds of masks (which Mario sold in his shop resulting in £1,500 being raised for Sand Bothy funds - thank you Kathleen McIntyre.

Added to an increase in walkers, our parish has benefitted from an upsurge of litter-pickers who are certainly addressing the litter problem in our villages. Litter picking equipment is housed in a box at the Sand Bothy and anyone can borrow this. A special well done goes to young Ross Melvin from Balmedie, who has been going out litter-picking daily and has filled probably hundreds of bags of rubbish, which he arranges for the council to collect. He is certainly showing his community spirit by example. So much so, that other young folk have asked to join him.

In the early days of Lockdown, toddlers were regularly disappearing completely under the high grass that had taken over playparks. It was a particularly strange time, seeing everything revert to nature, without human interference. Thanks to the council getting back into gear, Better Balmedie and other gardening groups across the parish fighting back to regain planters and communal growing areas, this is now but a memory. It is however a reminder that we rely on community volunteers to keep our villages beautiful.

We thank all those who volunteer within our parish – individually or in groups. It may seem that everything shut down this past year, but nevertheless work continued behind the scenes, in preparation for future activities. We are delighted to see the Sand Bothy up and running again – thanks to Rosie Nicol and her band of volunteers. They are all stars. Joni Corbett is ensuring the Sensory Garden is at its best – it's no mean feat to get it looking as it is. A mention must go too, to volunteers Fiona Winstanley and her team who have opened up Balmedie Beach to wheelchair users. The reward for all their hard work must surely be the delight on the face of someone who, for the first time, is able to dangle their feet in the sea.

Shall we all show such delight, when Covid becomes a memory, I wonder? At least we have honed our problem-solving skills as Covid has been all about finding a way around a problem. We should all be proud of how we have coped. Let's hope the world we re-enter shows the same support, generosity, respect and kindness that has seen us through hard times.

**Editor**

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**Balmedie Community Sensory Gardens,  
Mainly Music Belhelvie and  
Middlefield Wasps SC.**

To become a Co-op member, ask for a membership card at the Balmedie Co-op store, where staff will be happy to help you. The cost of a membership card is £1.

**Local Community Fund Applications  
open on 4th May 2021**

The Co-op Local Community Fund supports projects across the UK that Co-op members care about. From 4th May, your group could apply for funding if they are looking to deliver a project that: enables people to access food and co-operate together to feed everyone. Or maybe your group helps improve people's mental wellbeing. Also groups that can offer young people opportunities to develop new skills and make a difference in their community can also apply. To apply or ask for further information, contact

**Debbie Jobson email:** [debbie.jobson@coop.co.uk](mailto:debbie.jobson@coop.co.uk)



During the **Aberdeenshire Wellbeing Festival** on 10-16<sup>th</sup> May, one of the Co-op Local Community Fund causes **Middlefield Wasps SC** promoted their football club via a zoom meeting with the Co-op Member Pioneer for Balmedie, Debbie Jobson. There will be a video to promote the Middlefield Wasps SC available on the Aberdeenshire Wellbeing Festival website.

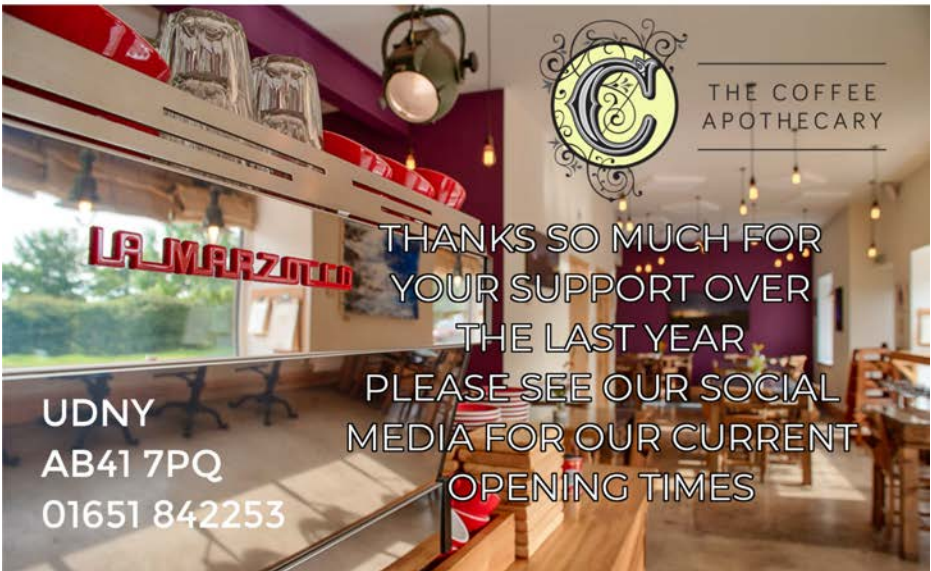
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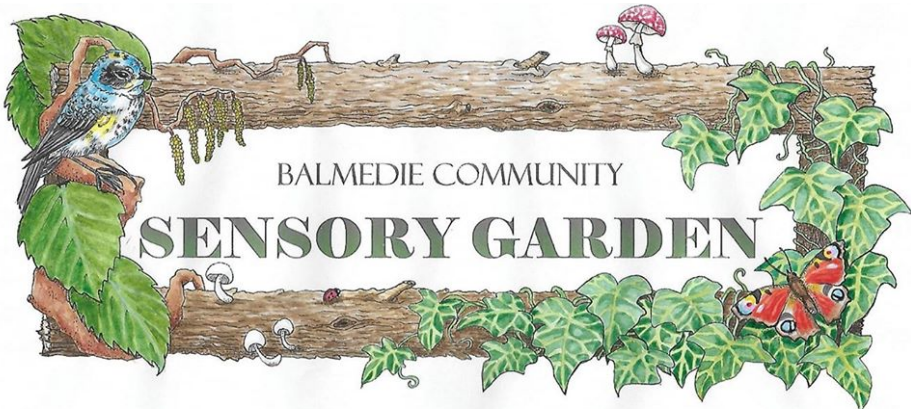


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Balmedie Community Sensory Garden is being developed by Belhelvie Community Trust. It is situated in the Magnificent 7s Community Woodland near Balmedie Library.

Our volunteers have been back in the Sensory Garden for the past few weeks, tending to the weeds, clearing the paths, and sowing seeds into the flower beds. Summer is nearly here, and the Sensory Garden will soon be bursting with colour.

Last year the community came together to place pebbles in the Sensory Garden, painted with messages of support and colourful designs to cheer us up.

