

# mastrick Matters

Spring 2022

PHOTO CREDIT: ANDY BROWN

## In this issue:

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SPRINGHILL COMMUNITY  
GARDEN

MASTRICK WALKERS

MASTRICK YOUTH HUB

[www.shmu.org.uk/press](http://www.shmu.org.uk/press)





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### editorial

Welcome to the Spring edition of the Mastrick Matters community magazine!

Read on to find out more about the news about Mastrick Youth Hub, Springhill Community Garden and Mastrick Library.

If you would like to get involved and join the editorial team or if you have ideas for the community publication, you can easily get in touch with us.

The staff at shmu are able to support and train anyone living in the area who are interested in developing their ideas and skills in either writing, photography or proof reading.

So please don't be shy, this is your magazine written, edited and designed by the good folk of Mastrick. If you live in the Mastrick area and would like to come along to the editorial meetings (when it is safe to do so) or submit an article then get in touch with Laura at shmu on **07752586312** or you can email her on **[laura.young@shmu.org.uk](mailto:laura.young@shmu.org.uk)**.

You can also get in touch with us via our Facebook page - look up 'Mastrick Matters' and hit that 'like' button, and you can view this magazine alongside previous editions on the shmu website: **[www.shmu.org.uk](http://www.shmu.org.uk)** then click the 'PRESS' option

You can be reassured that our distribution company is taking every measure to ensure they are delivering your magazine safely and within government guidelines.

Mastrick Matters is a community publication and the views expressed are not necessarily those of the editorial team or of shmu.



Supported by





# MASTRICK WALKING GROUPS

The first walk of the year for the Friday group, that is the Strollers, was to Banchory. Some of the group went up Scolty and the rest did the walk along the riverside to Crathes. It was a beautiful sunny day and lovely having our lunch sitting at the riverside.

The next walk was to Stonehaven, a walk around the harbour and into Dunnottar Woods, then over to Dunnottar Castle which was covered in the haar. It was very atmospheric and we had a walk back around the clifftop and down to the harbour.

A trip to Kemnay was next, the group split up, some did a circular walk, down the side of the river, around the ponds and then through the estate. The others did the same walk but missed out the estate, again a lovely sunny day.

Out to Aboyne was next, the walk started by going out the Deeside Way then a track over to the River Dee to walk down the riverbank to Belwade Wood, again another lovely walk .

The Amblers are the Monday Group. They went to Kemnay to walk the Fetternear Estate for their first walk of the year. This is a lovely walk through the woods then around the two ponds. We had our lunch at one of them. It was frozen right across, strange to see the ducks walking over the ice.

Our next outing was to Crynoch Burn Den. This is a woodland walk down the side of the burn, it is heartbreaking to see lots of magnificent trees down by the storm.

Lunch was at the top of Oldman Hill, lovely views from there.

We went down to Gourdon to walk along a track on the shoreline to Johnshaven, once again it was a lovely day. The sun was very low over the sea, this made the water sparkle, at times it was difficult to see up the track in front of us for the sun.

On returning to Gourdon we visited a fish house for our roes and fish to take home.

We have one or two spaces in the groups, if you would like to join contact me on 01224 783627 or email [mastrickwalkers@gmail.com](mailto:mastrickwalkers@gmail.com) or follow us on Facebook "Mastrick Walking Group"



## Pop Up Play @ Aberdeen North Parish Church

It's back! The long-awaited popular pre-school play sessions are up and running again at Aberdeen North Parish Church. Pop Up Play is on Thursdays from 1 – 2:30pm and all are welcome. Sessions include story time and a sing a long, children and their parents/carers are able to socialise and enjoy each other's company – much needed after all the isolation of covid restrictions. Snacks for the children and teas, coffee and a wee treat for their adults. You may make a donation if you wish.

We look forward to welcoming you soon.

## Grampian Women's Aid

The chances are that you know someone who is experiencing domestic abuse. If you know or suspect that someone you know is experiencing domestic abuse it can be difficult to know what to do.

Many people's first instinct is to try to 'save' someone from the relationship, unfortunately, it is almost never that simple.

It's important if you do suspect domestic abuse, you do not ignore it. Women experiencing abuse are often scared, ashamed and confused, and many don't want to accept that their partner is abusive.

