

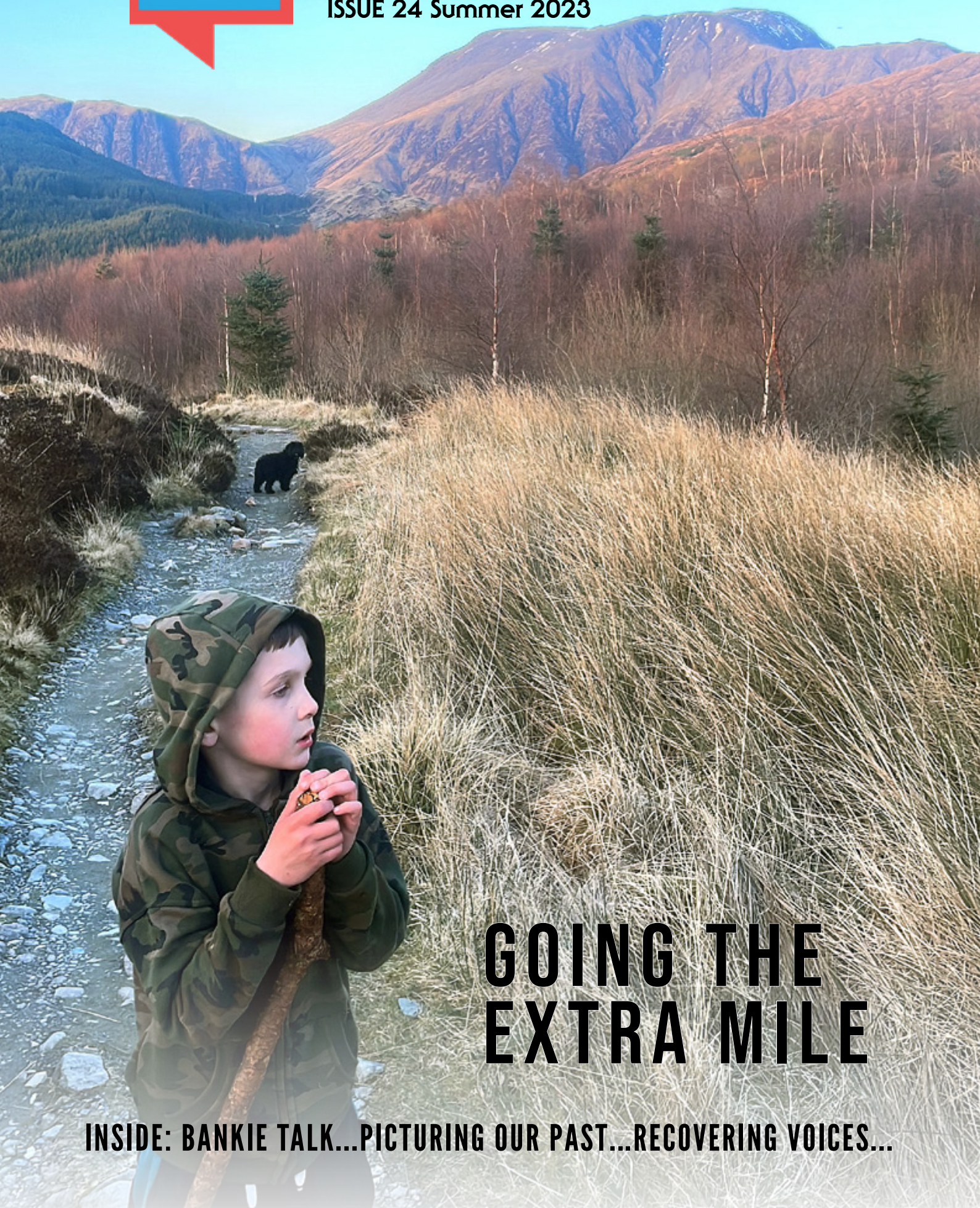


# CLYDESIDER

OUR COMMUNITY'S POSITIVE PRESS

ISSUE 24 Summer 2023

FREE



## GOING THE EXTRA MILE

INSIDE: BANKIE TALK...PICTURING OUR PAST...RECOVERING VOICES...



# POETRY COMPETITION WINNER

## Belongings

By Steven Kerr

*dedicated to my daughter*

**Belongings, they come in many shapes,  
For some, they're trinkets or precious keepsakes,  
But for the neurodivergent, they're something more,  
A vital tool to navigate this world and explore.**

**A weighted blanket to soothe an anxious mind,  
Fidget toys to keep fingers intertwined,  
Noise-cancelling headphones to block out the sound,  
These belongings are a safe space that can be found.**

**A favorite book or game to escape from reality,  
A stuffed animal for comfort and stability,  
These belongings bring a sense of familiarity,  
To a world that often feels like a hostile rarity.**

**Belongings for the neurodivergent are not just things,  
They're a lifeline, a connection to one's own wings,  
To soar above the challenges and find one's own way,  
To a world where differences are celebrated every day.**



# WELCOME

Every time I put together a new issue of Clydesider I am in awe of the many amazing people living in our community, but this issue is possibly our most inspiring to date!

It's packed with stories of people – particularly young people – going above and beyond to make a difference in their community.

From six-year-old Ollie, our front cover champion, who walked 96 miles along the West Highland Way to raise cash for charity, to young Hugh the baker who has used his culinary expertise to create delicious cakes and sweets for the Big Scrans community eats, to the two Our Lady and St Pat's pupils who volunteered to write an article about all the amazing things their school is doing to tackle climate change.

And that's just the inspirational young people.

We also have stories about people facing a range of life challenges who not only discovered in themselves a strength and resilience to survive but also a desire to improve the world for others in similar circumstances.

Plus, there are some phenomenal local organisations leading the way to remove barriers and just make this world a better place, particularly for those who are often overlooked or forgotten about.

From the volunteer-led talking newspaper bringing local news to local people for over 30 years, to the world-first wheelchair event space, to the photography project improving access to heritage – it's all happening here in WD!

And thanks to our wonderful volunteers I could have easily filled another 10 pages with more powerful and positive stories from our community.

Instead, I'll hold on to these for the next issue and that will give us all something to look forward to.

Enjoy!

**Amanda Eleftheriades-Sherry**

**Clydesider Editor**



## ABOUT CLYDESIDER

Clydesider Creative Ltd is a not-for-profit community media social enterprise based in West Dunbartonshire.

The Clydesider community magazine, website and social media promote the positives our area has to offer in terms of people, place, scenery, and history and showcase the creative talents, ideas, and experiences of local people.

**Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and Instagram. If you would like to get involved and contribute to Clydesider please email [jenny@clydesider.org](mailto:jenny@clydesider.org)**

## CLYDESIDER CREDITS

A big thank you to our fantastic team of volunteers who are all a true joy to work with. We would also like to thank our advertisers, members and funders. Your support helps us shine a light on the inspirational stories and creative talents in our communities. An additional vote of thanks goes out to all the community groups and organisations helping with the distribution, making sure the magazine reaches those least likely to read our stories online.

## Clydesider Creative Mission Statement

**Inspiring change by sharing positive stories and solutions, creating opportunities for individuals and organisations to build connections so together we can challenge the negativity and stigma too often associated with our community.**



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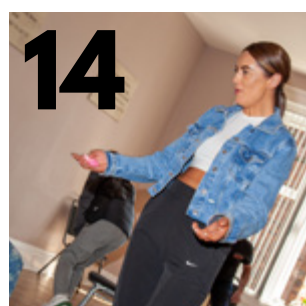
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Cover Photo by Stephen Durand







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### **Katie at Clear Your Mind**

Katie started her career in welfare rights in 1999 and has worked in local housing for 15 years. She is passionate about helping people. During her career in welfare, Katie qualified as a counsellor and has been practising in private practice for the last six years, and offers her clients the help they need. Her motto is: get help, get happy.

Katie McGhee Ad Prof Dip PC, MNCS (Accred)

**Phone: 07707 019 275**

Email: [clearyourmind@virginmedia.com](mailto:clearyourmind@virginmedia.com)





# COMMUNITY NEWS ROUND-UP

## COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP

Words by Angela Clark, photos by David Watson

A local community centre received a facelift this Spring, thanks to a group of young adults with mild learning disabilities.

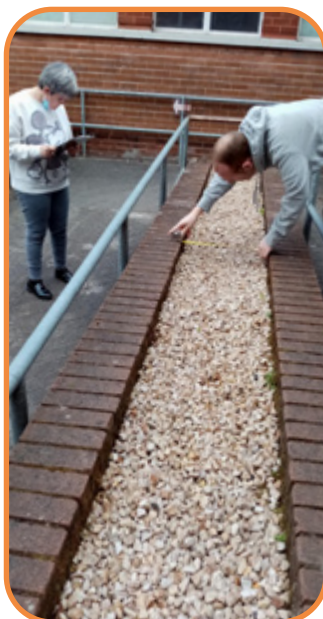
Unity Enterprise wanted to help brighten their base at Dalmuir C.E Centre.

David Watson, Service Coordinator, said: "The building was so dull and dreary, especially the entrance. The group takes such an interest in it."

With no money or materials, David put an advert for donations of gardening materials on social media.

He was looking for half a tonne of compost.

Shortly after posting he returned to find two tonnes of soil in the car park!



### BEFORE & AFTER

He said: "We had to get it moved very quickly, so we filled the front areas and along the side of the building with compost."

A successful funding application to Volunteer Matters/Action Earth for £250 allowed the group to buy plants.

David added: "We also managed to get some rocks from Loch Lomond to decorate the area."

"And we got two half barrels donated from a whisky company which the group polished."

"Then we spent weeks getting the ground ready for

the plants.

"It was looking gorgeous, everyone coming into the centre commented on how nice it looked."

"We painted the railing to the wheelchair ramp and the main entrance door."

"I thought if we're going to do the garden the whole place has to look nice. It has made a massive difference."

An additional grant of £500 from the DWF Foundation means the group can buy more plants plus gardening tools and waterproof jackets so they can work outside in all weathers.

David added: "It makes our guys feel really good to give something to the community, it makes them feel useful."

Two of the young adults involved in the clean-up are delighted with the results.

Paul Sullivan said: "I enjoy keeping the gardens tidy and clearing any leaves or weeds away, and I know people coming to the centre like how nice the gardens look now."

And Siobhan Kidd added: "I enjoy planting bulbs and then seeing them grow into flowers with lots of different colours."

**The group is always grateful for any gardening donations - contact [david.watson@unity-enterprise.com](mailto:david.watson@unity-enterprise.com)**



## PICNIC IN THE PARK

People living in Castlehill, Brucehill and surrounding areas are invited to a Picnic in the Park.

The community event will be held in the grounds of St Michael's Primary School on Saturday June 24 from 12 noon - 2pm.

The event is an opportunity for the local community to come together for some chat, games and general fun activities.

There will be various community stalls, outdoor games and activities plus refreshments.



## TAKE A MINUTE

From the prehistoric remains of the Cochno Stone buried in the hills above Clydebank, to Dumbarton's royal links to Robert the Bruce, to the industrial heritage of the Vale's Turkey Red dyeworks and the Clyde's shipbuilders, our local area is steeped in fascinating history.

Sadly, much of this is hidden away or forgotten.

So last year we teamed up with local filmmaker Paul Murdoch to create a series of video shorts exploring some of the area's heritage.

We had such great response from the first 15 Take A Minute films we decided to apply to the Heritage Lottery fund to make some more.

And we're delighted that not only was the application successful, but our plans will be recognised in the Scottish Parliament.



Local MSP Marie McNair is to put a motion to the Parliament congratulating us on the award.

As well as the short films we will be hosting free Walkin Talkin events to explore some of the local heritage.

**We plan to run these at the start of August – dates and venues to be confirmed - details will be on our social media and e-newsletter or email [theclydesider@gmail.com](mailto:theclydesider@gmail.com) for details.**



  
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# Walk This Way

Words by Angela Clark

Photos by Caroline Finn & Stephen Durand



A six-year-old boy from Dalmuir walked the West Highland Way with his dad and raised over £2,000 for charity.

St Eunan's Primary pupil, Ollie Durand, and his dad Stephen wanted to walk the 96 miles from Milngavie to Fort William as a personal achievement.

After chatting they decided it would be a great way to raise some money for Old Kilpatrick Food Parcels (OKFP) where they both volunteer.

Stephen said: "We put the idea to Maureen at OKFP and she was delighted, then everything happened so fast. A Go Fund Me page was set up and then we were away."