We have started on a new project to build a cairn with most of the pebbles we collected to make a place to remember 2020, when we all came together whilst having to stay apart. Hopefully, work will begin soon to have the cairn in place for this summer.

While we loved all these beautiful gifts we would ask if you could please hold off placing any more pebbles into the garden to allow us to continue working on our other projects and installations. And please, if you wish to add any plants or remembrance items, contact us beforehand.

We have been eagerly waiting for our delivery of wheelchair-friendly picnic tables and the installation of a Willow dome and Willow tunnel, these will provide wonderful spaces for children's groups and families to enjoy an afternoon out.

We welcome new people to come join us on a **Tuesday morning at 10 to 11.30am** and lend a hand volunteering for your community. You do not need any gardening experience. Please feel free to turn up on the day or contact us on Facebook [@balmediesensorygarden](https://www.facebook.com/balmediesensorygarden).

**Joni Corbett**

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Lockdown has clearly limited progress in Potterton, but tubs were maintained last year with donated plants. We have had some limited funding and we have two large newly varnished half barrels ready to replace the damaged ones by the bus stop.

This job can progress when the daffodils and other spring flowers are over. I am pleased to have been informed that the council have decided to provide bedding plants for Potterton and other local villages this year.

Additionally, I can add that there is a possibility that we may also have some new paths in the village in the future. This will enable Potterton residents to walk around the area adjacent to the children's park, access the seats and enjoy the garden. Hopefully in the near future, Potterton Greenfingers will be able to work together again on planting and new village projects.

**Hilary Foxen**

## **BELHELVE BOWLING CLUB**



It's 2021! No bowling in 2020 but hopefully we are looking forward to some this summer. We look forward to seeing old and new members. If you have been looking for a new hobby, why not come along and join us. We can supply bowls initially to try. All you need is flat sole shoes. Get in touch to arrange a coaching session.

If you would like to know more, contact Marion Donald (Secretary) on 07729 817718 or email [marion.donald@btinternet.com](mailto:marion.donald@btinternet.com). You can also get information on the website: [www.belhelviebowlingclub.com](http://www.belhelviebowlingclub.com)

**Marion Donald**



## **BREAKING NEWS**

Exciting plans are afoot for the White Horse Inn in Balmedie. Mario and his team are working their socks off to bring it back to life, so hopefully it will be opening very soon.

***Watch this space!***

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## WORKING WITH ENERGIES TO KEEP US HAPPY AND HEALTHY

Shiatsu originated in Japan around 530BC and follows the Chinese Medicine dogma that illness occurs when the person is out of sync with nature and the way they were intended to be. Shiatsu can be described as needle-less acupuncture that involves pressing certain points on meridians. Meridians are energy lines on the body and correspond to organs e.g. Heart, Lung, Large Intestine and so on. Pressing these points influences the flow of energy in a particular meridian. It is well known how important touch is for health and well-being and how this has been missed in the past year.

**Although you can have a shiatsu treatment from a practitioner, there are specific points you can use on a day-to-day basis or when you have pain.**



Did you know there is a point on your hand that if massaged can help with headache, migraine, toothache, jaw or facial pain, a sore neck or even arm and hand discomfort? It is certainly worth trying before painkillers which have the inevitable side-effects.

***It is known as the He Gu/Ho Ku point and is on the Large Intestine meridian and you can see it here.***

***Find*** it by using your thumb and finger of your opposite hand and grip at the furthest point between the web of the thumb and first finger.

***Hold*** it for about 10 seconds. If you have a headache, it will be very tender. ***Breathe*** into it, give it all your attention. ***Relax*** as you press or massage the point. Repeat three times and after a short break. As you see, you can do it to yourself or ask a friend.

This point has a multitude of uses and can be used to stimulate labour **so if you are pregnant, please do NOT use it.**

Another point on the leg helps you walk or run that extra mile! It is a great point for tiredness but also can help with nausea! You find it by placing four fingers below your kneecap and moving one finger width out the way. It will feel tender. Press or massage as you breathe into it.

There are many other points for helping with sleep problems, sore legs, anxiety and more.

*Remember our health, happiness and our very existence is based on energy.*

**Maggie Brooks-Carter**  
DO, RN, SMTO Osteopath and EFT Practitioner

## Over 65? Need some help with your shopping?

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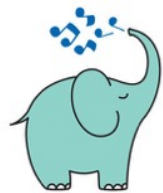


What a relief it is to see our parish getting back into normal activities again after the last year of uncertainty and restrictions. The Sand Bothy reopened its doors last month and now we are all looking forward to a summer of coffees, snacks and ice creams galore while visiting our wonderful Balmedie Beach. Many thanks to the hard-working band of volunteers who provide this service. Pictured here are Rosemary Nixon, Joni Corbett, Fiona Winstanley and Rosie Nicol on duty for the first day of opening, when the sun came out, the playpark buzzed, the walkers and picnickers – and they were rushed off their feet!

If you would like to volunteer to help out at the Sand Bothy kiosk, they would love to hear from you. Full training will be available including 'barista' skills. What an opportunity to put *that* on your CV!

## MAINLY MUSIC

This is a parent and toddler music and movement class that runs on **Tuesdays from 1.15 to 3.00pm**. We start with a song time together using fun resources, then serve snacks for the kids and at the end of the session the parents get to sit and have a coffee and a chat while team members look after the wee ones for 20 minutes



or so. Recognising the challenges of raising young kids, our team of volunteers take pride in looking after the adults as well the children and making sure that everyone has a good time. At the time of writing, we are working with Covid restrictions which limit the number to 10, so we may have to run two separate sessions. We also can't provide teas or coffees for the moment so please bring your own snacks. Things may change, so if you need to know up-to-date information, please contact me at [jeanettelamb@btinternet.com](mailto:jeanettelamb@btinternet.com)

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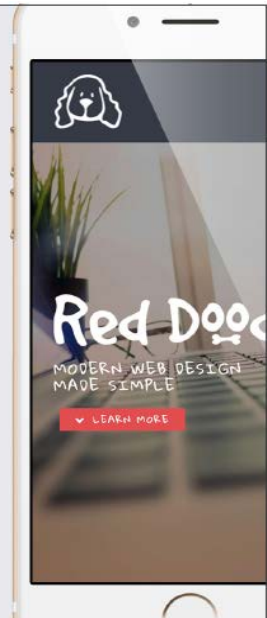
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## PASTURES NEW



Many of our readers will know Balmedie resident Margaret Murison for her many years of involvement with community groups and the massive organisation she undertakes annually to raise money for the charity Stella's Voice. She is now about to set off on another adventure, leaving Belhelvie Parish far behind and starting a new life in Cheltenham.