If you believe someone you know may be experiencing domestic abuse, please call us on **01224 593381** or email [info@grampian-womens-aid.com](mailto:info@grampian-womens-aid.com).

When our phone lines are closed, Scotland's Domestic Abuse & Forced Marriage helpline is always available on **0800 027 1234**, email [helpline@sdfmh.org.uk](mailto:helpline@sdfmh.org.uk).

Always, if you are in immediate danger, ring **999** for the police.

# MASTRICK LIBRARY IS OPEN

**Our current opening hours are Monday to Friday 10am-1pm and 2pm-5pm and Saturday 10am-1pm.**

Visit [www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/libraries-and-archives/find-my-local-library](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/libraries-and-archives/find-my-local-library) for information on our other libraries.

Visitors to the library can browse and borrow items. We offer books (including large print and audio books) and junior and adult DVDs. Borrowers can also request items, subject to availability.

We offer one-hour appointments for PC access. These slots can be booked online or by contacting our open libraries. We also offer printing services and have photocopying and scanner facilities.

We continue to operate our click and collect service. Appointments can be made online at [aberdeencity.zipporah.co.uk/Generic.AberdeenCity/](http://aberdeencity.zipporah.co.uk/Generic.AberdeenCity/), or by contacting any of the open libraries.

In addition, please visit: [www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/library](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/library) for information on our online services.

Our Bookbug team are reintroducing our popular in-person sessions. To make sure that these are run as safely as possible, we are hosting small tester sessions across the city. Spaces are

extremely limited, and booking is essential. Look out for details on our Facebook page or check with your local library to see if a session is coming there soon.

We are always delighted to meet new faces. For more information on how to become a member, please visit [www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/library](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/library), or contact an open library.

If you are unable to visit the library due to disability, illness, shielding or caring responsibilities, the Home Library Service is available for monthly deliveries to your home. Please contact an open library for more information.

Health Information Plus is a brand-new service launched on 10th January 2022. The service offers customers the opportunity to access health information with support and guidance, allowing people to play a more active role in their own health and wellbeing. Enquiries can be made by email and telephone through [healthinfo@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:healthinfo@aberdeencity.gov.uk) and **01224 652500**.

**For information on our services, please visit [www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/libraries](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/libraries) or contact Mastrick Library by email: [MastrickLibrary@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:MastrickLibrary@aberdeencity.gov.uk) or telephone: **01224 788558**.**

## SPRINGHILL COMMUNITY GARDEN IN 2021

During 2021 so many people had a hand in bringing the community garden further along in its transformation into a safe and accessible growing space, and we are grateful to everyone who has wielded a spade or attacked a bramble. Sunday afternoons saw a variety of different volunteers coming along to help out with different jobs, from pruning bushes, to spreading wood chip and moving compost. The unpaid work team (community service) have provided a huge amount of muscle power throughout the last year with Forbes and his clients clearing paths around the edge of the green, digging out overgrown areas, battling brambles, rebuilding the compost area and collecting various supplies around the city for us. On top of that, back in their workshop they made us lovely signs for fruit and vegetables around the garden, some decorative pieces and a lovely bird watching bench. As a result of all this effort from so many people we are seeing the garden grow increasingly into a place where both people and nature can enjoy being.

Despite a delay caused by covid we took part in Aberdeen's first Community Garden Festival. One afternoon we were able to look at the insects found on site with Rangers Rob and Helen who delighted attending children with their knowledge. The visiting bees and hoverflies were particularly well examined that day while they enjoyed some later flowering plants. The children seeded wildflower areas in the garden that we can see growing already and

look forward to seeing blooming later this year, while adults enjoyed the sunshine and surroundings then went home with some freshly dug tatties.

Growing spaces for vegetables were increased when a new enclosure was constructed with help and advice from the Men's Shed based over at the Bridge of Don. More beds will be built in preparation for this spring as we have just received a generous donation of supplies from CHAP construction, who are also helping us with some jobs around the garden. One of our aims for 2022 is to increase the variety of vegetables as well as increasing our harvest. In addition to the raised beds, in place beds will be dug directly into the ground with one already earmarked to be a pumpkin patch. Within the wildlife area we have been increasing diversity with wildflower seeds, some plug planting, introducing a wider variety of shrubs and a damp area specially for our resident toads!