A friend set off with them but because of the harsh conditions decided it was too much for him on their first night.

Stephen said: "We started with three of us, the first night we camped it was a rubbish tent and we woke up in pools of water. My mate had enough and left.

"The money had started pouring in through the Go Fund Me, so I said to Ollie we cannae quit, we need to keep going, and I used that to push him to continue. To be fair he never said once he didn't want to go on."

The duo formed a close friendship with a father and son from Wales who were taking on the challenge to raise funds for their local football club.

Stephen said: 'We met them at Rowardennan. They arrived at the destination at the same time as us. Neither of us knew where we were going to camp due to restrictions.

"We managed to get a lodge for a third of the price because we were doing it for charity, and we just stayed together.



"It made the rest of the journey easier because we could bounce off each other and the boys were chatting and walking."

As well as talking to people from Germany, France and various countries in Africa, the meeting which left a deep impression was with a young Brazilian boy.

Ollie said: "We met him on the path and while we were talking, he told me he supported Brazil so he was really happy when I gave him my Celtic football top."



Ollie had also received a gift of a tartan hat from his Dad's friend before they set off and he asked every single person he met along the way to sign it.

His Dad said: "Not one person refused to sign it, we wanted to take it back to the foodbank and leave it there as a memory of what Ollie had achieved."

A visit to OKFP to help over the Christmas period had motivated the pair to raise funds for the charity.

Whilst young Ollie helped make up the kids' parcels

and stock the pantry, his Dad helped with the deliveries.

Stephen added: "We were regular visitors and got to know Maureen and the other volunteers and we loved it, the stuff they do is amazing and these people have become like family."

The pair plan to do Hadrian's Wall sometime this year with the family they met from Wales, though there will be less pressure as they won't be fundraising this time.

Stephen added: "This whole experience has strengthened our bond and it teaches my son that not everyone is privileged or has got the same opportunities."

Everyone who knows what Ollie achieved is so proud of the young boy.

Maureen Cummings, director of OKFP and Chatty Cafe said: "We ran out of food last month for the first time ever and that's what spurred Ollie and his Dad to do the fundraiser to help us. It will enable us to buy stuff that we don't have."

"Lately we are getting asked a lot for milk and dairy products that we never had before."

"So, this means we can keep the fridge fully stocked with the money raised. It has been a godsend and has been a great help to us."

"He is a wee legend - five days to walk 96 miles is fantastic. We had a heroes' welcome for them when they returned."

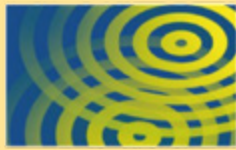
**If you want to help raise funds or provide donations for OKFP send a message through Facebook or call 07916310806.**





## **SPONSORED EDITORIAL**

# **Community Links Scotland**



## **REGENERATION SERVICES**

As a small Clydebank based community regeneration charity, we have been supporting our local West Dunbartonshire community for 21 years.

Across West Dunbartonshire we primarily work with community-controlled Housing Associations to develop and deliver projects that support their tenants who are the most vulnerable to social isolation and financial hardship.

We support a number of projects that seek to engage wider communities within local activities. We also support non-profit community organisations, helping them to develop, to secure funding and to deliver projects.

We work across the whole of Scotland and are currently delivering projects within Glasgow, Inverclyde, East Dunbartonshire, West Dunbartonshire, Dundee and Argyll & Bute. All our projects are different and are responsive to the needs and the demands of the local community.

We currently deliver two targeted projects that support the local West Dunbartonshire community.

### **HEALTHY PATHWAYS**

Our Healthy Pathways project aims to bring individuals from the local community who are socially isolated together to build a healthier, more resilient community.

It changes lives and gives local people the opportunity to create new friendships and discover themselves again.

We run several social sessions including our Book Club, Chatty Craft Club and our Sewing Club, all of these are free, and we provide all materials. All clubs will be opening again for registration in June.

In addition, each year we deliver a series

of personal development workshops and wellbeing sessions. These are promoted via local partners and through our Facebook page.

This project is funded through the National Lottery Community Fund and The Robertson Trust to June 2024.

**For more information on our Healthy Pathways project contact: [lisa@comlinks.org.uk](mailto:lisa@comlinks.org.uk)**

### **ENERGY ADVICE SERVICE**

From the beginning of June, we will have an in-house Energy Advisor who can provide advice and support to Housing Association tenants to help tackle the on-going cost of living crises and the challenges that many households will face.

Our Energy Advisor will undertake home based visits, getting to know people and how they use energy within their homes, issues they have with bills and any fuel debt together with wider heating issues. They will then provide specific, targeted help for each household.

Our Energy Advice Service aims to provide local people with advice on the most economical ways to heat their homes, help them find ways to minimise spend on bills and ensure they are accessing all available local support.

The project will also deliver a number of drop-in Energy Cafes, providing face-to-face sessions within local community centres and workshops on energy advice.

This project is currently funded for 12 months by the National Lottery Community Fund.

**For more information on our Energy Advice Service contact: [emma@comlinks.org.uk](mailto:emma@comlinks.org.uk)**





## Think Outside the Books

Words by Emily Fraser, photos by Charlie Eleftheriades-Sherry

Newly renovated public libraries in Alexandria and Clydebank are now perfectly poised to welcome us, offering connection, accessibility, and inclusion for each and every local person.

This is partly thanks to the creative yet practical upcycling of their beautiful, historic buildings, blending modern facilities with original features.

But, even more so, it's thanks to the empathy, commitment and imagination of the library staff, whose talents extend way beyond the bookshelves when it comes to helping our communities thrive.

Having recently interviewed some of these passionate people, I was bowled over by how much is on offer and want to share some of those discoveries, so you're aware of what's possible in your local library, if you think outside the books!

My local, Alexandria library, now has a lift for the first time. This is thanks to National Lottery funding and campaigning of staff who saw customers with mobility issues prevented from using the community and heritage

spaces upstairs.

Both Alexandria and Clydebank are now fully accessible from street level, with ramps, lifts, wider layouts, accessible toilets, and design innovations like the 'wheely bookshelves'.

These not only look cool but can be pushed right back against the outer walls of the main areas to create huge spaces for special events.

And space is something both libraries have lots of.

Sympathetically restored to make the most of traditional wood-panelling and windows, stone pillars, wrought-iron staircases, original skylights and tiled floors.

The new, up-to-date furniture of the cosy reading nooks and various modern-style workstations make them functional, comfortable, and fit-for-purpose spaces.

The refurbishments have created a lovely, interesting, relaxed ambience where anyone could feel at home, want to 'coorie in' and linger without feeling obliged to spend money. That's rare these days, unfortunately.

Members of the public can also book the libraries' numerous private meeting rooms free of charge.

I was surprised by this but think it's brilliant.

Many groups already take advantage of this opportunity, but you don't even have to be part of an official group.

It could be for a job interview,





family meeting, quiet study, or even for those working from home (on days when you can't get peace).

Financial accessibility can be just as much of a barrier as physical accessibility when it comes to finding decent spaces for hire, so it's great to know we have this option.



Besides free Wi-fi, meeting rooms and computer access, there are so many other free resources available.

Just by having a library card, we can use the Pressreader app to skip over the 'paywalls' used by many online commercial newspapers. So, if reading the papers is your thing, you don't have to miss out due to costs.

We can also access the premium genealogy website Ancestry.com free of charge! This could be a life-changing resource for someone wanting to trace long-lost family.

Comics Plus and Borrow Box enable you to choose from hundreds of comics/graphic novels, audiobooks, e-Books and magazines to read in the comfort of the library or via your own device from anywhere.

If there's a book you'd like to borrow which isn't in the local

collection, you can even 'Suggest and Request' they purchase it. Who needs Amazon, that's what I say!

The WDC libraries are also designed to be safe spaces for all.

Every local library is registered with I Am Me, a charity scheme aimed at helping differently-abled people feel safer in public places, but it can be used by anyone who lacks confidence for whatever reason while out and about.

Police Scotland vet public places before they're registered and provide staff with training on how to support vulnerable people.

The Keep Safe card is free and available from the I Am Me Scotland website at [www.iammescotland.co.uk](http://www.iammescotland.co.uk). There's also a free app to help plan outings.

Hopefully you'll never need it, but the idea is if you're having a bad day, you don't have to explain yourself, just show your card in the library and staff will know how to help.

This could be invaluable to people like me who struggle with mental health problems and neurodiversity.

We never know when a panic attack or trigger could hit and it's sometimes hard to ask for help from a stranger without making yourself feel worse, so I'm definitely going to get this card.

Libraries of Sanctuary is another inclusivity scheme designed to ensure refugees/asylum seekers have a safe and supportive public space free of racism.

Clydebank Library hosts weekly classes teaching ESOL (English as a Second or Other Language). They're also keen



to introduce some fun, social groups connecting those new to the area with other Bankies, promoting kindness, friendship and helping people to integrate.

Library workers are trained to have a zero-tolerance approach to any form of discriminatory behaviour in the building.

And there are lots of subtle nods to inclusivity and accessibility in all WDC libraries.

For example, just by placing the complimentary period products in both male and female bathrooms, it sends this message to trans men 'someone who works here has thought about you and planned for your visit, and it's safe to be yourself'.

As one library colleague shared... "everyone should come to the library and feel it's a place for them, that it has





something for them, and they can see themselves here.”

Thoughtfully curated book displays recognise a diverse range of characters, lived experiences, celebrations and stories. Seeing a title on the shelf which you relate to, can make your day.

Both renovated libraries have beautifully decorated, forest-themed junior rooms full of colour and natural light, now with closable doors.

This one simple change means kids are welcome to have fun and play, so they'll grow up feeling positive about the library while their adults needn't worry about their noise.

Alexandria is the only WDC library with its own outdoor garden space.

It gives local families access to nature-based fun activities with a fairy trail, bird boxes, mud kitchen, fruit trees and

raised beds for planting seeds, all of which are wheelchair accessible via the paved pathways.

Upstairs, the old heritage room has been given a new lease of life. Now a stunning museum exhibit with ornate decor, colourful information displays and historical artefacts from the 300-year history of the Vale's textile dyeing and printing works, and the 150-year old Vale Juniors football club.

Primary pupils have enjoyed tours of the heritage room and the space is also used for a range of creativity and well-being sessions.

Our libraries are one of the few public places where it's still free to just exist or to get involved with any of the above. They are the glue holding many things in the community together.

And staff want you to know there are no hard and fast rules, only guidelines, as to

how to use the library.

“Just ask for anything you need and we'll do our best to help.

“Even if it's not something we normally do, the team can usually find a way to make things work.”

Ask for a tour if you'd like to get reacquainted, they love proudly showing people round their amazing new spaces.

Whether you're a Bankie or a Jeely-Eater (Vale of Leven resident), or from somewhere in between, I really hope your local library becomes a favourite place - if it isn't already.

The improved accessibility and inclusivity mean more of us can experience the many ways these incredible community assets can enrich our lives and connect us with our shared past, a thriving present and an even brighter future.

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# Recovering Voices

WORDS BY ANGELA CLARK & PHOTOS BY CAROLINE FINN

Local people recovering from substance and alcohol abuse channelled their life experiences into drama and on to the stage.

The six-month drama project, run by Creative Change Collective, uses creativity to help people in recovery or at risk of entering the justice system.

CCC works with the drama students to help increase skills and confidence until participants are ready to perform on stage in front of a larger audience.

Drama teacher, Lorraine Hudson, said: "As part of the programme which leads to the stage performance, we ask people to give a character name.

"We don't know whether they are describing themselves or their character. It means they don't need to worry about sharing personal details.

"That is how we create content for the performance and why it is called Recovering Voices."

And the recovery drama programme had long-term positive impact on participants' lives.

Young mother Ashley Mundie was starting to mend family relationships after attending the course for a few months.

She said: "Before I came to this group I was shut down and isolated and would never have believed I would have stood up in front of my peers.

'It has changed my life in many ways. It helped build my self-esteem and confidence.

"I've started talking to my mum again as we have had a difficult relationship and she's coming to the show and telling me how proud she is of me.

"I have just got back in contact with my son after four years. I never thought I would get my child back. My life has changed, and this is just the start."

The students learn things about themselves through different games created to help clear

up past events and allow inner healing.

The classes use therapy through laughter and voice reflection work to create a journey through difficult times.

Michael Dale explained how he has benefited from the classes: "It helped build my confidence, they've taken me out of my comfort zone and improved my mental health.