Over the years, Margaret has been the first port of call if anyone needed information about the local area, its characters, places or history. So we have turned the tables to dip into her own history and involvement in our area.

Initially living at Keir Farm, Balmedie and then Hillhead of Ardo, Whitecairns, Margaret and her husband Alex first moved to her present home in one of the Holdings by the Country Park in 1960. This was where her grandfather had previously lived. She has many memories of Balmedie as it has developed over the years. She remembers the village having more shops when she first lived here – a grocer, a shoemaker, a tailor and a haberdasher. There was also a blacksmith, a joiner, a post office and of course the police station. The village was just a handful of houses clustered along what is now Old Road. Much has changed in the time Margaret has lived here, including the creation of housing estates, the school, the White Horse and the changes to the road layouts including the new bypass.

Margaret's home is one of the Holdings you see sprinkled around the Balmedie area. In 1933, part of the Balmedie Estate was acquired by the Board of Agriculture to create 36 small holdings and crofts to promote land resettlement. She has a wonderful view of the dunes and fields where deer roam freely and that is certainly one thing she will miss when she moves. She will also miss the many friends and neighbours, and the community groups she has been involved with. Her passion has been gardening, growing her own supply of produce and an array of flowering plants in her large garden.

Ever the optimist, Margaret is really looking forward to a new life in Cheltenham, where she will be nearer her daughter. She will be on the look-out for new clubs to join, new people to meet and exploring more of the Cotswolds. Thank you, Margaret, for all you've done for our community, you will certainly be missed – but we admire your spirit and wish you well with your future plans. Do send us a postcard!

**Editor**



## BELHELVIE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Some of you may know the song that Dory the fish sings to herself in 'Finding Nemo' as she descends into the inky blackness of a deep sea-trench. *"Just keep swimming, just keep swimming, just keep swimming, swimming, swimming..."* It's been a tough year for everyone and keeping swimming, keeping things going as best we can, has asked a lot of many folk within our community.

In the church we went online the first weekend of last March's lockdown and have remained online since, even during the spells when we've been able to meet in person. Services are available on the Belhelvie Church webpage and YouTube channel. Links are uploaded each Sunday to YouTube and Facebook. You can access them from mid-afternoon on Sunday. We're also on Spotify and iTunes if you'd prefer to download a podcast. We are now meeting in person again on Sundays at 11am. Spaces are limited and booking needs to be done through Allan Ritchie our Session Clerk on 01224 704386. For now, in-person children's work has not restarted.

Beyond Sundays, pastoral visiting has been impossible for most of the year but we're trying to keep in touch with folk and be available to them through Zoom and regular phone calls. If anyone out there just needs someone to talk to at any point please do phone me any time – you don't have to belong to our church to be in touch.

In the early stages of the pandemic, we worked with other community groups to develop a local response, promoting neighbourliness, recruiting volunteers and pairing them up with folk who were in need. One of our big sadnesses over the last year has been the inability to visit folk when they're poorly, in hospital, or bereaved. Many folk have had to take farewell of loved ones with only a handful of close family and friends in attendance. More happily, I conducted my smallest ever wedding earlier in the year with just five folk present. Despite the limitations, the couple still felt that they had a wonderful day! A socially distanced baptism is also in the offing so if anyone has a long-range water pistol, please let me know!

At the time of writing, a small group of volunteers are working hard to jump through all the hoops that will allow us to re-open our halls. Hats off and a big thanks to all the volunteers who are wrestling with the slippery and ever changing Covid regulations.

If you haven't been up our way for a while, you'll see a big change. After years of planning and fundraising, our new Annexe is almost finished, and we're delighted with the result. We have a great new Hall to complement the Forsyth Hall, a well-appointed catering kitchen and several smaller multi-purpose rooms across two floors which will all be made available for hire. We really want to see these spaces used by the community, so if you're wanting to come and have a look, ask about rates or check availability please be in touch with me (Paul) and I'll direct you to the right people. We are tentatively planning to start taking bookings from late May.



On Sundays we've been reading through John's gospel in church, and early on in his story John says, *'the light shines in the darkness and the darkness has never overcome it.'* It's been a dark old year for many of us, but against that background we've seen a lot of light in the ways people have reached out to one another and helped and encouraged them through this time. Let's hope that continues as our new, post-pandemic 'normal' starts to take shape. God bless.

You can contact me on 01358 742227 [pmckeown1@btconnect.com](mailto:pmckeown1@btconnect.com)

**Rev Paul McKeown**

## COFFEE HAVEN



I don't think that any of us could have guessed when we last met on Tuesday, 3rd March 2020, that it would be the last time we would get together for a cuppa for well over a year. And what a slow year it has been. Anyway the good news is that restrictions are gradually being lifted and hopefully we will get back together this year, although at the time of writing it is too soon to say when.

Like many of the volunteers at our monthly drop-in cafe, which runs the first Tuesday of the month from 10 - 12noon, I've been practicing my baking skills, so I'm raring to go as soon as permitted. If your waistline allows, then please come and join us for a chat, a cuppa and something tasty to eat when we open again!

Look out for further information on the church webpage:

[www.belhelviechurch.com](http://www.belhelviechurch.com) or on Belhelvie Church Facebook page.

**Fiona Miller**

Pastoral Care Team

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## BLACKDOG DOGS RUN FREE

Blackdog dogs must be so excited about their new facility in the village with the opening of new secure dog fields there. This has been organised by Run Free, a company that was established in 2017 to provide safe and secure dog walking fields where you can take your dog to run free off the lead. These fields are all over the country, providing a safe place for dog exercise.

The Blackdog site is easy to find – just off the A90 and A92 Blackdog junction – with good parking and unloading bays directly into the fields. The chain link fences are 6 feet high and are dug into the ground to ensure dogs cannot escape over, under or through. It is ideal for dogs with poor recall, reactive dogs or just a place to play with your dog in the safe knowledge that they can't escape. There is a wooden shelter, water, poo bags and bins in both the fields. There is agility equipment provided too. When you book you will have exclusive use of the field. For more information, to check availability and to book, visit [runfreedogfields.co.uk](http://runfreedogfields.co.uk)



## BALMEDIE CRAFT CLUB

Craft club has been closed now for over a year - but now that the restrictions are lifting, we aim to restart craft club on Wednesday 2nd June at 6.30pm in the Wee Kirk Hall - all Primary School age children welcome. £1.50 per week covers any crafts or baking.