If you would like to get involved this year, either again or for the first time, keep an eye on our Facebook page (Springhill Community Garden) to see when Sunday volunteer sessions will begin again for this year, and for details of other events through the year. We can also be contacted through our email [springhillcommunity@gardener.com](mailto:springhillcommunity@gardener.com).







# Pathways in Mastrick

**Pathways has been assisting people across Aberdeen City for over 22 years to find suitable employment! At Pathways we work with people from 16 years old to our oldest client who was 74.**

Pathways had worked with a client for over a year and helped them get their last job. Unfortunately, they were paid off due to Covid. While they managed to get a temporary Christmas position, this only lasted till January. The client's passport had run out as well and they had to go to Glasgow to apply for a new one. This temporarily held them back from applying for new positions that required a PVG or Disclosure.

The first thing the Pathways Keyworker did was update the clients CV with the positions she had done. Pathways then updated her Indeed account with their new CV and made sure the client could access the site through their phone as they had no internet access at home. The client also got their passport sent to them two weeks after visiting Glasgow for a new one. Pathways supported the client by forwarding suitable jobs to them daily and supporting them by phoning them every couple of days. As the Keyworker had

known the client for over a year, they were able to supply them with a reference to the employer as well. The client was also given a workbook about interview techniques to help them prepare for interviews.

The client secured a full-time housekeeping position with a hospital and was very happy. This client made such a good impression with her manager that she was asked to apply for a care position after couple of months. She came back to Pathways to get help with the application and support for the interview and she was successful in gaining the position.

The client told her Keyworker, *"Thank you so much for your help and support, I will keep in touch to let you know how I am getting on and I know where you are if I need you help again"*.

**The Pathways Keyworker based in your area is Theresa McKay who meets people at Mastrick Library on Thursdays between 10.45 am and 1.45 pm. She is usually very busy so you must phone and make an appointment. Give Theresa a call on 01224 682 939.**

**PATHWAYS –  
Helping YOU Find Work!**

## Scotland's Census

This year is the census year for Scotland. It should have been 2021 but it was postponed because of Covid.

The census is the official count of person and household information in Scotland, and it is important to fill out the census as the government and councils use the information from it to plan public services and how to spend their budget, so they need accurate information.

2022 is the first predominantly digital census but there is the option to fill out a paper census if you would prefer.

The census date is the 20th March 2022 and you can get more information about the process on [www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk](http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk).

# Instant Neighbour - Supporting the local community

Happy New Year from all of us at Instant Neighbour! We hope that you all had a lovely Christmas and New Year and managed to stay safe and healthy. We opened our doors for 2022 at our St Machar Drive HQ on the 5th of January and are full of enthusiasm for the coming year. Looking back, 2021 saw the message to 'shop local to support local' emphasised across all sectors; retail in particular as small businesses targeted local communities to help keep them trading. Charities have been crying out for volunteers and donations as increasing numbers of people have found themselves in need of support. We really appreciate the support from the local Aberdeen community. We love catching up on your news when you pop into the shop to pick up a bargain and are eternally grateful to those of you who pop in with cakes and treats to keep us going. A huge thank-you to you all for your ongoing support and custom as well as your donations of items for reuse encouraging sustainability and helping Aberdeen go greener.

We're in the middle of implementing as many changes

as possible to ensure that as a charity, we're as green as we can possibly be. Our shops sell reuse items which are often one-off unique products. Every time you shop with us, upcycling these items, you're not only potentially getting better quality items for less money, but you're being kind to the planet by diverting that item from landfill.

We're a local charity and we're here to support the local community. The profits generated by selling reuse items in our shops are ploughed straight back into the charity to support our charitable enterprises - our Giving Tree, and our Food Bank. In monetary terms, every £20 spent in our shops equates to the cost of a basic food parcel. In December 2021, through the Instant Neighbour Giving Tree Christmas appeal and the gifts we received both from profits generated in the shop and from donations by the wider Aberdeen community, 3684 children were supported and received gifts to open on Christmas Day. Our Food Bank is open Monday – Friday all year, but in December, our food bank handed out 595 food parcels.



## Grampian Credit Union

We are a savings and loans co-operative open to everyone living or working in Aberdeen city, Aberdeenshire and Moray areas.

For over 28 years, we have helped more than 10,000 people in the Grampian area with safe savings and accessing affordable loans and credit - and now we can help you!