"It also showed me there are other things out there and I've discovered I'm pretty good at drama, although it won't be a career choice.

"I would like to help people.

"By doing this it shows people who know me and who are still out there using, we can get better."

On the day of their performance nearly every seat in Dumbarton's Denny Civic Theatre was filled with family, friends and members of the public - we were all in for a treat.





There were tears, laughter and sadness in memory of those who had lost their lives to drug and alcohol addiction.

But above all the professionalism of those on

stage delivering the script they had created, was a reminder to all that recovery is possible and there is a life beyond mind-altering chemicals.

**For more information about Creative Change Collective or for support with substance use contact Alternatives on 01389 734500.**



**Your MP, working for  
West Dunbartonshire**

## *Here to help...*

In the past year I've provided advice and support to more than 2,000 constituents living in West Dunbartonshire.

As your MP I hold weekly advice surgeries across Clydebank, Dumbarton and the Vale. I also offer virtual surgeries via phone or video call. Appointments can be booked via my website: **[www.martindocherty.scot](http://www.martindocherty.scot)**

If you'd like to get in touch please email me on [martin.docherty.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:martin.docherty.mp@parliament.uk), or call my local constituency office on 0141 952 2988.

*Thanks, Martin*



**Martin Docherty-Hughes  
MP for West Dunbartonshire**



# CLAIM WHAT'S YOURS – CLYDESIDER CAMPAIGN

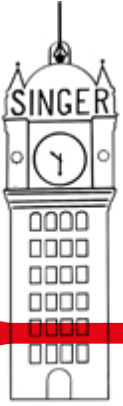
## BENEFIT SPOTLIGHT

### Access to Work

BY JOHN DONNELLY

The Access to Work scheme is money from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to help people with a wide range of health or learning challenges get to or stay in a job.

#### Who is it for?



It's for people with a physical or mental disability, learning difficulties, developmental condition, a long-term health condition such as diabetes or epilepsy, or temporary condition eg a broken leg. If you find it difficult to do your job or get to work this could help. You could be entitled to a grant for:-

- Practical support with your work
- Help to manage your mental health in the workplace
- Communication support at job interviews

You must be aged 16+ and in a paid job, about to start a job or going back to work. This can be in Scotland, England or Wales.

It does not matter how much you earn. If you get an Access to Work grant, it will not affect any other benefits you get and you will not have to pay it back.

#### What Can I Apply For?



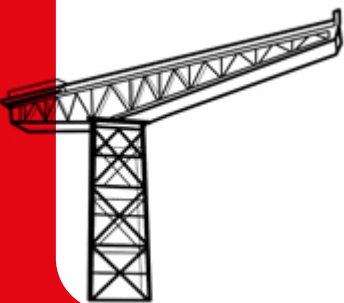
##### o Practical Support. For example:-

- o British Sign Language interpreters, lip readers or note takers
- o Adaptions to your vehicle so you can get to work
- o Taxi fares or a support worker if you cannot use public transport
- o Support worker or job coach to help in the workplace

##### o Mental Health Support. For example:-

- o Tailored plan to get or stay in work
- o 1-1 sessions with a mental health professional

#### How Do I Apply?



You can apply by phone or online for an **Access to Work** grant. You will need your personal details; workplace address; postcode and contact to confirm you are an employee; details about how your condition affects your work and what support is needed. If self-employed you will also need your Unique Taxpayer Reference number.

Apply online at <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/apply> or telephone 0800 121 7479 or textphone: 0800 121 7579

For **Mental Health support** apply directly to **Able Futures** - <https://able-futures.co.uk/individuals> or **Maximus** - <https://able-futures.co.uk/individuals>



#### Anything Else I Should Know?



You or your employer may need to pay some costs up front and claim them back later.

It is an employer's responsibility to make reasonable adjustments to make sure employees with disabilities, physical or mental health conditions are not substantially disadvantaged in the workplace. More details are available online at <https://www.gov.uk/reasonable-adjustments-for-disabled-workers>



# QUICK CASH SAVING TIPS

BY GEORGIA EDWARDS

One of our Clydesider volunteers decided to take direct action against the ever-rising cost of living.

And with just four phone calls managed to save over £200. Here's what worked for her.

## Computer Antivirus Software

I have one of the more expensive computer protectors because I like to be as careful as I can.

The first payment was reasonable. The next was a massive increase.

I wasn't happy. I accessed their website and saw the same cover for new customers at roughly a third of the price offered for renewal.

I personally would advise really doing your homework on computer protection. Cheapest is not always a good buy.

However, I rang the company and got through quite quickly.

The gentleman was very helpful and suggested I cancel my existing agreement a couple of days before it expired, then buy the cheaper offer with the same cover.

I have done this every year since.

## Car Insurance

I'd been with the same company for several years as they were always competitive.

Again, I have a yearly agreement. When the reminder arrived, I was somewhat perturbed to see the quote £40+ more.

I got through immediately to the call centre and explained I'd done a like-for-like price comparison and noted several companies much cheaper.

Again, I remained calm and polite – find it works better than

getting angry!

Eventually I was given a quote - £1 cheaper than the previous year!

Strangely I was told if I **increased** my maximum mileage the insurance could be decreased.

I immediately upped the mileage and that added to the deduction.

## Household Insurance

A strange one this. The renewal reminder duly arrived. Read it and thought there's a typing error here.

The amount was nearly £30 **cheaper!**

Being basically honest I rang the company.

I explained there was an obvious typo and was surprised to be told something about a new Government ruling to do with insurances.

Turns out that from January 1 2022, new rules from the Financial Conduct Authority mean premiums for all renewing home and private motor insurance cannot be greater than those offered to new customers for an equivalent policy.

## Broadband/TV/Telephone

I'd been with this company for some time as always satisfied with their service. I was on an 18 month contract which ceased in July.

In March an email informed me of a £12 per month increase from

May. Of course, there were wonderful deals on offer for first time customers.

In April I decided to call and tell them I couldn't afford the increase and ask about new deals.

It took awhile to get through but eventually a polite gentleman said he couldn't do anything about the increase but could offer the same Bundle at 50% more than I was paying. A second offer was 60% more!

I explained I was on a fixed income and, with those offers, I would seriously consider going elsewhere.

He then asked if there were any special circumstances to be considered.

Again, I was honest and mentioned one benefit.

He then put me through to the Special Customer department and, within five minutes, the £12 increase disappeared and my new Bundle was £12 cheaper than my existing one!

The only difference; I can only use the landline at weekends but people can still contact me/leave a message.

As I have 1,000 minutes and unlimited texts on my mobile this was not a problem.

It's always worth a phone call. Just make sure you have all the relevant information to hand.





## COMMUNITY SPACES

### Clydebank

**Kilbowie St Andrews Parish Church** - Weds 10am - 2pm. Free food/hot drinks

**Free Meditation and Reiki Session** in the Hub Community Centre, 405 Kilbowie Road on Thursdays 1pm - 2pm

**The Salvation Army**, Sylvania Way South (next to the Co-op) - Wed & Thurs 11am - 1.30pm. Warm space and cafe (donation only). Also offers an Employment Plus service.

### Dalmuir

**Dalmuir Barclay Church** - Drop-in café on Wed 11am - 2pm Drop-in Tots and Teens 11am - 2pm Café & Community Pantry on Wed & Thurs 11am - 2pm plus Thurs 6.30pm - 8pm

**The Big Disability Group Hub** - open 9am - 5pm Mon to Thurs and 9am - 3pm on a Friday. Warm space, free tea & biscuits. Advisors available.

### Old Kilpatrick

**OKFP Chatty Cafe** will be serving food 12 - 4pm Mon to Fri

**OKFP Community Food Pantry** is open for emergency food Mon to Fri

### Dumbarton

**Food for Thought** - free lunch in St Augustine's Church Hall, Wednesdays 11.30am - 2pm

**Myre Community Hub** - free breakfast in St Peters Chapel House, Howatshaws Road, Bellsmyre, Tues & Fri 8.45am - 10am

**Soup Club**, St Augustine's Church Hall - Fridays 11.30am - 2pm

**St Patrick's Church Hall**, lunches every Mon 11am - 2pm

**Phoenix Community Cafe** - Tuesdays - Fri free soup & bread 12 - 2pm; free breakfast Tues & Thurs 8am - 10.30am

### Vale of Leven

**Renton Football Club** - every Thursday Tontine Pavilion 12 - 3pm tea/coffee, food pantry, wifi & chat.

## BENEFITS SUPPORT

**WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU** - Freephone 0800 484 0136 (Mon-Thu 8:30am - 4:30pm, Fri 8:30am-3pm) [www.wdcab.co.uk](http://www.wdcab.co.uk)

**WORKING4U MONEY** - West Dunbartonshire Council's money advice service providing support with benefits, debt and money issues. Call 01389 776929 or email [wrmass@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:wrmass@west-dunbarton.gov.uk)

**HOME ENERGY SCOTLAND** - help, advice and financial support to reduce heating bills 0808 8082282 [www.homeenergyscotland.org](http://www.homeenergyscotland.org)

**CHILD POVERTY ACTION GROUP** - information about benefits in Scotland: [www.cpag.org.uk/scotland/welfare-rights/scottish-benefits](http://www.cpag.org.uk/scotland/welfare-rights/scottish-benefits)

**ENTITLED TO** - free online benefits calculator blog: [www.entitledto.co.uk](http://www.entitledto.co.uk) plus [www.entitledto.co.uk/help/coronavirus\\_help](http://www.entitledto.co.uk/help/coronavirus_help) (benefits and coronavirus)

## MONEY & DEBT ADVICE

**ADVICE DIRECT SCOTLAND** - provide free, independent advice via phone, SMS, web chat, email, online and through social media [www.advisedirect.scot](http://www.advisedirect.scot)

**CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY** - provide free debt help. Locally work in partnership with West Dunbartonshire Debt Centre to offer a home visiting service for people experiencing unmanageable debt. The service is free and available to people of any faith or none. Martin Lewis of the Money Show is one of CAP's patrons.

To access support call their Helpline on 0800 328 0006 (Mon-Thu 9:30am-5pm, Fri 9:30am-3:30pm) or visit [www.capuk.org](http://www.capuk.org)

**NATIONAL DEBT LINE** - charity giving free and independent debt advice over the phone and online. Call free on 0808 808 4000, Monday to Friday 9am - 8pm and Saturday 9:30 am - 1pm or to Webchat with an advisor visit [www.nationaldebtline.org](http://www.nationaldebtline.org)

**STEPCHANGE** - a debt charity providing free, confidential and expert debt advice and money guidance. They also campaign to reduce the risk of problem debt. To find out more visit [www.stepchange.org](http://www.stepchange.org)





# Value in Volunteering Hugh the Baker

By Jenny Watson

The great banana bread trend during the lockdown of 2020 inspired many budding bakers, however, it was a pineapple upside-down cake that captured the curiosity of teenager Hugh Kelso.

"Hugh was looking through one of my old recipe books from school one day, looking for something to do, when he found the cake recipe," Marie, Hugh's mum explained.

Hugh added: "It looked cool so I thought I would try it."

"It turned out great. I kept baking because it gave me something to do. I enjoy it."

In November 2022 Hugh started to work towards his Duke of Edinburgh award and chose to improve his baking skills as one of his activities.

It was during this time Hugh saw a post on Facebook from Dumbarton-based The Big Scrان, looking for baked goods donations for their Thursday evening meals.

The Big Scrان was a weekly community meal run by Ben View centre, in partnership with Blue Triangle, a social care organisation and homelessness charity.

Keara Donnachie from Blue Triangle said: "We usually have around 60-70 people attending; for some, it is the only meal they get that day."

"Hugh would spend a few hours each week baking cakes for the Big Scrان."

"His cakes were always amazing in variety, from Easter-themed to Valentine's Day."

Baking on average 70 cupcakes per week is not the only volunteering Hugh does.

He is also working towards his Young Leader

award through Explorer Scouts and helps at the community gardens in Knoxland with the Cubs.

He participates in weekends away with the Duke of Edinburgh and is also learning to play the guitar and keyboard.

All while still a high school pupil!

"I'm busy, but it's fun," Hugh said.

"Volunteering feels rewarding. You learn new things and you can make new friends."

The Big Scrان is on what will hopefully be a short break. They are looking for funding and new premises, as it has outgrown Ben View Centre.

Hugh has the whisk at the ready waiting for its return.