During our first term we will create imaginative crafts along with clay modelling and baking - LOTS of chocolate involved!

Due to Covid restrictions, spaces will be limited. To book a space contact Diane on 07850 235215 or message the Craft Club Facebook page.



**Diane Cassie**



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The cost of this service per POA is £325. This cost includes all submission and registration fees payable to the Office of the Public Guardian Scotland on your behalf.

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Fish can also be ordered using our Click and Collect Trawl and Haul service at [www.peterheadfish.co.uk](http://www.peterheadfish.co.uk) Any questions, please call **07854 891360**.

## SCOUTING IN THE PARISH

**Scouts**  
1st Balmedie



Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorer Scouts have adapted well over the lock-down year. Meetings via Zoom became the norm with all sections running their programmes this way.

It hasn't been easy for everyone as youngsters just want to get back to outdoor activities normally offered. The good news is that we've started meeting in groups outdoors in line with policies and with many mitigations to avoid spreading the virus.

All our plans for Family Camp had to be put on hold but we did manage to join with Northumberland Scouts for a Camp at Home.

Early in August our Leaders ran a Virtual Camp which had family engagement core with many wonderful activities, many back-garden based and a Geo-Caching challenge with new caches being placed around the parish. There were knot challenges, build a tall structure from the contents of your recycle bin, a puzzle to work out who kidnapped Mr T and his biscuits, build a kite, build a tin can lantern and cook a backwoods meal. On Saturday evening we were joined on-line by Joe Doherty, the first Scout to ski to the South Pole and Kite-Skied back. He gave an enthralling talk which captivated everyone. On Sunday morning we went online with the team from Aberdeen Air-Ambulance and were able to find out a lot about this new service based at Dyce. Everyone, including our guests, received a special woven badge which held a secret message.



Recently the District Commissioner joined our 25 Leaders on-line to present awards. Our congratulations go to **Eleanor Jenkins** who was presented with the prestigious Queen's Scout Award after completing all the challenges required. Eleanor will have the opportunity to attend Holyrood Palace or Windsor for an awards day when conditions allow.

**Elaine Neil** was presented with her Wood Beads after completing all her training as Beaver Leader. **Ian and Laura Nebbiolo** and **Malcolm Farr** received 10-year service awards and **Keith Donaldson, Giuseppe Tizzano** and **Eleanor Jenkins** 5-year awards.

Balmedie Scout Group is for Girls and Boys and caters for ages 6 through to 25. Beavers (age 6-8), Cubs for ages 8-10.5, Scouts 10.5-14 and Explorer Scouts 14-18. Please note for Beavers there is a long waiting list. Add name from 5<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

With our Centenary of Scouting in the Parish fast approaching your help is sought please. Finding a piece of land within the Parish to develop for Scouting and wider community use is high on our to-do list. Plenty open space and proximity to woodland is on our wish list but any land would be considered anywhere in the Parish of Belhelvie. Anyone in a position to offer us suitable land under any terms and wishes to discuss further should get in touch soonest please. We all strive to do our best with the Youth of the Parish and with your help we could enhance this ten-fold.

If you would like to find out more about volunteering with Scouting in the Parish, you are kindly invited to drop me an email at [balmedie@gordondistrictscouts.org.uk](mailto:balmedie@gordondistrictscouts.org.uk) or have a chat with one of our Leaders.

For all Scouting enquiries please call 07743 844040 or email as above.

**Ian Thomson**  
**Group Scout Leader**

## **Girlguiding Ythan**

Girlguiding Ythan covers all the areas the Banter reaches, as well as Newburgh and in between. You may not have seen us much during lockdown but many of our units continued to meet online and in person when allowed. Now that the weather is improving and leaders are becoming available again, more units are looking to start meeting again outside and we would very much like to welcome new members and volunteers.

While we follow a national programme (including badges), our activities are girl led with the members deciding what challenges and games to do. Rainbows is for girls aged 5 to 7, Brownies for 7 to 10 year olds, Guides for 10 to 14 year olds, and Rangers for 14 to 18 year olds. To register a member, please visit:

<https://go.girlguiding.org.uk/join-us/join-as-member/>

Volunteering with Girlguiding is open to anyone over 18 years old and available roles are varied ranging from Leaders to occasional helpers to accountants. I have found Girlguiding invaluable during lockdown. It has provided me with purpose and regular outside contact; you're never alone when you're a Guide no matter where you are in the world.

Find your place in our team of inspirational women, sharing their skills and passions with girls in a local unit - all while benefiting from the adventure and opportunities guiding has to offer.

To find out more, get in touch with me by phone on 01224 703335 or email [dcythan@gmail.com](mailto:dcythan@gmail.com) or visit: <https://go.girlguiding.org.uk/join-us/join-as-volunteer/>

**Susan Osbeck**

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## BALMEDIÉ BROWNIES

(2<sup>nd</sup> Belhelvie)



Wow, what a year! We've had to put our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations on hold but have continued to meet via the wonder of Zoom. The Brownies have been fantastic at embracing this change and new way of meeting - through it we've discovered new activities (such as virtual 'escape rooms') and risen to the challenge of adapting Skills Builders and Unit Meeting Activities to complete them remotely; even 'camp fires'! We've made kites, fajitas, 'edible architecture', painted ceramic owls, and created campaign posters about littering, to name just a few.

We've had some fantastic guests join us, such as Laura Sharpe Theatre with her Puppet Workshop, and Blooming Good Flowers (making Christmas wreaths). We even 'visited' the Royal Observatory for a night in space! Girlguiding Gordon planned brilliant virtual camps/events which we could take part in from our own homes and gardens: we were invited to the Flamingo Safari (May), the Llama Llympics (August) and the Christmas Selection Box in December.

Our Brownies have still achieved a range of badges, including their Gold Awards, and girls have joined us from Rainbows, and left us to move up to Guides. We've also welcomed girls new to Girlguiding altogether over the past year!

We did have a great few weeks late last year when we could meet face-to-face – following strict Risk Assessment under guidelines laid down by Girlguiding Scotland – at Haddo House for activities and adventures both indoors and outside (a walk 'Acting Our Age' for Children in Need in November – 40 minutes around the grounds in the dark, spotting a few night time critters!). Since Christmas, we've been meeting virtually once more but celebrated Burns Night and Lunar New Year with some fun activities, made a 'room in a box', and we were joined by Zoolab and their collection of animals (very popular with the girls!), 'Mountain Girl' Anna Humphries with outdoor survival tips and navigation challenges, and 'Jumping Clay' (we made wee air-dried clay Brownies!) over the past few weeks. We currently have our fingers crossed we'll be able to get back to face-to-face meetings soon!