To join us and benefit from our safe savings or affordable loans, contact us today and see how we can assist you with taking charge of your financial future.

If you need a loan for your next holiday, home or garden improvements, car or family event, we can help.

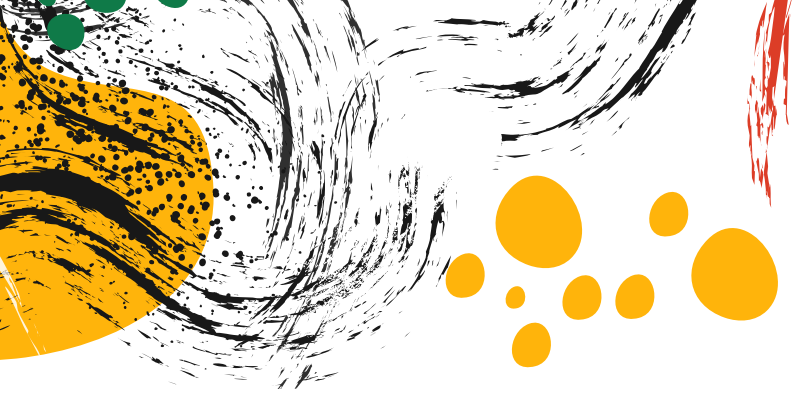
With loans from as little as £200, you can contact us through any of the following ways:

**Website:** [www.grampiancreditunion.co.uk](http://www.grampiancreditunion.co.uk)

**Email:** [ruth.leith@grampiancreditunion.co.uk](mailto:ruth.leith@grampiancreditunion.co.uk)

**Telephone:** 01224 561506

**Office:** 250 Union Street, Aberdeen AB10 1TN



## ANTI-SOCIAL CALLS DROP TO “ALMOST ZERO” AS YOUTH HUB HAILED

The multi-activity Mastrick Youth Hub in Aberdeen has been hailed as a great success by all partners involved having been nominated for several awards.

Situated in the car park of Tesco, Aberdeen Woodend, the sessions are running in partnership with the supermarket itself, Denis Law Legacy Trust and its Streetsport programme, Police Scotland, Aberdeen City Council, Developing the Young Workforce and AFC Community Trust.

The project has been nominated for Aberdeen City Council’s Star Awards; YouthLink Scotland’s Youth Awards and is also a finalist in the Chief Constable’s Excellence Awards, testament to the work involved and the innovative approach to setting up what’s thought to be Scotland’s first Outdoor Youth Hub.

Like many original Streetsport sessions, it’s in a targeted location to reduce anti-social behaviour among young people in the area, something partners have said has been achieved.

John McQuat, Community Policing Team, said: “The work delivered by the team involved in delivering the Youth Hub has been second to none, not least the youth workers, Stuart Neil of Tesco and the young people themselves. The number of reported youth related anti-social behaviour calls in the immediate vicinity has dropped to almost zero since the Hub has been up and running.”

Key to the success of the Hub has been the relationship between partners and young participants that has grown from strength-to-strength with each passing week.

Stuart Neil, Store Manager at Tesco Aberdeen Woodend, said: “This project has been something that I’ve personally been very passionate about and it’s been fantastic to see such a remarkable response from all of the kids who enjoy our new space. We wanted to really address the root of the problem with anti-social behaviour and for me, that started with speaking to the young people about what they wanted and trying to see things from their perspective.

“We’ve worked very closely with local police services and the council to get the hub up and running and so far, the feedback from the community has been fantastic. Another key aim of the project is to really support these young people, inviting youth workers to the hub to speak to them as well as invite people to come along to offer training and provide them with new skills, as we understand the importance of having positive role models to help give them the tools they need for everyday life.”

Karen Philip, Employer School Coordinator, Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) North East, said: “DYW bridges the gap between employers and education to help all young people find fulfilling careers. Two of our Employer School Coordinators, who are

linked with schools local to the Hub, are delighted to attend partner meetings.

“They hope to feed into the partnership’s activities by helping them to foster links with local employers, both to support the activity sessions and to raise awareness of work, training and volunteering opportunities for the young people. The Employer School Coordinators also report back into their school networks, so that all those involved in supporting the young people can adopt a joined-up approach.”