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## SPONSORED EDITORIAL

# CIVIC RECEPTION MARKS CHARITY'S THIRD BIRTHDAY



At the start of the pandemic an Old Kilpatrick couple looked for ways to help people struggling to get food and everyday essentials.

With a large elderly population in the village, they knew many residents were scared to use supermarkets and public transport.

So, Maureen and Gordon Cummings set up an emergency food aid collection spot in the local Twisted Thistle pub and used their own funds to buy food.

"On our first day we supplied 21 people with food bags," Maureen remembered.

Within weeks they had food drop-off and collection points set up across Bowling, Old Kilpatrick and Dalmuir and were receiving bottles of hand sanitizer made locally at Auchentoshan Distillery.

At the time they only expected to be providing the support until the lockdowns eased.

However, as they started chatting to people coming to pick up food parcels, they quickly realised food wasn't the only thing in

short supply.

Maureen explained: "We met a lot of people who lived alone and didn't see anyone or have people to talk from day to day. That's where the idea of the Chatty Café came from."

A year later the OKFP Community Pantry and Chatty Café opened for business in a disused industrial unit in Station Road.

With the help of a small group of volunteers and community groups like the local Men's Shed, the unit was transformed into a bright and welcoming space which has become a lifeline for people across the community.

Maureen added: "In year one we provided food parcels to 4,000 households, in year two it was 4,500 and in year three it has been 6,000 households.

"A total of 27,500 people have received food since we started, most of which has been donated by our community, for our community.

"We've also had 3,500 people at our various events and classes

in here and we've now had 140 volunteers who have helped make this happen."

For Maureen the highlight of the past three years is in seeing the transformation of her volunteers many of whom had accessed support from OKFP Community Pantry.

She said: "Being able to give them opportunities and create jobs for five of them, watch them develop and see their happiness increase, has been priceless. I'm like a proud mum."

And the Civic reception hosted by Provost Douglas McAllister in Clydebank Town Hall was the perfect way for the OKFP team to celebrate three years of hard work and thank all the people who have helped along the way.

Provost McAllister said: "The Old Kilpatrick Food Parcels project was the overall winner of the Provost's Civic Awards in 2021.

"Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we at West Dunbartonshire Council did not get the opportunity to recognise the Old Kilpatrick Food Parcels' achievements with their



volunteers, helpers and friends.

"I was delighted to arrange and host this civic reception to recognise, celebrate and thank all at Old Kilpatrick Food Parcels and the Chatty Café for the quite outstanding contribution to the community and the wellbeing of our citizens."

And after a night to remember in the Town Hall's Grand Hall, the team were fired up and looking forward to their new community venture for 2023.

This is the Wee Chatty Café and community garden.

Based in a shipping container on a plot next to the Scout Hall, the Wee Chatty Café is based on the same principles and ethos as the Chatty Café hub.

Its aim is to provide a friendly

community space for local people and visitors alike.

Maureen explained: "There are a lot of dog walkers out there and the only chat they have is with their wee dog.

"So, this is an outdoor space where they can stop for a cup of something or a bite to eat and

have a chat with our team or other passers-by.

"It is a 'free' take-away. We accept a range of currencies –

tea bags, coffee, cakes, biscuits, dog treats and poo bags.

"We do also accept cash, but we prefer an exchange or donation.

"An elderly gentleman came along the other day, he had two rolls and sausage and handed in a large jar of coffee which had been sitting in his cupboard since Christmas."

With the help of the Men's Shed, the Scouts, AOK and the Community Justice team they are also creating an enclosed community garden space for anyone in the community to enjoy.

Maureen added: "People can come and potter and just enjoy the outdoors. We'll have gardening equipment, plants and local groups and nurseries can come along for a visit.

"It will be an outdoor space where everyone is welcome."



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# Red Ramp Nights

**Words by Angela Clark**

**Photos by Katie Kennedy and courtesy of Golden Friendships**

A local charity has created an entertainment event programme specially designed for wheelchair users - believed to be the first in the world.

The Golden Friendship Club, based in Dalmeir, is a community hub that provides support and social activities to some of the most vulnerable people in our community.

Founder Jim McLaren said: "We have been talking about doing this for four and a half years, but because of Covid everything stopped. We will host popular music tribute acts which are for wheelchair users and their carers only."

The venue will give wheelchair users more independence and is fully accessible.

There are five disabled toilets, one of them has changing facilities, a hoist and a shower. Also a sink with a button that allows it to move up or down to wheelchair level.

One section of the bar is

low, with an overhang so the wheelchair can go under it and the person can see and chat with whoever is serving them without needing to reach up.

Club member and electric chair user Annemarie Gavin said: "My mobility is getting worse. I

"When I arrive they take my frame with wheels away from me, then return it at the interval for toilet breaks, so it's not ideal.

"There is plenty of space in the Golden Friendship Club and plenty of disabled toilets and the staff are lovely, this makes a huge difference to my experience."

Due to lack of facilities and accessibility, many Golden Friendship members have faced major issues on previous visits.

It was after one of these encounters that Jim decided to hold events for wheelchair users.

He explained: "I remember the first time we went to a pantomime, out of 200 people we had 30 wheelchair users.

"I phoned up to book it and you could only get four wheelchairs into the venue. So, I had to attend 20 shows.

"It's impossible to go to certain places in a wheelchair so we started to bring the pantomime



have multiple sclerosis (MS).

"It's really difficult to go to events because of access. I was going to the King's Theatre in May and I had to phone ahead to book.



here instead.”

The club can only run three events per year as it is not a licensed premises and it would cost too much to get a full licence.

Thankfully Jim secured a sponsor for this year ensuring people who attend get the maximum experience of having a bar.

He said: “We want to make it accessible for everyone and every event will have a red carpet on the ramp.

“Nobody has ever said to me there is a wheelchair events place. The nearest we’ve heard of was the Paralympics had a big party at the end. But it was a one-off.

The first entertainment event Absolute 80’s with Hart and Soul tribute night, was due to take place as the Clydesider

party dinner in December.

Club member and wheelchair user, Ross Docherty is looking forward to attending the events.

He said: “I’ll hopefully be coming to all the entertainment. It will be good for me and help me get out into the community. I know whatever is on will be accessible.”

**If you are a wheelchair user or a carer and would**

**like to buy tickets for upcoming shows contact Golden Friendship Club on 07957568330.**



went to press.

This will be followed in July with a Freddie Mercury tribute dinner evening and a Christmas

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# Photo Competition - Close-up

**WINNING ENTRY**  
by Emma McKerry



**Thank you to everyone who entered the competition.**

**Keep an eye on our social media for a slideshow of all entries.**

**The theme for our Issue 25 photo competition is Sunsets & Seascapes, see page 44 for details on how to enter.**



**RUNNER UP**  
by Lindsay Allan





**RUNNER UP by Kelsey Graham**



**ENTRY by Yvonne McGowan**

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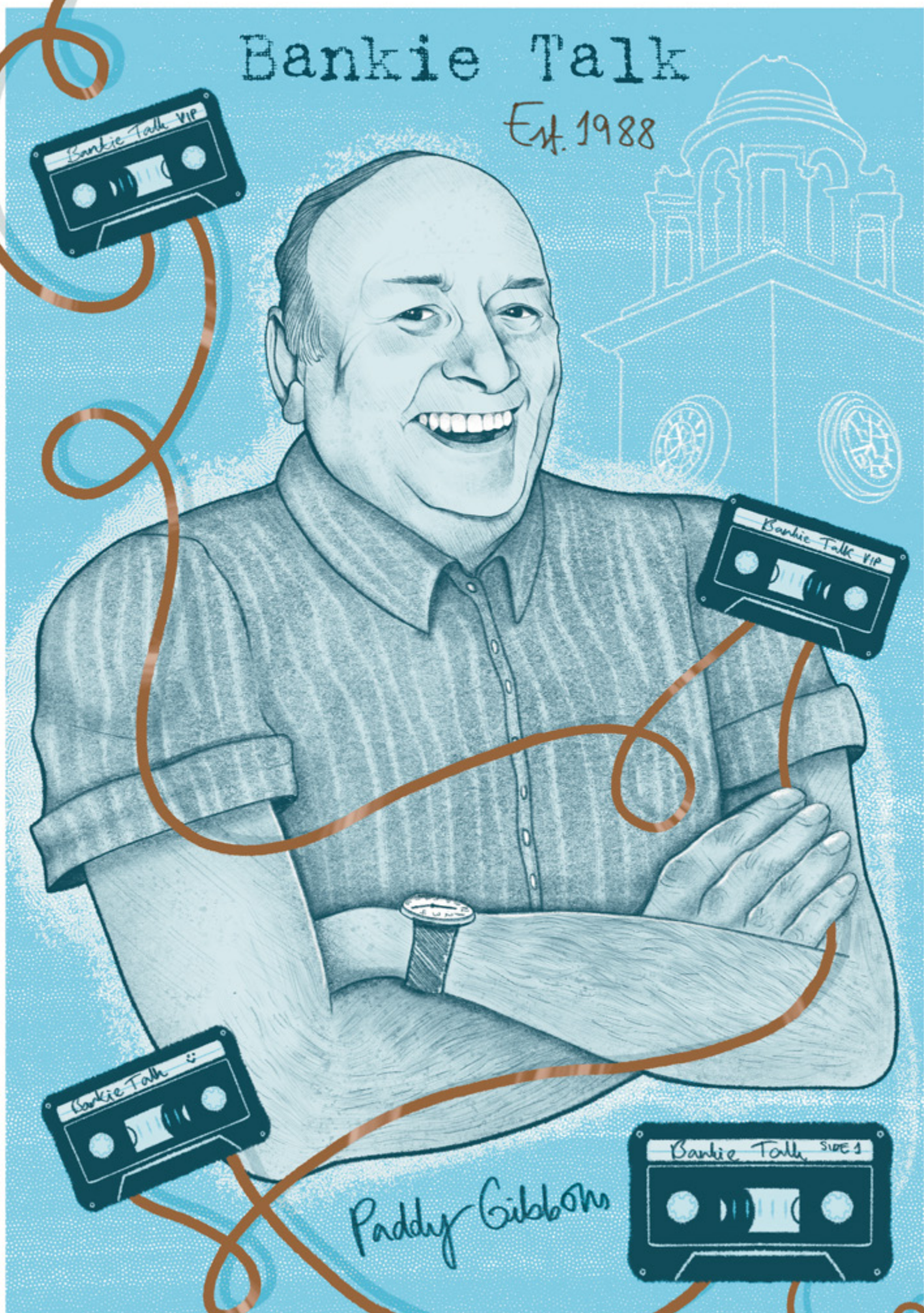


# Bankie Talk

Est. 1988



Paddy Gibbons





# Bankie Talk: A Personal Reflection

**By Pat Gibbons' daughter, Patricia, with illustrations by his granddaughter Susan Laws Artwork Photos by Jim Stevens**

Every reporter longs for that dream assignment. This issue, Clydesider's editor sent me on one of mine.

My mission - to interview the team of volunteers at Bankie Talk, Clydebank's talking newspaper for the blind and visually impaired.

Back in the 1990s, my Dad, Patrick Gibbons, was Mr Bankie Talk. It was such an integral part of Dad's life.

The organisation's current chairperson, Irene McKelvie, greeted me enthusiastically on the phone.

"Come down and see what we're up to! We record 'The Post' on a Wednesday. You are more than welcome..."

I smiled to myself, Wednesday had always been Bankie Talk day for Dad.

Nowadays, Bankie Talk's premises are at the former Our Holy Redeemer School.

Irene hands me a mug of tea and introduces me to her husband, Rodger, who also volunteers, as treasurer.

There is a real buzz as everyone gets on with the many tasks involved in the distribution of a weekly publication.

One lady is handling the familiar plastic wallets, containing a memory stick recording of the Clydebank Post, which the team send weekly to local listeners.

My attention drifts at the sight of the wallet (roughly A5 in size) and I apologise: "Sorry, Irene, that wallet takes me back. Dad used to get them delivered to our house."

We thought they were ingenious. Fully tactile, they clamped together just like a freezer

bag, which was easier for the recipient.

After listening to their cassette tape, listeners put it back in the wallet, took the address card out of the clear pocket on the side and flipped it over so it came back to our home address.

Magic!

Dad then carted the whole bag of 90 cassettes to the Town Hall, no mean feat. Then he had to erase them all, initially just four tapes at a time, which took ages.

Finally, he would record that week's new issue of the Post, a long and laborious process, before humphing all the newly recorded cassettes back to the Post Office to start all over again.