We have space in our unit at the moment for new members! Brownies is for girls aged between 7-10 years old so if you're interested in Brownies/Girlguiding, please register (to find out about being an adult volunteer or for your daughter to join) via the Girlguiding Scotland website [www.girlguidingscotland.org.uk](http://www.girlguidingscotland.org.uk) and click on 'Get Involved'. Contact Brown Owl (Marianne McIntosh) if you have any questions, on 01358 724231.

You can also support us through 'Easy Fundraising' (Girlguiding Scotland – 2<sup>nd</sup> Belhelvie Brownie Unit) when you make purchases online and even on Amazon through 'Amazon Smile' - you can find us at [smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/SC035058](http://smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/SC035058)

**Tracy Leach (Sapphire Owl)**



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## 1st BELHELVE RANGERS

Nothing can stop Girlguiding: a worldwide war wasn't able to do it, so a global pandemic is unlikely to put a dent in our stride. The Rangers have been meeting online for the past year and we've been doing some great things. We've had a live Peer Educator session where we joined with the Guides to get some resilience training, and tried some chair yoga, meditation techniques, and also hand massage.

The Rangers not only earned their Communications Level 6 Skills Builder (learning about body language and trying out their presentation skills) but have also gained their Self Care interest badge. It's not all badge work, we also had a few giggles playing knife-fork-spoon (my favourite), I-spy, boggle, and even snap online. We still had end of term parties including chocolate, snacks, and puppets! And we even managed a night hike before Christmas when we could meet outdoors.

This term we're hoping to manage a few more meetings outdoors including joining Cancer Research's Race for Life and an end of term (distanced) festival. We are still open to new members and would welcome any young women (14 to 18 years old) who want to give it a go. If you are interested, either give me a call on 01224 703335, or email [1stbelhelvierangers@gmail.com](mailto:1stbelhelvierangers@gmail.com) or register online:

<https://go.girlguiding.org.uk/join-us/join-as-member/>

Volunteers are also most welcome just now. It's a great way to give back to the community, meet new friends, and help girls achieve their dreams.

<https://go.girlguiding.org.uk/join-us/join-as-volunteer/>

**Susan Osbeck**



### BABY & TODDLER GROUP

Our group is planning to re-open in June, all going well. We run for 1 hour 30 minutes one morning a week (day to be confirmed). £2 per week includes drinks and snack (snacks will be pre-packed and in individual bags prior to class).

We provide a wide variety of toys suitable for babies and toddlers including lots of sensory toys.

If we receive enough interest we would like to consider re-starting back our messy play sessions during the same hours - one week toys and one week messy play. Please follow our Facebook page for updated information about dates etc. or contact me on 07850 235215 if you need to know more.

**Diane Cassie**



  
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## A FARMING LIFE WELL LIVED

*Pat Leslie, at almost 99 years old, was our oldest resident in Belhelvie Parish. He was also the longest resident in the parish. He recently died at Blairton Farm, Balmedie, where he had lived for 94 years and was a much-respected member of our community. It seems fitting to celebrate his long life with some recollections of a “perfect gentleman”, shared by his family.*

Pat Barrie Leslie was born in 1922 on a farm near Inverurie but moved with his family to Blairton when he was five years old. Blairton Farm was to be Pat’s home until his death in February 2021.

Pat endured tragedy a number of times in his lifetime. The first was when at 16 years of age his father died suddenly, and Pat had to leave his study at Aberdeen Grammar School to work on the farm. However, Pat loved farming, although he did not relish “pulling neeps on a frosty morning”.

In 1952 Pat married Alice Mary, a farmer’s daughter from the Udney area. They had daughter Sheila in 1954 followed by son Kenneth two years later then David in 1964. Tragically, Kenneth died at 6 years old.

Pat was a very kind, friendly man and loved to be in the company of family and friends. He liked to drive around the countryside, as it gave him the chance to check out how other farmers’ crops were doing in comparison to his own! He was a font of local knowledge when it came to farms. Once supported on the farm by his son David, Pat was able to get time to enjoy bowling. He was a great music-lover too, particularly Scottish or Strauss.

Pat’s granddaughter Carolyn and her partner live at Blairton. After their third son was born, Great Granda Pat commented “Well that’s three farms we’ll need then!”

Alice Mary died in 1990 and tragedy struck once more when Pat’s son David was killed on his 49<sup>th</sup> birthday, in an industrial accident. Losing two sons was hard to bear.



Pat died peacefully at his beloved Blairton Farm. He was a perfect gentleman, highly respected in the community by all who knew him and is greatly missed by his family and friends.

*Pat with his parents and sisters, taken in 1938.*

# BELHELVIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL (BCC)

## THANK YOU!

We wanted to start this article by saying thank you to everyone in our area who has stepped up in the last year to help support our communities. Thank you for everything you have done and are still doing.

## VACCINATION APPOINTMENT TAXIS

We were successful in applying for funds to help support our communities during the pandemic. So if you or one of your friends or neighbours are unable to make your own way to your vaccination appointment, we can co-ordinate and pay for taxis to help you attend. Please note, this is restricted to people living within the settlements of Belhelvie Parish (Balmedie, Belhelvie, Potterton, Whitecairns, Blackdog). We will need your name, pickup address, destination address and appointment time. You can contact us to arrange transport through:

BCC Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/BelhelvieCommunityCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/BelhelvieCommunityCouncil)

Email: [belhelviecommunitycouncil@hotmail.com](mailto:belhelviecommunitycouncil@hotmail.com)

Phone (for BCC vaccination transport help): 07733 322244

## COVID ADVICE & SUPPORT

We have put together information on our website with links to local community support groups, foodbanks (Aberdeenshire North Foodbank in Ellon - 07562 914986, Instant Neighbour in Aberdeen - 01224 489955), Government protection levels and restrictions, and the Grampian Coronavirus Assistance Hub (0808 196 3384) who can answer questions about benefits, financial support, schools, testing and wellbeing. We update our help page regularly, and if you have any suggestions please get in touch.