Many youth programmes like Streetsport rely heavily on the good work of volunteers and this one is no different. Mastrick Youth Hub welcome a consistent number each week with well over 150 hours of volunteering being recorded so far and recognition through the Saltire Awards.

Hannah Clews, Streetsport Development Officer at Denis Law Legacy Trust, said: “Volunteers are such a huge part of our programme and we’re lucky to have a bank of them that are dedicated to helping young people across the city.

“At the Hub, for example, we’ve had five pupils from Harlaw Academy who organised a Christmas event involving a night of music, hot chocolate, tray bakes and even gingerbread decorating. The amazing mural backdrop was also a volunteer creation and has gained loads of respect in the community.



“One of our longstanding Streetsport volunteers, Jenna, regularly attends the Hub sessions and was recently nominated for Young Volunteer of the Year at this years’ Aberdeen Sports Awards which is great recognition for the hard work that everyone puts in”.

Finding a common theme among young people is often a barrier to conversation or to gaining initial rapport and trust. One thing the Hub has found that brings both young participants and youth workers together is food.

Wilma Smith, Aberdeen City Council Community Learning and Development, said: “They have enjoyed getting involved in making food such as a BBQ, hot chocolate, fudge, noodles, smoothies and more.

“Building on this we have been successful in securing funding from the Trades Widows Funds Charity for cooking sessions at CFine’s Cook at The Nook where they will learn how to make healthy and cheap alternatives to the food and takeaways they love. They’ll be able to socialise with their friends in a safe and welcoming environment and can enjoy the meal they cook with their friends and youth workers”.

The importance of maintaining a presence and growing on relationships made in areas which contain high youth anti-social behaviour is paramount to its future legacy, something John McQuat recognises.

He added: “As we move forward Police Scotland continue to be actively involved in the Hub and local officers will look to build positive relationships with those who attend. Many of the young people

are reluctant to acknowledge or even speak with officers for a variety of reasons but we’ll be visible at the Hub when we can, taking time to talk and get to know those present which in turn will allow our young people to get to know their local ‘bobbies”.



# Kevin's Diary

December 24 2021: whilst in the shower, the postman knocked on the door with a parcel. He left it with a neighbour. I think the neighbours know I have difficulty manoeuvring big steps - my faith in humanity has been restored.

January 10 2022: the weather outside is frightful but the fire is so delightful. So, after putting the recycling out, I went inside and appreciated the warmth. Outside, not even my Nordic socks helped. At least it wasn't as bad as when Storm Arwen hit us.

When I closed my eyes, I was escorted back to when I went to September when I spent a few days in Callendar.

Back then, there were leaves on the trees and the sun shone. It was warm; I could sit outside and enjoy the surroundings. I awoke each morning to the sound of sparrows chirping and blackbirds tweeting.

Though how they got hold of a computer, I don't know.

The missing word is **MAY**.

		R	E	H	C	A	T	H	A	T		
	C										T	
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SOLUTION

## Disssc (Disability Inspiring Sports and Social Club)

We are a disabled group up in Mastrick which runs from the Mastrick Community Centre on a Sunday from 1pm-4pm.

We offer all sorts of sports such as carpet bowls, table tennis and dominoes, as well as the opportunity to just sit and have a chat.

We welcome people age 9+ years but we would still ask for

a parent or carer to accompany them until the age of 16 years.

**For more information, please feel free to pop in to the Mastrick Community Centre on a Sunday afternoon or call Alex Rae (Disssc Chairperson) on 07572125253.**

## WORD SEARCH

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

All the words below will be found in the puzzle below – except one.

The words that are there are found horizontally, vertically, or diagonally. In some instances the words are backwards.

The words are surnames of sitcom characters.

Can you spot the word that is not there?

The words:

- BRENT • FLETCHER •
- GODBER • GRANGER •
- MAINWARING • MELDREW •
- PEARCE • PIKE • TROTTER
- WILSON • WARBOYS



# FIBROMYALGIA

## *Fi-bro-my-al-gia?*

I have suffered from this nasty problem for close to six years now and I was recently asked what it is, people know I have got it, but they do not really know what it is. When I thought about it neither did I, I had always just accepted what the professionals told me, it is chronic, incurable, and extremely unpredictable.