Irene shows me round.

I feel a wee twinge of 'if only...' when I see the purpose-built soundproof recording studio.

Dad would have given his eye teeth to have such an impressive facility!

I remember picking him up at the RNIB place near Partick Station after a fact-finding mission to tour their premises and see all their equipment.

He was so excited at the prospect of bringing that to Bankie Talk.

The late Frank Duffie, Dad's successor, actually achieved it and catapulted the organisation into the future by moving into the former Hall Street Police Station and setting up a proper studio.

Frank changed over from cassettes to CDs and was instrumental in moving the team to their current home in Clyde Street. The technology has advanced even further and the news now comes via memory sticks.

Irene continues: "Readers work in threes normally, and we currently have a team of six.

"The recording lasts half an hour

for the first half. We are trying to add a lighter tone with a quiz and a poem and not be so strait-laced.

"At Christmas time, we actually had a singer-songwriter with a guitar and a poet who had written a poem about Clydebank, we are trying to engage more with our audience."

I smile to myself, Dad felt the exact same way: every week, he would play a quick blast of a famous song...less than 30 seconds' worth, to entertain his audience without infringing any copyright laws.

Bankie Talk currently have 35 recipients of the newspaper.

They lost some over Covid and are keen to build it up again.

Irene tells me: "Bankie Talk is Clydebank's talking newspaper for the blind, yes, and the visually impaired: that last bit is very important!"

I tell Irene Dad used to call them his VIPs. He thought all his recipients were VIPs and treated them as such.

Bankie Talk volunteers wish to increase their audience. "That's really what we're all about to give an advantage to people who wouldn't otherwise see the Clydebank Post and improve their lives.

"The delivery and receiving of the memory sticks is free of charge and delivered by the Post Office direct to your own home."

Bankie Talk recently appealed for volunteer readers in Clydesider magazine.

There was a good response and they recruited a new cohort of readers.

I can't see the volunteers, but I do enjoy hearing their interesting and interested voices, precious voices of Bankie Talk, without whom the organisation could not exist.

Three sound engineers are following every word and making sure the levels are just right.



They too have been volunteering for a long time.

Irene tells me Bankie Talk had no funding this year and is actively looking for sponsors.

"A few of our clients gave us donations, which we're really grateful for, but we are appealing for further sponsors or donors.

"It doesn't have to be a lot of money, every little helps. Now we have Clydebank Housing Association magazine up and running that will help."

Bankie Talk is helping CHA with their magazine and would be happy to work with other housing associations and organisations once it is fully up and running.

The team has also relaunched their library facility.

They have about 1,000 audio books in their audio lending library, set up some years ago by former chairperson the late Carol Ann Gallagher. These were initially on CDs but are now on memory sticks.

Carol Ann, who dedicated over 20 years to the organisation, nominated the group for the Queen's Award for Voluntary Services in 2015 and they won.

The Awards ceremony was in the Town Hall with the Provost and then two of the team went to London for a celebration on the Mall.

I marvel at the innovations at Bankie Talk since Dad ran it - the sound mixers, the computers, the recording studio...it's a world away from the former Witness Room in the Town Hall where Bankie Talk first began in 1988.

I think of Jessie and John, Tom and Nora and Betty, all readers I met back when I read in 1992.

In the background, I can hear today's readers informing listeners about the Roman Fortlet discovered at Carleith Farm in Duntocher.

Dad would have been tickled at that story. He always said the Antonine Wall was at the foot of our garden!

I say goodbye to Irene, Rodger and the rest of their team of volunteers happy Dad's legacy is in safe hands.

I certainly hope my article will bring them more listeners, sponsors and funding. They provide as vital a service nowadays as Dad did for his VIPs back in the 90s, a lifeline really...

**If your sight is not quite as sharp as it used to be and you would like to receive a copy of the Clydebank Post on memory stick, please call Bankie Talk on 07469792648 and leave your name and number or email: [bankietalk@yahoo.com](mailto:bankietalk@yahoo.com)**

**Similarly, to donate to Bankie Talk or if you are able to help with fundraising they would be delighted to hear from you. Every little helps!**





## SPONSORED EDITORIAL

# TRUST THE TRUST

West Dunbartonshire Environment Trust, operating locally as 'The Environment Trust' is a local charity which aims to tackle disadvantage and improve individual and community wellbeing through environmental regeneration.

The Trust works in partnership with West Dunbartonshire Council and other community organisations to develop environmental improvement ideas based on local need.

Since its inception in 2002 The Trust has worked on a diverse range of projects including urban forestry, play and sports spaces, public realm projects, creating learning spaces in schools, park and greenspace improvements, footpath and access improvements, community safety projects to name but a few.

Environmental Regeneration Manager, Alan McMullen, explained: "We are a small team with big ideas. We thrive on new ideas and solutions to improve our environment for the benefit of West Dunbartonshire residents.

"Our staff ensure projects are designed to a high standard often drawing on ideas from Scandinavia and Europe.

"We have created partnership design teams with leading landscape architects and designers who share our vision of West Dunbartonshire as a great place to live."

Projects are supported by West Dunbartonshire Council which enables The Trust to generate fairly large funding packages from relatively small amounts of local funding.

We have generated funding from Europe, Scottish Government and other strategic organisations for projects from planting a single tree to large



scale regeneration projects – so far we have developed projects in excess of £8million.

The Trust has continued its mission to assist community groups and other partners to tackle disadvantage, remove barriers and improve the environment of West Dunbartonshire.

Our activities not only involve the development and creation of physical environmental improvement works but also include community development, partnership support and environmental education.

This broad approach aims to address a wide range of community needs for the long-term wellbeing of our citizens.

Our aim is to be flexible and creative, responding to new challenges and community needs and aspirations as they arise.

**Our objectives are to conserve, restore and improve the environment; to create opportunities for training and employment and to promote environmental awareness; to develop partnerships, to inspire others and to adopt sustainable practices.**

**We aim to deliver these through a series of operating principles focusing on healthy living, community**

**participation, biodiversity and sustainability.**

The Trust also endeavours to support others in the development of regeneration initiatives and will continue to assist groups and organisations such as WDC Education, Housing & Greenspace departments, Tenants and Residents Associations, Community Councils etc.

The Trust's projects are aimed at both local and national regeneration outcomes and where possible linked to other initiatives such as community safety, health and wellbeing, employment and training, economic vitality and inward investment.

We aim to develop programmes which demonstrate the value and benefits of good quality, sustainable environments.

In an ever more challenging world we seek to find creative solutions, maximise scarce resources, engage individuals with nature, tackle disadvantage and improve opportunities for healthier and more active lifestyles.

We constantly seek new challenges, build belief and inspire others to create a sustainable and vibrant West Dunbartonshire.

**To contact The Trust email [info@wdet.co.uk](mailto:info@wdet.co.uk)**





## Pictures of Our Past

Words by Steven Hastings

Photos by Chris McGaughey & by project participants

They say a picture paints a thousand words, it can also tell you about the past.

I am a member of Stepping Stones, a mental health charity for West Dunbartonshire.

Earlier this year we were invited to take part in Picturing Our Past, a photography project run by Charlie Sherry from Inclusive Images social enterprise.

Although Charlie teaches a few photography techniques the course mainly focuses on telling stories through images and learning about and accessing local and Scottish heritage sites.

Charlie was inspired to create Picturing Our Past while delivering a course to a mental health peer support group in Drumchapel.

He explained: "We were talking about Drumchapel and its history. Most of the group had no idea of the history of the place or their own history.

"Then I suggested going to the Botanic Gardens in Glasgow but they felt it was not for the likes of them."

This shocked Charlie as the

Botanic Gardens are just two miles from Drumchapel.

He looked into why people from less affluent backgrounds, particularly those with disabilities, feel excluded from their heritage and successfully applied to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a three year project.

Picturing Our Past aims to introduce people to local heritage and encourage them to find out more.

Our course began in February and ran for eight weeks.

For our first task we were asked to bring in photographs of family members at work. We talked about who was in the photos and where they worked.

Digital cameras were given to those who needed them, and our next task was to photograph monuments to local people.

I took photos of one of the blocks in Helensburgh's Colquhoun Square.

It features a model of the ventriloquist's dummy used by John Logie Baird, the Helensburgh-born inventor of television, to send an image from one room to another.

I also took photos of the war memorial bench in Christie Park, Alexandria and the statue of climber, author and broadcaster Tom Weir, in Balmaha.

Other people photographed the plaque to remember Renton's football team winning the World Cup in 1888 and a plaque on Glencairn House in Dumbarton to commemorate Robert Burns' visit to the town in 1787.

On the third week Elspeth Crocket, Dumbarton resident, retired teacher and volunteer guide at Dumbarton Castle, came to talk about the history and future of Dumbarton.

She told us about Robert the Bruce and how parts of him are buried in Levensgrove Park.

Something which stood out for me as a wheelchair user, was that she would like a lift installed to the Castle's French Jail so disabled visitors have some access to its history.

We also visited Kelvingrove Art Gallery to see an exhibition by amateur photographer Eric Watt.

The photos of Glasgow from the 1950s to 1990s were very good and ranged from children





playing in the street to protests in the city.

One participant said: "It was great to remember good times from the past. Seeing the photographs transported me to the past. It also made me more questioning about Scottish history."

Neil Fraser from Historic Environment Scotland visited us to talk about websites where you can view archive photos of places, people, and events all round Scotland.

Then we had a trip to Bannockburn and Stirling Castle.

Our first stop was Bannockburn Visitors Centre, run by the National Trust for Scotland.

When we arrived, we got the most important thing out of the way first - coffee and cake in the café!

Duncan Thomson from the Robert the Bruce Centre in Renton came along and gave a very interesting talk about Bruce and the Battle of Bannockburn.

We then went to Stirling Castle which is run by Historic Environment Scotland.

Here we met our guide for the day Kirsten Wood, the Learning Development Officer at Stirling Castle.

After a good lunch we headed for the exhibition in the tunnels which have great access for wheelchair users.

There are many things to look at including a model of the castle.

We then headed to other parts of the castle. It was great seeing the architecture and the different rooms where the kings and queens slept and had parties.

They are trying to make Stirling Castle more accessible for wheelchair users. In one room a small wooden cabinet on wheels has a mirror on it to help wheelchair users see the Stirling Heads on the ceiling.

This is such a simple and really good idea.

It was quite bumpy going over the cobbles in my powered wheelchair, but most of the castle was accessible.

We also saw a real life royal - well an actor playing one - the Duke of Lennox who gives his name to the Lennox area of Dumbarton.

We all took photos, some featured in our own exhibition at the end of the course.

One participant said: "The trip to Stirling Castle was a high spot for me, we could focus on producing images that reflected

the historical context."

There is a learning space where Kirsten showed the different weapons and clothes from the castle.

Unfortunately, I was unable to access this room as although they have a portable ramp it was too steep for me to use.

As there is a wall in front of the rooms, they can't put in permanent ramps.

A committee is looking at accessibility in the castle. They would like to have a platform for wheelchair users to enter the exhibition space and go through to other rooms, including the learning room.

There is a smooth path to this part of the castle which, Kirsten informed us, was for the horses to walk on.

It would be good if a similar path could be put in the middle of the cobbles throughout the castle grounds to help wheelchair users and people with mobility aids get around.

Historic Environment Scotland are partners in the Picturing Our Past project and, according to Charlie, have been brilliant.

He explained: "From the off they fully got it, as it ties in with what they're trying to achieve, to reach out to communities who they've found quite hard to



engage with in the past.

"They provided a lot, from free guided tours, to sending people to give talks, to putting up the lunches, which was really good of them."

Stirling Castle will also host a grand exhibition in autumn 2024 to showcase the photographs from all 11 groups involved in the Picturing Our Past project.

A big part of the project is to give service providers firsthand feedback so real change can be made.

To help with this Charlie set up a project Steering Group which includes many organisations and local people.

The group is looking at why people from less affluent backgrounds, especially disabled people, feel excluded from Scotland's heritage.

Charlie said: "We've met on a quarterly basis and it's starting to gain some momentum.

"From that we will produce a report, which hopefully will influence policy, maybe within their organisations, but also, maybe nationally as well."

The other groups Charlie has delivered the Picturing Our Past project with include, Neighbourhood Networks, Golden Friendships, Work Connect, Men Matter and Chance 2 Change.

One idea to come from the Steering Group is for some participants to become ambassadors for Historic Environment Scotland.