Coronavirus help and advice page on the BCC website:

[www.belhelviecc.org.uk/coronavirus.html](http://www.belhelviecc.org.uk/coronavirus.html)

Check the latest covid protection level and restrictions (by postcode):

[www.gov.scot/check-local-covid-level/](http://www.gov.scot/check-local-covid-level/)

## TAKING OUR WORK ONLINE

In the past year we have continued the work of the Community Council, grappling with online meetings, working through piles of emails and repeatedly finding ourselves talking with our microphones muted (just like the rest of the world). All our meetings have been online since April 2020, and you can join by requesting a link or the conference call phone number.

We have been working on issues such as local bus timetables, illegal cutting and trimming of trees (and the dumping of cuttings), school capacity concerns, waste burning outside Potterton, vandalism in and around Balmedie, and reports of fly tipping throughout our area. We are also working with the local Police on speeding issues in several areas and we were able to report in February that mobile safety cameras were being deployed on the B977 Old Aberdeen Road, Balmedie.

We are continuing to work with Aberdeenshire Council, Police Scotland, and local suppliers of services such as Stagecoach on behalf of the community. If there are issues you want to raise, please get in touch.

### **LOOKING FOR NEW MEMBERS**

We are looking for new Community Councillors to represent the communities of Balmedie, Belhelvie, Potterton, Blackdog and Whitecairns. You can become a Community Councillor if you are 16 or over and resident in our area, and on the electoral register, or have principal residence in our area for at least 3 months before you put yourself forward to formally join the Community Council. Aberdeenshire Council has more information about Community Councils on their website:

[www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/communities-and-events/community-councils/](http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/communities-and-events/community-councils/)

We work closely with community groups in our area, the Police, our Aberdeenshire Councillors, Aberdeenshire Council's Formartine Area Office and local suppliers of services such as Stagecoach. There are a lot of opportunities to get involved and work on issues that matter to our communities such as road speed signs, reinstating and clearing paths in the villages, helping with funding applications for local projects, improving local transport and local planning.

### **WHAT HAPPENS AT OUR MEETINGS?**

We meet every month to review local planning applications, check our accounts with our Treasurer, hear from our local Police, receive reports from members who have attended meetings with other groups and Aberdeenshire Council, and see presentations from developers. The standing agenda is available on our website and each month's agenda is available about a week before the meeting online and on our noticeboards.

**Everyone is welcome at our monthly meetings.** We aim to have meetings that are friendly and professional. They are held **every third Monday, 7pm** online. For meeting dates, what's going to be discussed and what we talked about last time see our website: [www.belhelviecc.org.uk/meetings.html](http://www.belhelviecc.org.uk/meetings.html)

An archive of meeting minutes is available on our website, and the latest minutes are posted on our noticeboards each month. Want to know about an issue? You can now search our minutes on our website: [www.belhelviecc.org.uk/meetingminutes.html](http://www.belhelviecc.org.uk/meetingminutes.html)

### **STAYING IN TOUCH**

Email: [belhelviecommunitycouncil@hotmail.com](mailto:belhelviecommunitycouncil@hotmail.com)

Phone (for general BCC enquiries): 07767 237644

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/BelhelvieCommunityCouncil](http://www.facebook.com/BelhelvieCommunityCouncil)

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

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## **BELHELVIE COMMUNITY TRUST (BCT)**

**Serving our five villages & rural areas in the Parish**

What a strange time it's been. The pandemic has affected us all, as individuals at home and at work, businesses, charities, community groups, school pupils and students, retired people, whatever our age.

Belhelvie Community Trust is a charity and as such, despite the virus, we have had to keep going and comply with charity rules and regulations which didn't go away because of the virus. In fact, coronavirus presented us with a whole range of additional guidelines to research, consider and put into action. (Guidelines for community groups haven't always been easy to find). So, although our projects may not have been as visible as usual, we have been working away to ensure that we will be able to carry on when it is safe to do so.

The Sand Bothy and Balmedie Beach Wheelchairs did not open in spring 2020. We took the decision that our volunteers are always our main concern, along with visitors to the Country Park. We therefore decided that we would stay shut until guidelines allowed us to open. However, The Sand Bothy was in use some of the time. Love Rara Kidz Ltd booked the building to use as a base for their outdoor camps and workshops in the summer, autumn and spring holidays. We were able to do this as Love Rara Kidz Ltd took full responsibility for all Covid regulations related to the building and the children who took part. This arrangement worked well for us all as Love Rara had a base so that they could carry on working when rules permitted, and we had an income to help keep us going. A great example of a local business and a local charity working together!

We managed to get some funds from the Scottish Government Recovery Fund and local funds, so have been able to carry out much needed repairs to the decking and steps on the east side of the building. The funds also allowed us to employ Joni Corbett for a few hours each week to look into all aspects of re-opening the kiosk within current regulations. Joni has done a great job, and at the time of writing we plan to open the kiosk on Saturday and Sunday afternoons from 24<sup>th</sup> April, observing all COVID guidelines. We had no fund-raising events of course, so many thanks go to our many friends and supporters who have made masks to sell, donated cash via crowd-funding and sale of goods. This has given us a sufficient fund to stock up the kiosk and ensure that we will be able to pay for fuel, insurance etc. to keep the building going.

At the time of writing, we cannot have people in the main visitor centre part of the building, but we hope that as time goes on we will be able to open up, if not for big events any more, but perhaps for small classes. Let's wait and see. Keep an eye on our website or our Facebook page for future developments.

Our other projects were also put on hold during 2020, but we are pleased to report that our inclusive roundabout is now in place in the Sand Bothy playpark and is well used. Thanks go to our funders, People's Postcode Lottery, Aberdeen and District Cerebral Palsy Association and Balmedie Cubs. Work to refurbish the disabled toilet into a facility where disabled people can be changed safely and hygienically was also delayed, but we are pleased to report that at the time of writing, work will be finished in a week's time!

Balmedie Sensory Garden is part of a public footpath so has been open all the time. It played an important part in the first lockdown, as a focal point for families painting pebbles and walking to the garden to place their pictures and messages of positivity.

So although things have been shut down, the work of BCT has been going on and progress has been made. There are many people to thank for helping to keep things going. So I will say it now – thank-you!

**Rosie Nicol**  
**Secretary BCT**

## **IF YOU DON'T ASK...**

For the last 28 years, in my association with Beavers, Cubs, Scouts & Explorers, I have seen many changes in the movement locally. However, one change that is particularly pleasing is the growth in the sections. We are now almost at one hundred members with more than twenty adult supporters. Whilst this is a most pleasing situation, the current council lets in Balmedie and Potterton are getting too small for our needs and we now need to think outside the box.