It causes pain which can be mild to extreme, it can affect specific areas or be widespread. There may be a trigger or maybe not, the onset of flare ups can be gradual or rapid. It can cause the sufferer digestive and bowel problems. Often there will be memory and speech issues, "Fibro Fog." A lack of balance, dizziness and clumsiness is common and my personal favourites, sensitivity to things like light, noise, and temperature. Oh, and do not forget the difficulty sleeping. There will be good days and most certainly bad days. One thing is certain though, it is random, unpredictable and to the observer it is often invisible and that in itself can be a disability.

Fibromyalgia is a strange beastie, there are between 1.5 to 2 million diagnosed sufferers in the UK alone, yet little has been achieved in relation to a cure. The current approach is simply to treat the symptoms. As the most common symptom is pain that is often the focus of the medics

when faced with a sufferer. Sadly, over the counter pain relief is seldom effective and that leads to the use of prescription pain relief, usually opiate based in the form of morphine. Now I am not going into the stigma often associated with regular opiate use, that is just another branch on the tree that sufferers must deal with. For many it is the only way to find relief from the constant 24/7 pain as well as dealing with potential side effects from medication, indeed it is not unusual for the side effects to require medication.

It is hardly surprising that sufferers often suffer from crippling mental health issues, experiencing pain twenty-four hours a day often with little or no relief. Facing the inability to perform simple daily tasks from opening a coffee jar to dealing with personal hygiene. Everything is a challenge and the reliance on others for support is fraught with issues. Then you hear seemingly innocent comments like "well you don't look disabled" or "it can't be that bad, you look fine to me." But we are not fine and facing the additional challenge of having an invisible disability is often a step too far for sufferers

Another often forgotten aspect of dealing with disability is the role of the carers. Often untrained and unpaid spouses or family members. These largely unsung heroes often suffer

both physical and psychological problems from performing their support roles. Physical from having to perform tasks that would normally be undertaken by two paid carers, bathing for instance, lifting and physically supporting sufferers. On top of these massive tasks and providing emotional support they must deal with the pain of watching their loved ones suffer. Oh yes and then they might find time to work and have a life of their own. Not a great job description is it.

It has been said that we often "look but do not see and listen but do not hear." Now that may be true but sometimes there is nothing to see or hear, when that happens we must rely on that rarest of senses, our common sense. Try to see what is not obvious and not judge when we do not know the facts, an ounce of compassion is a wonderful thing, use it wisely.

Support group contact info:

**Fibromyalgia Action UK**  
**Suite 3006, Mile End, 12 Seedhill**  
**Road, Paisley PA1 1JS**

**Tel:0300 999 3333**

**(national helpline)**

**web: [www.fmuk.org](http://www.fmuk.org)**

**email: [charity@fmuk.org](mailto:charity@fmuk.org)**



## Covid-19 Myths

Are you unsure where to get the latest up-to-date information regarding the Covid-19 vaccination and testing?

Don't worry, we have got you covered!

Visit a local drop-in vaccination centre. You only need to take yourself and a mask, the vaccination team will take care of the rest! You don't even need to be registered to a GP practice. Find out where the team are going to be using the following link - [www.nhsgrampian.org/covid-19](http://www.nhsgrampian.org/covid-19)

### **MYTH BUSTING – Covid-19 Vaccine**

***I do not need to get the vaccine because I am young and healthy.***

Everyone should get the vaccine regardless of age and health status as it is the best way to protect our communities. The disease can damage the lungs, heart and brain and it may result in long-Covid. There is another reason to consider getting the vaccine: It protects those around you. Even if Covid-19 does not make you very sick, you could pass it on to someone else who might be more severely affected.

***If I have had Covid-19, do I still need to get the vaccine?***

We do not know how long protection remains after Covid-19 infection; therefore, the vaccine is advised even if you have had Covid-19.

The current advice is wait 4 weeks after having Covid-19 before getting the vaccine.

***I am worried about the long-term impact of the vaccine.***

When any vaccine or medicine is approved, it is continuously and closely monitored for safety and effectiveness by the MHRA. Most side effects appear immediately or soon after vaccination, within days or weeks, and are minor and temporary. Long-term side effects appear to be very rare but, to be ultra-careful, the MHRA will continue to monitor all the vaccines. Any suspected side effects are reported by healthcare staff or patients to the MHRA using the yellow card scheme.