I've volunteered and hope to help by making them aware of changes to help wheelchair users access more of Stirling Castle.

At the end of the eight-week project there was an exhibition of our work for friends and family, other members of Stepping Stones also attended.

Our photos were displayed on A3 prints and looked amazing and Elspeth presented us all with certificates.

Charlie has seen changes in all the groups he has worked with.

At the start some people say they're not interested in photography or history and then become the most enthusiastic.

He said: "It's great seeing people take an interest in historic buildings and things like that, but it's taking an interest in themselves, that's the main thing and building confidence, that's what it's all about.

"I'm not going to change your life, but I can plant a wee seed hopefully it helps grow confidence and you see things differently."

And for several participants in the sessions with me, this is exactly what happened.

One said: "I liked the history of the castle and Bannockburn and taking photos and Glasgow Museum. I didn't know much about Stirling Castle, now I know."

Another said: "I couldn't recommend this course more highly, I learned a lot and now possible future endeavours in photography and local history exist for me."

And another commented: "Charlie was charming, enthusiastic, and inclusive.

"He shared his extensive knowledge of Scottish history and many beautiful examples of his photography skills.

"We were instructed in the basics of taking photos. I found by referring to these I could take a pic I was quite pleased with, and proud of."

Hopefully this project helps people think about Scottish and local history as it was informative and lots of fun.

And I hope it helps give people better access to the world around them whether going to places they thought weren't for them or creating better access in historic buildings and places of interest.

Thank you to Charlie and all involved with Picturing Our Past.





# SCHOOL TAKES ECO ACTION

Words by Addison Noble & Grace McGrath S3 students

Photos from Our Lady & St Patrick's High School

Our Lady and Saint Patrick's High School in Dumbarton is one of many establishments working to make a difference in our environment and to our world.

The many eco-friendly programmes, partnerships, and activities the school provide and take part in, encourage pupils and members of the community to stay sustainable and take care of their surroundings.

The hard-working eco-committee and involved teachers, inspire, and encourage pupils to take action in fighting climate change and staying sustainable.

From the first Eco Flag secured in 2022, to the eco-friendly activities the school take part in, Our Lady and St Patrick's High School always has something to offer when it comes to saving our planet and educating pupils and their families on how to do their part.

OLSP has collaborations with the local nurseries 'Andrew B Cameron' and 'Bellsmyre', where pupils regularly took part in sustainable, informative and enjoyable activities with the younger children.

In December, a group of pupils played Christmas songs on instruments as part of a small 'around the campfire' performance.

This was an outdoor experience which helped the children and our young people make use of and enjoy our surroundings.

It was thoroughly enjoyed by the pupils at OLSP and the nursery alike. It allowed OLSP pupils to practise skills and develop their leadership skills.

On other visits, pupils helped the nursery children to plant trees and an assortment of plants teaching them about gardening and sustainability.

The company of the older children is influential for the nursery pupils, encouraging them to take part in volunteering and eco projects in the future to save their home.

At the nursery, pupils also helped with literacy activities about litter pollution, discouraging harm towards our environment while also teaching the children great life skills.

"We loved this opportunity to link with our local partners and developed a shared partnership focused on raising awareness on environmental and sustainability issues," Mrs Jennifer Sharkey, Principal Teacher at OLSP said.

Pupils at OLSP also regularly take part in litter picks around the school.

Groups of pupils are selected to spend some class time cleaning the school area and protecting our environment.



Clubs in the school, such as the Cooking and Gardening Club, have an area of the school garden where they plant ingredients, fruit and vegetables as an affordable and viable source of food.

The members enjoyed growing their own vegetables, and cooking with it.

The Cooking and Gardening Club visited Bellsmyre Community Gardens with guides who took them around and inspired the pupils.

The school has also set up an eco Twitter account with sustainable activities, and created a video to submit to a Climate Champion Competition.

These small changes can make a big difference in our environment when it comes to stopping climate change.





# Nature in Crisis, How Can We Help?

WORDS AND PHOTOS BY JAMES DUNCAN

Nature is declining at an unprecedented speed.

Whenever I speak to naturalists of my own generation, an almost universal pessimism about the future prevails.

They see all too clearly just how much wildlife we have lost in the past few decades.

In my local area I can remember the abundant wildlife we had in the 1960s when farming practices were different to what is practiced today.

One of my favourite walks at any time of the year was round the Auchencarroch - locally known as the 'Horseshoe'. An 8-mile circular walk surrounded by mixed farmland.

In early Spring you could watch the lapwings in their nests in freshly tilled fields.

The familiar 'pee-wit' cry could be heard on almost any bit of farmland as pairs swooped, their iridescent wing colours catching the light as they tilted in aerial

acrobatics.

I always took with a pinch of salt old-timers' stories of going into a field and filling a pail with lapwing eggs. I imagined they were exaggerated.

But when I visited a farm outside my local area, I was excited to see a sitting lapwing in a field close to the road. A few seconds later I spotted another and another.

In the end I counted seven birds sitting on nests and since the field they were in contained a large area of 'dead ground' it seems quite likely there may have been more!

Another wader who came inland to breed was the curlew, a very large, tall wader, about the same size as a female pheasant.

Its haunting display call 'cur-lee' is unmistakable.

Snipe, ringed plover, oystercatcher, skylarks, meadow pipits,

yellowhammers and reed bunting plus many more species were common on this walk until the 1980s.

Not so nowadays.

Farming practices, global warming and climate change have altered dramatically over the last 50 years.

The area now has just a few

sheep with many fields left unoccupied. No seasonal crops, ploughed fields or dairy farms.

Gone are the brown hares, roe deer, hen harriers, kestrels and many more species.

Gone are the curlew, snipe, cuckoo, tawny and barn owls and sparrowhawk.

Gone are the dragonflies, butterflies, bees, trout and sticklebacks from our burns.

So, what can we do to help our native wildlife?

A decline in natural habitats mean our gardens are more important than ever for our wildlife.

To attract birds, your garden needs to be attractive to them all year round.

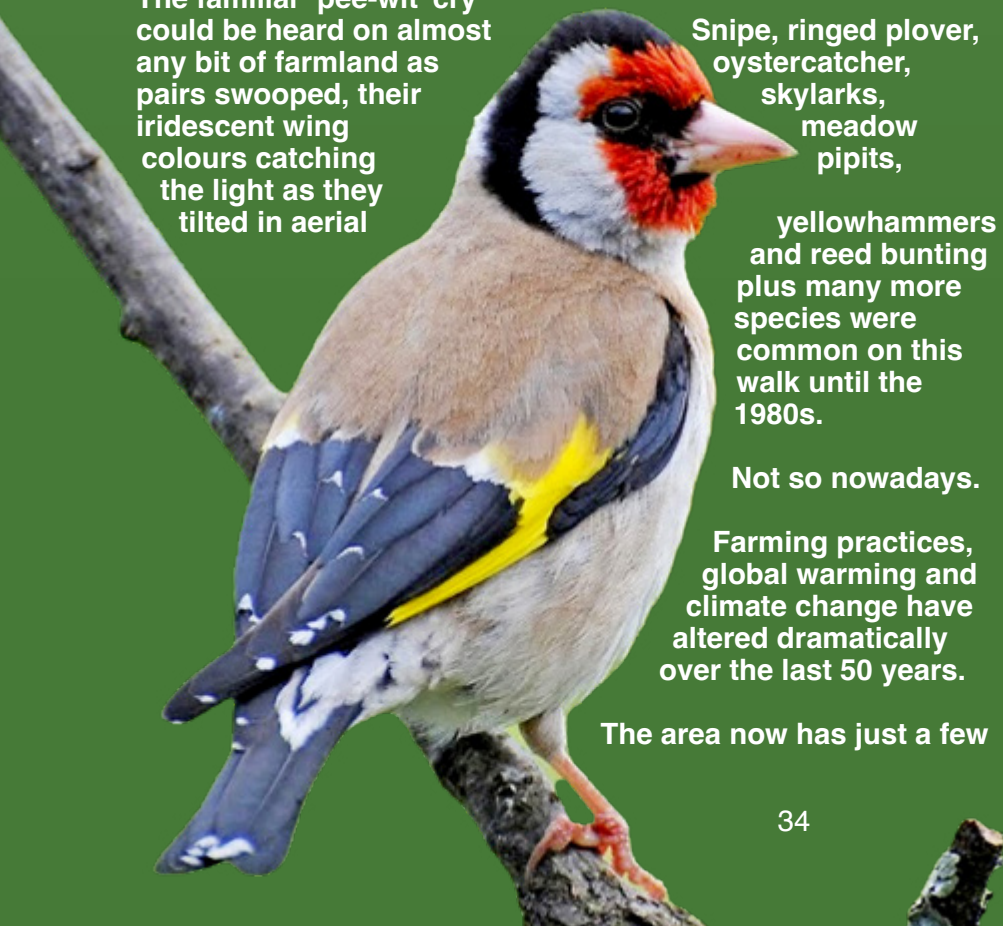
A bird-friendly garden not only offers food, but also water, shelter, nesting sites and protection from predators.

Bird tables are suitable for many species and most foods. A simple tray is perfectly adequate, with or without a roof.

A large number of birds eat seeds and will be attracted to your garden by a peanut or seed feeder.

Although winter feeding benefits birds most, food shortages can occur any time of year.

By feeding all year round, you give them a better chance to survive food shortages whenever they







may occur.

Sunflower hearts are a great all-round option. They contain the same high calorie content as sunflower seeds, but don't have husks, so no mess.

If you can provide a range of foods, you're likely to attract a wider selection of birds.

For the greatest variety leave out a seed mix, a fat-based product such as fat balls, and a protein-rich source such as mealworms.

Goldfinches, chaffinches, siskins, robin, blue, great and long-tailed tits, dunnocks and wren are just a few of the birds visiting our garden.

Above all else enjoy, and watch what your garden will bring to your wellbeing and happiness - a gift from nature.

And nature needs your help - now!



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## CREATING STORIES

Words & Photos by Caroline Finn

Creativity is a great way to share stories and ideas.

And over the next two years Clydesider is offering free creative storytelling sessions to local community groups.

This spring we teamed up with 13 participants from Neighbourhood Networks in Dumbarton and Clydebank.

Together we explored the positive impacts growing your own food and spending time in nature have, both on the environment and mental health.

Neighbourhood Networks support vulnerable adults to gain independence both in their own homes and in the community.

We began the project by visiting the group's community garden in Melfort Park, Drumry where we gathered natural materials to work with.

The group were up for a challenge and had lots of fun painting portraits of each other using sticks as paintbrushes and mud for paint.

Jordan said: "I wasn't sure about it because I didn't want to get dirty from the mud, but I liked using the sticks, that was good."

Audrey Duff, the Clydebank

networks Community Living Worker, said: "It shows even without arts and crafts materials, you can just use what's around you. Everybody got a wee portrait made by each other, it was great."



Then we used painting and printmaking techniques to create individual fruit trees. They were printed with leaves we picked in the community garden and, using carved rubber stamps, we covered our trees with fruit.

Jordan enjoyed painting with sticks so much he went outside and sourced some more to make his tree more realistic!

The following session we made cyanotype prints using a UV light box. We looked

at the unique shapes and transparency of different plants and leaves.

Designing tote bags allowed the group to make their own creative choices using the techniques they'd learned so each member had a unique bag.

Steven explained: "We're going to use our bags for harvesting the fruit and veg we grow at the garden."

Lynne added: "This is great getting to do creative stuff, I love all this."

For their final piece the group worked together to plan and create a canvas mural.

They had lots of ideas about what should be included in the painting. Lynne said: "We should draw butterflies and bees."

Ronnie suggested: "I could do some tulips; they would look nice with all the trees."

John asked: "What about the shed?"

Working from a blueprint they created the previous week, the group started work on their painting.

Ronnie said: "I'm drawing all of us, this is going to look great." He then proceeded to draw





every member of the group including Stephanie's dog!

Stephen suggested a pond and then carefully painted one full of ducks.

For John, his favourite part was seeing his friend Raymond's confidence grow. He said: "I like seeing how on the first day Raymond didn't want to join in and look at him today."

Audrey agreed. "When we first started, he was a wee bit shy. Now he's got his sleeves up, paint pot in hand working away."

"It's built confidence in Raymond he never had when he first came in."



The group worked hard over the six weeks completing a variety of artwork.

Audrey added: "We learned lots of new things."