**The first step has to be to secure a piece of land through donation, sale or by long lease (typically 99 years). Either of these options would have to be affordable, as we have no funds in place for this.**

What would be our IDEAL site for Scouting use? If I had a wish list I would say 8-12 acres, partially wooded, reasonable accessibility within the Parish and services not too distant. This would need support from council planners. There would be plenty room onsite for pitching tents, tracking, woodcraft and backwoods activities. Site aside, it will take a number of years to raise the necessary funding to realise this dream. However, being realistic, our dream may have to be tailored a little, so we'd love to hear from you if you have any leads at all.

Should all this materialise, we will not only have a home for Scouting but a resource available to other community groups. If you think you may be able to help us on this ambitious journey, please get in touch. You can contact me at [balmedie@gordondistrictscouts.org.uk](mailto:balmedie@gordondistrictscouts.org.uk) or 07743 844040

**Ian Thomson**





## Oh, it's so good to be back on the beach!

Like everyone else we have had a very peculiar and quiet year and are very pleased to be back out and open again. If you know someone with mobility issues who wants to get on the sand and get their feet wet in the North Sea, then give us a call and we will see what we can arrange for you!

To book a chair or to discuss anything about the project, please phone Fiona Winstanley on 07864 350989 – and have a look at our excellent new website: [www.balmediebeachwheelchairs.co.uk](http://www.balmediebeachwheelchairs.co.uk)



## BALMEDIE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

Christmas seems a long way in the past, but this is the first opportunity we have had to thank the local Chip Shop and Indi & Will shop for displaying a Christmas reindeer in their shop over the past festive period. It's great support for the group. Also a big thank you to Balmedie Congregational Church for supplying the electricity for our Christmas tree and reindeer lights that were displayed around the community garden. Since Christmas we have done a few small fundraisers - our Just Giving page, Asda voucher, Valentine's Hamper and the Easter Guessing Sweets in the Jar... all the funds from these will be used towards the insurance and purchasing some more lights for around the village.

We hope to be able to do some more fundraising this year, and to create more of a display to light up our village.

**Diane Cassie**



## SUPPORTING MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

Brett Townsley from Belhelvie village, is celebrating his recent success in the Oil & Gas UK Awards. As the owner of Omniscent Safety Innovations Ltd, a company that specialises in workplace mental health solutions, Brett (pictured) was delighted to discover that the company had won not only the Business Innovation award but also the Audience Voted award. Brett acknowledges there is a

fundamental change in how we care for the mental health of all those in industry and is proud of the work they do in preventative workplace solutions for mental health. He feels this sets the standard for workplace mental health going forward. The company's goal has always been to remove the stigma of mental health and create preventative, proactive solutions. Congratulations on such inspiring innovation Brett – job well done!



# Beachside Coffee Shop

Eigie Road, Balmedie AB23 8YF Tel 01358 742003

*The days are getting longer and lighter!*

Why not come along and enjoy a delicious bowl of homemade soup with a sandwich or panini. Or just have a soup and a pudding from our menu. In addition to our warming hot drinks we also provide cold refreshments including prosecco, beer and cider. Remember our **Afternoon Teas** are available **Monday to Friday 12noon - 2.30pm**, so why not add a cheeky wee glass of prosecco. *We look forward to seeing you!*



[www.balmedieleisurecentre.com](http://www.balmedieleisurecentre.com)

or our Facebook page Balmedie Leisure Centre



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With the current Covid restrictions easing and life returning to a form of normality, we are aware that people are looking to get back to meeting up with friends, getting back to fitness and exercise and getting their kids back to groups, sports and activities. In Balmedie we have plenty of options for things to do whether you fancy a coffee with friends, activities for your children or you want to find an exercise class for yourself.

The Beachside Coffee shop is the perfect place to catch up with friends you have not seen for months, maybe grab a spot of lunch with the family or even get a cold drink when you are out for a walk. We also have outdoor seating, so if you are out walking the dog and fancy a drink or a bite to eat, then we also have the option for you to sit outside with your dog.



We open again on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> April and we are looking forward to welcoming back both our regular customers as well as all our new customers. Check out our menu at <https://www.facebook.com/BeachsideCoffeeShop>

With all our children's classes beginning again on 26<sup>th</sup> April in the Balmedie Leisure Centre, please check out our Facebook Page for what classes are available and how to get your child involved.

Our Facebook Page is <https://www.facebook.com/balmedieleisurecentre>

Adult fitness classes will hopefully re-start the week commencing 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021 but please be sure to keep an eye on the Facebook page for updates and availability.

The Balmedie Leisure Centre also has 2 x 5 aside 3G football pitches that can be used for a kick about with friends or football training. Please contact the Leisure Centre for costs and availability.



If your son or daughter is interested in joining a football team, we also have Middlefield Wasps SC based in Balmedie. We have various age groups from 5-6 year-old right up to amateur. Contact us through our Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/MiddlefieldWaspsSc>

We are a grassroots Football Club with our home ground at Beach Park in Balmedie, a short walk from the beach, the Country Park and the Coffee Shop. Or maybe you want to give back to the next generation and get involved in coaching the game.

**Bill Murray**  
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**Thursday** 10.00 - 13.00  
**Friday** CLOSED  
**Saturday** 10.00 - 13.00

**Tel: 01358 281070**

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Slots can be booked online for collection of book bundles, reserved books, food waste caddy liners, recyclable battery bags, hearing aid batteries from the NHS and photocopying. These slots can be booked at:

<https://www.livelifeberdeenshire.org.uk/libraries/click-and-collect>

Slots can also be booked by calling the Live Life Aberdeenshire phone line 01467 532929, where staff will record your requirements.

**Doorstep Delivery Service:** for people who are confined to home or have trouble getting out to the library. An application can be made by filling in an online form or calling our Live Life Aberdeenshire Helpline on 01467 532929. Visit the website at <https://www.livelifeberdeenshire.org.uk/libraries/click-and-collect/delivery-service> for more information and to see if the service is available to you.

**25 years' service:** Congratulations and thank you to **Helen Telford** for her **25 years' service** working for Aberdeenshire Libraries. Helen had worked at Balmedie Library since its opening. Helen has recently left the library service and we wish her all the best for the future.



**Bookbug Sessions: Live via Facebook every Tuesday at 10.30am** for parents, babies and toddlers. Join in the fun with Debbie and Bookbug, singing songs and rhymes for 0-5's.

To access these sessions, go to Balmedie Library Facebook pages.