***Catching Covid-19 after having this vaccine is proof it does not work.***

The Covid-19 vaccine will reduce the chances of suffering from the serious complications of infection. No vaccine is 100% effective, so everyone should continue to follow the recommended Scottish Government guidelines to prevent further spread of the virus.

***I am worried I am going to be ill after getting the Covid-19 vaccine and need to take time off work.***

There can be side effects from the vaccine such as having a temperature or having flulike symptoms, this is similar to other vaccines such as the Flu jab. If you start to feel poorly, we recommend you take some paracetamol, and this normally passes within 24- 48 hours.

***I have heard the vaccine affects fertility and I am hoping to become pregnant in the future.***

There is no evidence that the Covid-19 vaccine affects fertility.

Testing is an important way we can spot cases early and stop further outbreaks! Find out all the information you need about testing including FAQs, local testing centres and pick up points, as well as how to book a PCR test using the following QR code or link - <https://bit.ly/3smzINI>





# Elected Officials

## Councillor David Cameron

In recent weeks it was brought to my attention the totally unacceptable state of the road surface on New Park Place. I understand motorists had to adopt a slalom approach to driving on the road between Arnage Drive and Mastrick Road, in both directions, in an attempt to avoid the dangerous potholes which could have caused serious damage to their vehicles. The fact that I was made

aware of this problem allowed me to make an enquiry which resulted in me receiving an email a short time later from Council Officers informing me that the road surface had been repaired. I am aware that when I make enquiries to get issues resolved that I am not always successful, however if I don't make the enquiries then the problem will still remain. Please feel free to bring

issues in your neighbourhood to my attention, using any of the methods of communication listed at the end of this article and I will do my best for you and the community.

It has been a pleasure and an honour to represent you on Aberdeen City Council for the last 10 years. Please stay safe and look after yourself, your loved ones and your neighbours so that we can emerge from this

## Jackie Dunbar

I am pleased to be able to inform you that I have now signed a lease for office premises at Mastrick Shopping Centre, Greenfern Place and my office will be located here moving forward.

I can also update you on my new office phone number which is: 01224 011 936 so if you need some assistance with an issue or you feel there is a matter needing raised in the Scottish Parliament, please do get in touch as I am here to assist you when needed.

I am also continuing to donate my Councillor salary to local good causes every month like Children's Hospices Across Scotland (CHAS) to provide baby memory boxes, Future Choices and Mastrick Community Centre for their new bingo machine for the over 50s, mats for the parents and toddlers group, as well as new tables and chairs. I also made a donation to food banks in the Mastrick area over the Christmas period. If any community groups or organisations could do with a little funding, please do get in touch with

the details of how you would use the funding and who would benefit.

**Yours sincerely,  
Jackie**

**Jackie Dunbar MSP  
Aberdeen Donside  
01224 011 936  
jackie.dunbar.msp@parliament.scot  
12A Mastrick Shopping Centre  
Greenfern Place, Aberdeen  
AB16 6JR**

## Gordon Graham

Hi folks,

### **New housing for our families**

Our housing priorities are progressing well as the Summerhill Site comes to fruition. Despite hold ups due to Covid it is planned that Phase 1 will see 128 houses available to let later this year. Phase 2 will see a further 128 houses available from Summer

2022 and there remains to be a date set for the remaining 113 houses this will see a total of 359 houses being built. This will provide much-needed homes for folk.

### **Northfield/Mastrick Doctor Surgeries - Greenferns**

A number of people are complaining that there is no Doctors Surgery

at Mastrick and have requested to find out what is happening with the promised GP practice at Greenferns. I am getting very concerned that despite promises made in 2018 there seem to be a reluctance to commit to the new building at Greenferns.

**ggraham@aberdeencity.gov.uk  
tel 07736329751**

## Interview with Tracy - part Three

The Mastrick Matters team wanted to start using the shmu page to introduce you to some of the staff and volunteers who are involved with shmu. Recently we spoke to the Volunteer Coordinator, Tracy Ewing and here are some of the things she had to say about her experiences at shmu. We included parts one and two in the previous edition of Mastrick Matters so read on for part three.

*What did you find hardest about your role during lockdown?*

T: I think just balancing has been the hardest thing. I think that every day is different and I think balancing home and work life has been the hardest thing for me because typically my role would be get up in the morning, do my hair and makeup and go to work and be in the office and have my hours in the office and I knew I was doing this, then I had a meeting and I had to do that and then I would get in my car and come home.