"It's not just about getting a paintbrush and painting, we learned new ways to paint and create art no matter where we are or what we've got to hand."

"It's all that confidence it's building, by trying new things."

Peter gave the project the thumbs up: "I've enjoyed just coming here and being with people and doing new things. I liked painting the shed."

The group is now looking

forward to showing off their mural which will hang proudly in the Neighbourhood Network main office.

These workshops are funded by the National Lottery Community fund so we can offer them free to community groups in West Dunbartonshire.

We are excited about upcoming projects with Alzheimer Scotland, Duck Duck Dragon and The Big Disability Knit & Natter.

**If you know a group who might be interested in their own creative storytelling or community media workshop next year, please email [caroline@clydesider.org](mailto:caroline@clydesider.org)**





# Please See Me

**Speaking to Amanda Eleftheriades, Clydesider volunteer Johnny Dale shares his experience of near sight loss during childhood followed by a lifetime battling systems blind to his access needs.**

“To be able to see the flowers, the trees, the sky, it’s like I’ve been given a second chance at sight again and I’m so grateful for it.

“Now I just need the people who are meant to support me to see what I can do, and not try make me do what they think is best, just to get me off their hands.”

At the age of 14 Johnny started to lose his sight.

His GP initially put his vision problems down to migraines.

Johnny refused to accept this, and when McLaren’s Opticians in Clydebanks spotted a change in shape in his eye, he was referred to specialists at the old Western Infirmary.

“I knew it was going to be bad news because he looked at both eyes for a very long time. Then he told me I had this disease called Keratoconus,” Johnny remembered.

“It is an inflammation of the cornea which makes it bulge on the outside and distorts vision. When you look at things it’s like seeing a mixed-up puzzle in front of you.”

Johnny was given gas permeable contact lenses to try and help maintain his vision but as the disease progressed it became more difficult to get the lenses in place.

“On the day of my step-grandfather’s funeral I couldn’t get the lens for my right eye to stay in.

“I had been told this would happen eventually, it’s the stage when the cornea comes apart and the retina keeps trying to add fluid to the eye to clear it, so my vision was totally blurred.”

In January 2002 at the age of 17 Johnny had his first cornea transplant.

He then had to endure months of his body trying to reject the new tissue and needed steroids and immune-suppressant medication to protect it.

“It takes a long time for sight to start to come back and it happens in wee flashes. It’s like someone giving you a glimpse of what it’s going to be like and then taking it away again.”

Eventually his right eye had improved sufficiently that in 2005 he was able to have a second transplant and the cornea in his left eye was replaced with healthy tissue.

Throughout this time, he received support from the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) who helped secure a grant for a specialised laptop, camera and magnifying software.

They also sent a support worker to his home, at the time in the Highlands, to show him how to use all the new equipment.

But when he returned to Clydebanks to go to college, he discovered a missing link in the support as no-one explained his situation to his tutors.

“It’s a lot of equipment and the tutors would avoid me when I started to set this up in the

classroom, they didn’t understand why I needed it.

“If RNIB had been able to explain to them about my sight it would have helped.

“But it was better than when I was at school, I wish I’d had all that equipment then.”

College was a difficult and stressful time for Johnny as he found most tutors lacked understanding and resources to support disabled students.

Charities intended to help people with disabilities also let him down.

He recalled at one point being sent to join a group for adults with severe additional needs.

“None of them could talk, they were just sitting in this room rocking back and forwards and they wanted me to join them because I couldn’t see properly! “Fortunately, my gran was with me, and she just said we’re getting out of here.

“Most of these big charities don’t look at the individual person, they just try to make you fit in with what they can offer.”

Refusing to be neatly pigeon-holed Johnny instead focused his attentions on nature and the





environment.

And over the past 10 years he has almost single-handedly reforested his family croft in the Highlands.

He also volunteers with several community garden groups and is a Board member of Kingsway Community project.

Passionate about the environment he is keen to share his extensive knowledge and experience of working alongside nature and has written several articles for the magazine.

Now he would like to get a job working with nature or gardening but finds the services funded to support people with disabilities into the workplace still don't understand his needs.

Johnny said: "The job centre referred me to Enable and since I've been going there, I've told my story to at least four different workers. None of them last long.

"The last young girl I saw arranged to meet in Costa café in Clydebank. It was the middle of the day, and she was sat right by the coffee machine, so it was almost impossible to hear her.

"As well as my sight problems I also struggle with processing words when there is a lot of background noise.

"She didn't seem interested in anything I had to say, just constantly tapping away on her laptop without even making eye contact.

"Then she said 'I think the best thing for you is to go to college.' She didn't even ask if I'd been to college before or what I wanted to do."

Johnny said he's sick and tired of being passed from one place to another.

"They don't know what to do with me, so it's a game of pass-the-parcel with Johnny.

"They moan at us when we don't turn up, but why should we, if they don't treat us like individuals, as human beings?"

"They should employ more people with personal experience of sight loss and other disabilities, so they understand what it's like and have some empathy."

Johnny feels of all the different systems and organisations he's been involved with, only the RNIB really understood his issues and provided the support needed.

Although able to see in bright daylight he still struggles at dusk or when it's raining and often needs to ask for help to read a bus number or get on a bus if his vision is blurred.

"I keep getting told 'you can read, you can write and take all those beautiful photos, your sight can't be that bad,' but I can't focus on text for long as my eyes and brain don't process it in the same way, and I get motion sickness.

"I need two cleaning fluids for my lenses but that's £46 a month. I can't afford that.

"Now they want me to go back to college but what support am I going to get there?"

"People don't understand, even when I explain it over and over.

"Telling my story time and again, it gets so my body and mind just give up talking. It feels like, what's the point? I just get quieter and quieter because no-one is listening to what I have to say."

For now, volunteering in the community gardens and sharing his nature and wildlife posts on Facebook is where Johnny feels understood and appreciated.

*We asked Enable for a comment but they failed to reply.*



**Photos courtesy of Johnny Dale**







## Creative Q & A with Billy Scobie

### By Jenny Watson

Vale man, Billy Scobie, is a master of many talents. When he responded to our article about the Skylark IX Recovery Project with a photo of his own Skylark painting, I had to find out more.

**Q: When did you first become interested in painting?**

A: It was in childhood. I was encouraged and advised by my dad. Later, in the Vale of Leven Academy, one of my Art teachers, Farquhar Fraser, was a positive inspiration. It wasn't just that he taught me how to paint, but rather how to think like an artist.

**Q: What style of painting do you prefer?**

A: My favourite medium has always been watercolour. I find I can achieve more sensitive and subtle shades and textures with it.

**Q: You created a wonderful painting of the Skylark, what inspired you?**

A: Each year, for many years, veterans of the Second World War Dunkirk evacuation came to Jamestown Parish Church, took part in a service of remembrance and thanksgiving, and then paraded to Balloch. From there they boarded Skylark IX. This was

one of the very few surviving vessels to have taken part in the Dunkirk action and they were treated by the Sweeney family to a Loch Lomond cruise.

Around twenty-five years ago, Rev. Ken Russell, then minister of Jamestown Church, paid me the very great compliment of asking me to do a painting of the Skylark.

It was an honour and a privilege to do so as my own uncle, Duncan Baxter, was rescued from Dunkirk. I take my middle name from him, and this is the only painting I ever signed with my full name - William Duncan Scobie.

The painting first hung in Jamestown Parish Church, but now hangs in Lomond Parish Church, Balloch.

**Q: If you could paint anything in the world, what would you choose?**

A: My wife Mary.

**Q: Do you have any other creative interests besides painting?**

A: I've written three historical novels and a collection of short stories under the pseudonym Alexander Tait. They are 'Whisky in the Jar', 'Upon This Rock', 'Mightier than the Sword' and 'The Cup'.

I have also written a collection of poems under my own name 'Song of the River'.

**Q: What advice would you give to anyone interested in creating art?**

A: First and foremost I would say, believe in yourself! Find a subject which inspires you. Find a medium with which you are comfortable and with which you get your best results... and do your stuff!







# LET'S GROW WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE

by Rose Harvie

So, welcome all gardeners! Here we are in the middle of June, and time to assess your gardening progress - whether you just have a few pots, a large allotment or garden, or help others in a community garden.

By now, most of your vegetables should be sown or planted; but it is still not too late for some – salad crops, winter brassicas, leeks, and any left-over main crop potatoes.

Keep 'earthing up' your spuds, and when they start to flower, investigate carefully to see how the crop is growing. Early potatoes should be ready around July.

Salad crops like lettuce and radishes can be sown in odd corners and spaces, and will keep giving a crop until autumn.

Outdoor tomatoes, courgettes, and sweetcorn, should all be sown in individual pots in a greenhouse, or propagator, for planting out later.

Now is the time to sow late brassicas – winter cabbages, broccoli, kale, and cauliflowers.

These seeds should be sown indoors, either a greenhouse, or sunny windowsill.

Sow thinly, in a small seed tray or margarine tub filled with multi-purpose compost. Prick them out into larger trays or multi-cell seed trays when they are about an inch tall, to allow them to grow on.

When they are about 10 cm tall, and look healthy and strong, plant them outside in rows, at least 2/300 cm apart.

You should protect your brassicas from several 'enemies'.

Slugs will eat them, so either use brassica

mats or just use squares of thick towelling or thin carpet. Cut a cross in the middle and carefully place around each brassica plant.

Pigeons can also be a problem – I use large plastic drink bottles, cut in half, and placed over each brassica plant.

Leeks can be sown the same way as brassicas.

When they are about 10/20 cms tall, use a wooden 'dibber' to make a row of holes about the same depth and drop a leek in each one. Don't forget to fill the hole with water!

Strawberries, raspberries, and redcurrants all need protecting from birds by covering with netting. Be careful how you fix the netting so birds don't become trapped underneath. Strawberries need hay or straw carefully put round them, to protect from slugs.

If you have grown courgettes or outdoor cucumbers, plant them about 1 metre apart, again protecting them from slugs and birds.

Sweetcorn does not seem to suffer from pests but it should be planted in a square, NOT a row, as it is wind pollinated.

Your composting system should now be very active. Ask neighbours to keep grass cuttings; collect horse manure and seaweed. Comfrey should be ready for cutting and adding to the heap, only add kitchen waste if you have no rat problems! Weeds, apart from 'mare's tail, docks, and ground elder, can be added. When the first NZ box is filled, turn the contents into the next box, and continue until the end of season.

Happy gardening everyone!





## WHERE'S GOOD FOR FOOD: THE BIG TAQUERO

WORDS BY JENNY WATSON PHOTOS BY KATIE KENNEDY & MARCUS COLE

A passion for food, the need for a career change and a social conscience are the perfect ingredients for an exciting new gastronomic venture in Dumbarton.

Early this year Dave Summerson, owner of the Mexican-inspired food truck Big Taquero, decided he was going to seal the deal on an eight-year dream.

He explained: "I worked away a lot when I was young.

"I got to try lots of different dishes. My love of food just blossomed from there.

"When I was home, I would cook for the boys, and got right into it. From there, I wanted a food truck.

"One day at work last year I decided I'd had enough and just wanted to cook.

"Mexican food is just class and has a great social aspect to it. You can sit with your pals for hours enjoying it.

"Now I turn up at work with a smile on my face."

Dave and his great team Gerry and Matt can be found at Unit 23 Skatepark in Dumbarton.

Their truck is a hidden gem.

The smells wafting through

the hatch and along the queue make a solid promise to your taste buds that they are in for a treat.

I tried the Platter on my first visit – it offers a taster of the menu's staple items. I also ordered the special of the day.

Every bite was flavoursome, delicious and moreish.

There was spiciness, smokiness, sweetness, saltiness, creaminess and freshness!

I washed it all down with a Jarrito, a pineapple-flavoured Mexican soft drink.

On my second visit (which won't be my last) I ordered the Mexican toast - a take on the eggy bread we call French toast.

If you like scrumptious, indulgent, sweet treats, this is for you.

You've got to be quick though, it makes an appearance on Sundays and sells out quickly.

But it was not the lure of tacos which first caught my attention.

Scrolling through Instagram, I noticed a post offering free meals on Saturdays for families accessing a local food bank.

"It's wrong in this day and

age kids are going hungry, it's b\*llsh\*t," Dave said.

"There's no judgement here. We just want folk to have good food. Turn up, get a scan and have a giggle."

If you are registered with West Dunbartonshire Community FoodShare, let the team know you are interested.

Claire Coyle, from WD Community FoodShare, said: "Dave has been great.