**Virtual Weekly Storytelling Sessions:** for children aged 3-5 years and 6-8 years. Booking is essential for us to email your virtual invite. To access the full virtual storytelling sessions go to: <https://tinyurl.com/ym5b6dji>

**Debbie Barclay**

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[www.parkhillgardencentre.com](http://www.parkhillgardencentre.com)



## **GARDEN WASTE PICK UP POINT AT BALMEDIÉ**

Bring your garden waste in bags to the **Balmedie Library car park** for pick up by a Council truck which will be there every **Saturday from 1pm to 4pm.**

You can empty your bags into the truck and then take your bags home.

This service is available from **10th April to 30th October 2021.**



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dog owner and help keep  
our villages clean...***

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throughout Belhelvie Parish.



***Thank you!***

***We are delighted to see  
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to borrow equipment.

***Thanks everyone!***

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	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
<b>ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL:</b>		
<b>YOUTH ORGANISATIONS:</b>		
<b>Beavers (Balmedie)</b>	} All enquiries to Ian Thomson <a href="mailto:balmedie@gordondistrictscouts.org.uk">balmedie@gordondistrictscouts.org.uk</a>	07743 844040
<b>Cubs (Potterton)</b>		
<b>Scouts, Explorer Scouts</b>		
<b>Rainbows (Balmedie)</b>	Claire via website <a href="http://www.girlguiding.org.uk">www.girlguiding.org.uk</a>	
<b>Rainbows (Potterton)</b>	Pauline Wood	01358 743002
<b>Brownies (Balmedie)</b>	Marianne McIntosh	01358 724231
<b>Brownies (Potterton)</b>	Katherine Hebron Scott	01330 833448
<b>Guides (Balmedie)</b>	Christine Coldwells	07766 050457
<b>Rangers (Potterton)</b>	Susan Osbeck	01224 703335
<b>CHURCHES:</b>		
<b>Belhelvie Church of Scotland</b>	Rev Paul McKeown	01358 742227
<b>Congregational B'medie &amp; P'ton</b>	Rev Andy Cowie	01224 703248
<b>Catholic Church BoD &amp; Ellon</b>	Fr Patrick	01358 724580
<b>MEDICAL CENTRES:</b>		
<b>Scotstown, Bridge of Don</b>	Cairnfold Road AB22 8LD	0345 189 7070
<b>Udny Station</b>	Woodside Terrace AB41 6PJ	0345 189 7070
<b>Danestone, Bridge of Don</b>	Fairview Street AB22 8ZP	01224 822866
<b>Oldmachar, Bridge of Don</b>	Jesmond Drive AB22 8UR	0345 3370510
<b>Oldmachar, King Street</b>	526 King Street AB24 5RS	0345 3370510
<b>Ellon</b>	Schoolhill, Ellon AB41 9JH	0345 3371150
<b>DENTISTS:</b>		
<b>Bridge of Don Practice</b>	2 Balgownie Road AB23 8JP	01224 703010
<b>Grandholm Practice</b>	Grandholm AB22 8BH	01224 701890
<b>Kingseat Practice</b>	Kingseat Business Park AB21 0AZ	01651 260200
<b>Oldmachar Dental Care</b>	Jesmond Drive AB22 8UR	01224 827095

## SCHOOLS:

Balmedie Primary School	HT Douglas Ford	01358 742474
Bridge of Don Academy	HT Daphne McWilliam	01224 707583
Ellon Academy	HT Pauline Buchan	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	Egie 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 Wallace	01358 743595
Belhelvie Community Trust	Rosie Nicol	01358 742557
Balmedie Beach Wheelchairs	Fiona Winstanley	07864 350988
Balmedie Health Walks	Dan Wood	07851 733096
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	Debbie Barclay	01358 742045
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
Scottish Women's Institute (SWI)	Elaine Strachan	01358 743173
The Sand Bothy Project	Rosie Nicol	01358 742557
The Sensory Garden	Joni Corbett	07522 987856

## KIDS' STUFF

Kindergym	}	Phone the Leisure Centre to check details of these first 6 groups.	01358 743114
Messy Monkeys			
Bouncy Tots			
Gymnastics			
Twos Group			
Baby Clinic			
Soo Yang Do	Danny Collins	01651 869005	
Danz Creations	Miss Simpson	01358 743661	
Balmedie Out of School Club	Lynne Fyfe	07920 295508	
Mainly Music, Forsyth Hall	Jeanette Lamb	01358 742684	
Balmedie Craft Club	Catherine Cassie	01358 743114	
Under 5s Rhymetime (monthly)	Library	01358 742045	
Baby & Toddlers/ Messy Play	Diane Cassie	07850 235215	
Links Nursery, Balmedie	Lyndsay Fleming	01358 743094	

## 2021 School Holiday Dates

*Dates are inclusive*

Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> May	In-service day	BoDA
Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> June	In-service day	Ellon
Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> June	In-service day	Ellon, BoDA
28 <sup>th</sup> June to 13 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Summer Holidays	Balmedie, Ellon, BoDA
11 <sup>th</sup> Oct to 22 <sup>nd</sup> Oct	October Holidays	BoDA
18 <sup>th</sup> Oct to 29 <sup>th</sup> Oct	October Holidays	Balmedie, Ellon
18 <sup>th</sup> and 19 <sup>th</sup> Nov	Winter Half Term	Balmedie, Ellon
Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> Nov	In-service day	BoDA
22 <sup>nd</sup> Dec to 4 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2022	Christmas Holidays	Balmedie, Ellon, BoDA



Our **Community Beat Officer** in Belhelvie Parish is **Doug Donald** (pictured) who covers the whole of Formartine. He is based at Ellon Police Station and works on a shift basis so is able to attend our area at various times during the day should there be a need.

If you have any Belhelvie Parish area issues that you would like to discuss, please call 101 and ask for PC Doug Donald at the Ellon Police office.

### Summer is upon us and we have so many different volunteering opportunities in Belhelvie Parish.

*Why not volunteer for one of the following groups?*

*It's a great way to get out there and meet new people.*



Group	Contact	
Belhelvie Banter	Jess Petrie	07763 314579
Better Balmedie	Allan Jeffrey	01358 743851
The Sand Bothy	Joni Corbett	07522 987856
Potterton Community Group	Caroline Anderson	07920 280212
Christmas Lights	Diane Cassie	01358 743114
First Responders	Marc Wood	01358 743002
Scouts	Ian Thomson	07743 844040
Belhelvie Community Trust	Rosie Nicol	01358 742118
Belhelvie Community Council	David Wallace	07767 237644

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**Copy deadline for Autumn Edition - Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2021**

email: [belhelviebanter@live.co.uk](mailto:belhelviebanter@live.co.uk)

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