"He came in with donations from his customers earlier in the year, so we gave him a collection box and he's been back with it a few times.

"He's also left skatepark tokens for people to use at the truck for food.

"We are delighted another local business sees what is going on in the community and is trying to help."

If you like great food and good banter, get yourself to the hatch!

**Open Fridays and Saturdays 5:30pm until sell out and Sundays 11am - 2pm.**

**Need further convincing... check their Instagram page: @thebigtaquero I dare you not to salivate!**



## RELIABLE RESOURCES

### LOCAL HELPLINE NUMBERS AND INFORMATION SOURCES

**Food For Thought** - 01389 743908

emergency food aid referral line.

**West Dunbartonshire Community**

**Foodshare** 01389 764135 - free phone

08003457050 emergency food aid delivery

**Old Kilpatrick Food Parcels** -

07368496836

**Dumbarton District Women's Aid** -

01389 751036

**WDC 'No Homes for Domestic Abuse'** -

01389 738510

**Clydebank Women's Aid** - 0141 952 8118

**Dumbarton Area Council on Alcohol**

**(DACA)** - 01389 731456 or 0141 952 0881

**WD Citizens Advice Bureau** - information

on benefits, welfare rights, employment

rights and general well-being

Freephone - 0800 4840136

**Clydebank Community Addiction Team** -

0141 562 2311

**Glasgow and Clyde Rape Crisis** -

Support line 08088 00 00 14

Mobile Number 07743807844

**WD Housing & Homeless** -

01389 738282

or Freephone 0800 197 1004 (option 5)

**Dumbarton Joint Hospital** -

01389 812018

**Overdose Response Team** - Dumbarton

Joint Hospital 7 days a week – 10am to

10pm. Anyone can make a referral on

FREEPHONE 08088 00811

**Stepping Stones** - 0141 941 2929 -

mental health charity providing telephone  
support

**Big Disability Group** - 0141 237 4560

thebigdisabilitygroup@gmail.com and on

Facebook - support and information to

people living with disabilities

**Alternatives Community-based Recovery**

- support for individuals and families affected

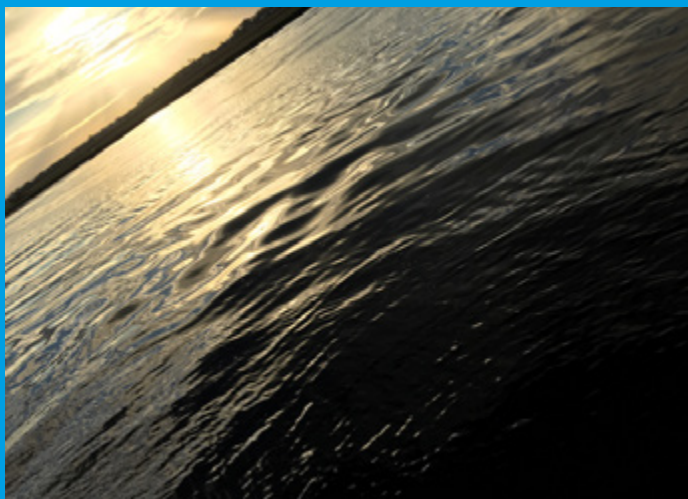
by substance use - 01389 734500 or 0141

9512420 or email [info@alternativeswd.org](mailto:info@alternativeswd.org)



## Photography Tips & Techniques

By Harvey Smart



The theme of this issue's photography competition is Sunsets and Seascapes. They can make for stunning photos, but can also be challenging subjects, so here are a few tips and tricks to get the best shots possible!

**Find the right spot.** Start by scoping out the perfect location to take your photos. When setting or rising, (but I'm not usually up that early), the quality of light our sun produces is fantastic and adored by photographers, who call it 'the golden hour'. Try to find places or subjects enhanced by this lovely golden light. For seascapes, look for a spot with interesting features such as rocks, driftwood, a ship or a lighthouse. This will help draw the viewer in.

**Get the timing right.** Timing is key when shooting landscapes, particularly at sunset. You might want to start shooting about an hour before the sun sets and keep shooting until it's gone. For seascapes, you'll want to choose your days wisely - bad weather often makes for more interesting, atmospheric photography, but is also unpleasant to be out in!

**Experiment with camera settings.** Try different exposure settings to capture the best light.

Shutter speed is the length of time the camera shutter is open and allows light to enter the camera. Shorter shutter speeds freeze the motion of waves or clouds, while longer shutter speeds give a more blurred effect creating a sense of movement. With sunsets, a longer shutter speed allows you to capture details in the bright areas of the sky, while shorter shutter speeds help create silhouettes. Experimentation with settings is the best way to find the best for your scene and shot.

And remember if pointing directly at the sun, most cameras struggle to keep the bright areas and dark areas visible at the same time.

**Have fun and try new things.** These are just suggestions, so above all else, experiment and be creative when taking photos. Try different angles and compositions to capture the perfect shot - it's how you learn!

**CLYDESIDER**   
**PHOTO**  
Competition  
Sponsored by **JESSOPS**

**Theme: Sunsets & Seascapes**

Prize: £25 + A3 canvas print  
& an A4 canvas for two runners-up

**Closing date: August 14**  
Email entries to:  
**clydesidercomp@gmail.com**

**CLYDESIDER**   
**POETRY**  
Competition  
Theme: **Hearts & Minds**  
Prize: **£25**



**Closing date: August 14**  
Email entries to:  
**clydesidercomp@gmail.com**

**Rules:** One entry per person for each competition, entrants must live, work or be part of a group in West Dunbartonshire; all entries must be your own, by entering you give Clydesider permission to publish your work in print or online - this in no way infringes your copyright.

# CLYDE & BAXTER

By Steven Hastings



## SUMMER WORDSEARCH

All the words in the grid are connected to summer.

The words can be found going Left, Right, Up, Down & Diagonally.  
Words that are split with a / can be found in the grid separately.

A	S	W	I	M	B	L	E	S	Y	G	N	I	P	M	A	C	O	L	Y
B	W	U	X	Y	E	Z	A	I	B	U	C	A	R	D	E	A	L	O	L
A	E	N	N	C	A	R	A	N	L	I	A	R	B	E	A	R	A	I	L
R	T	S	B	E	C	H	I	N	D	O	U	F	U	M	M	A	B	O	O
Z	A	R	O	S	H	O	L	E	S	R	I	A	C	H	I	V	E	S	L
O	L	I	L	A	B	B	A	T	T	L	E	C	K	E	T	A	W	R	Y
S	U	B	N	O	A	Z	N	N	E	D	T	I	E	F	I	N	G	S	H
T	I	U	J	L	L	A	Q	U	I	E	T	S	T	R	A	P	P	R	T
R	S	D	N	A	L	H	G	I	H	L	N	O	Q	U	R	A	S	P	A
A	I	Z	O	O	M	U	D	C	A	O	M	P	N	G	D	H	I	J	K
W	N	A	B	U	C	W	I	E	M	B	L	E	D	E	T	I	S	H	E
B	N	W	A	R	T	S	C	H	O	O	L	I	D	W	I	M	M	O	N
E	O	T	R	A	S	B	D	C	E	G	F	G	D	H	E	J	K	L	O
R	T	L	S	P	I	N	O	D	A	N	A	V	M	A	V	A	R	I	D
R	U	N	D	E	C	K	C	H	A	I	R	S	I	S	Y	L	L	O	E
I	V	O	T	U	V	X	S	W	I	M	M	A	W	X	Z	S	N	A	L
E	W	I	M	M	O	C	O	R	E	M	D	I	S	E	D	A	Y	C	B
S	X	P	Q	U	R	S	W	L	A	I	R	S	W	P	O	O	L	E	M
U	Y	L	L	O	C	H	A	I	N	W	I	M	M	E	A	L	S	O	I
B	E	G	A	M	E	S	U	T	E	S	P	I	N	G	A	O	D	E	W

Beachball  
Ice/Lolly  
Bucket/Spade  
Rain  
Camping  
Strawberries  
Caravan  
Sun  
Deckchairs  
Swimming/Pool  
Highland/Games  
Tennis  
Holidays  
Wimbledon



# WHAT'S ON IN WD

## JUNE 23

**The Big Disability Group Summer fundraiser** - 7pm till late Singer Bowling Club. Tickets £5 email [thebigdisabilitygroup@gmail.com](mailto:thebigdisabilitygroup@gmail.com) or pop into the office in Dalmuir.

## JUNE 24

**Picnic in the Park** – 12noon - 2pm in the grounds of St Michael's Primary School. The event is an opportunity for the community of Castlehill, Brucehill and surrounding areas to come together for some chat, games, and general fun activities.

## JUNE 24

**Bellsmyre Development Trust Gala Day** – 12noon – 3pm at the Cutty Sark Centre in Bellsmyre. Stalls, bouncy castle, raffle, home-baking. All welcome.

## JULY 1

**Dalmuir Barclay Church Community Fun Day** – 11am–3pm. Stalls, bouncy castle, food & drink, free activities, fun for all the family. 1 Durban Avenue, Dalmuir West, Clydebank G81 4JP.

## JULY 4

**Free storytelling session with David Harvie** - What's in a name ...? Dumbuck to Chile 250 years on. From 10.30am - 11.30am at Green Tree Remedies, 4, Church St., Alexandria, G83 0NP.

## JULY 5 - 8

**The Big Dumbarton Castle LEGO Build** - calling all Lego fans, join sculptor Alistair Jelks in Dumbarton Library to help build Dumbarton Castle! Free but booking required as spaces are limited, visit [historicensevironment.scot/events](http://historicensevironment.scot/events) to reserve a place

## JULY 29

**Scottish Pipe Band Championships** – 10am – 6pm in Levensgrove Park, Dumbarton. 100 pipe bands, Highland dancers, family activities, food & drink.

## AUGUST 1

**Free storytelling session with Ann MacKinnon** - The Great Tapestry of Scotland. From 10.30am - 11.30am at Green Tree Remedies, 4, Church St., Alexandria, G83 0NP.

## ASN DANCE CLASSES

April's Street Feet run additional support needs free dance classes every Wednesday from 10.30am - 12 noon from their studio above the Co-op in Dalmuir.

## DUMBARTON RIVERSIDE CHAMPIONS DISABILITY FC

- all players age 14+ can participate in league games and tournaments throughout the year. Training in Dumbarton East Park Monday 7.30pm - 9pm & Tues 6.30pm - 7.30pm. Call Donna on 07912353647 or email [donna271064@icloud.com](mailto:donna271064@icloud.com) for details.

## DUNBARTONSHIRE DISABILITY SPORTS HUB

- offer a range of activities including dancing, football, social swimming and multisport for children age 5+. Contact Michael, DDSC Co-ordinator on 07765035585 or email [dunbartonshiredisabilitysports@gmail.com](mailto:dunbartonshiredisabilitysports@gmail.com) for details.

## BIG DISABILITY CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

- The Big Disability Hub is offering a range of art activities including Art for Anxiety on Tuesdays 12.30pm - 2.30pm; Maggie's Yarn Buddies Knit & Natter on a Wednesday from 10.30am - 2.30pm and a Jewellery group on Fridays from 1pm - 3pm. For more details contact the Big Disability group on 07505824148 or pop into their base at 627 Dumbarton Rd, Dalmuir, Clydebank G81 4ET.

## FLOURISHING FAIFLEY

- offer a range of community activities in Skypoint Community Centre. These include:- Family ceramics class on Mondays 5.30pm - 7.30pm; Adult ceramics on Fridays from 10am - 12 noon; Parent & Toddler group Tuesdays & Thursdays 10am - 12 noon. They also have a Walking Group which leaves from their Secret Garden in Middleward Street on Tuesdays at 6pm and the garden is open Mondays from 11am - 1pm. A family summer programme is being planned - check their Facebook page for details.

## CONTACT CLYDESIDER

**Phone:** 01389 381110 (we're not in the office as often as usual so please try our mobiles or email if you can't get us on this number)

**Editorial:** Call Amanda on 07913029234 or email [amanda@clydesider.org](mailto:amanda@clydesider.org)

**Advertising:** Call Charlie on 07502460273 or email [charlie@clydesider.org](mailto:charlie@clydesider.org)

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

**Address:** 48a Erskine View, Old Kilpatrick G60 5JG

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

## MPC ENERGY LTD



INSULATION, HEATING AND SOLAR PV

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Air Source Heat Pump • Solar PV

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PAUL JAMES  
HOME & INTERIORS

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