But when you're at home you know particularly times when school's

been closed so as a single parent you are constantly juggling making sure learning is happening with children and they're eating properly and make sure they're been looked after and then you're trying to do the same with your colleagues and make sure they're fine and you're all working nicely together and supporting each other and making sure all the volunteers are as looked after as possible

## shmuTRAIN

Our current PT plus group has been busy even with Covid sometimes changing our plans.

We have had a session with Young Scot who were beamed into our Boardroom via Microsoft Teams videocall and spoke about funding and volunteering opportunities available for young people via their website as well as how the workers themselves got to where they are now, adding an employability side to the chat.

We have also had lovely Carol from Bon Accord Care, who delivered a Skills for Care workshop for our young people. The session took place

in shmu and was very useful for our participants to learn more about the care sector."

We also have had a very productive time doing our CV-s and Cover letters, thinking about our responsibilities in workplace and how to conduct ourselves at work.

We also have some great news about work experience!

Two of our young people are starting their placements with Shopmobility/ AbleDeen in their Union Square office while other two are going to start work



experience at the Aberdeen University Zoology Museum of all places! We wish them all the best with this.

And that is not all! We are happy to share more good news from the previous Positive Transitions group. Two young people have started their Sound Production School course with NESCOL and one has gained employment in a hotel in Aberdeenshire! Again we wish these young people all the very best!"



## Empty Homes in Aberdeen: Furry boots?



**Latest figures show there are over 43,000 long term empty homes in Scotland. Approximately 6,000 of these homes are in Aberdeen. At the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership, we support owners to bring empty homes back into use.**

We often work with owners whose houses are lying empty, but the process of unlocking it seems too difficult. They may have inherited it and there is an emotional attachment; a renovations project has not worked out; or a relationship has broken down. Owning an empty home, whatever the circumstances, can be a financial drain and source of worry. Empty homes can also negatively affect neighbours and surrounding communities. Neighbours tell us that living near an empty home can become a living nightmare...

For example, in Aberdeen a neighbour shared concerns about the property next door. The house had been empty for years after the owner had suddenly moved out. It

was falling into a state of disrepair- and more recently, had attracted antisocial behaviour. The neighbour told us they had felt isolated and frightened, watching vandals break into the house, damaging it further. They were concerned about the deterioration, and how this could affect the insurance and value of their home. Living near to an empty property is not just a case of blight, but also a source of worry, discomfort and safety for those trying to enjoy their own home. Empty homes can have a detrimental effect on people's wellbeing and sense of place. They send out negative messages about a neighbourhood and can become the focus of anti-social behaviour. This can have a spiralling effect, with more people leaving, homes remaining unsold and remaining residents feeling trapped in a declining neighbourhood.

Making empty houses homes again can help to reverse this trend, making areas feel safer, healthier and livelier, and once more making people proud to call it home. It

can create a positive feel about communities, drawing new people towards them and helping to support wider regeneration. We know that an empty home is a wasted resource. Bringing them back into use can not only offer someone a home, but also help a community to thrive.

Since the beginning of the Partnership, over 6,000 empty properties have brought back into use. Through working with owners and community groups, our advice service can assist in all aspects of bringing an empty home back into use. Whether you are looking for help in formulating a plan, would like to know what discounts you might be entitled to, or simply you want to share the burden of your empty home, please don't hesitate to contact the Scottish Empty Homes Advice Service. We would love to hear from you.

**Email:**  
[emptyhomes@shelter.org.uk](mailto:emptyhomes@shelter.org.uk)

**Tel: 03445151941**

# Community Contacts

Aberdeen City Council Helpline - 0800 0304 713

Virtual School Helpline - 01224 523322

## ALCOHOL

Alcoholics Anonymous - 0800 9177 650

Drinkline - 0300 123 1110

## CRIME

Crimestoppers - 0800 555 111

## DRUGS

Alcohol and Drugs Action Helpline

01224 594700 or 07927192706

Narcotics Anonymous

0300 999 1212

## DENTIST

Emergency - G-Dens - 111

## DOCTORS

NHS 24 Emergency - 111

## POLICE

Non-Emergency - 101

## ELECTRICITY

If you have a power-cut - 105

## GAS

Gas Emergency - 0800 111 999

## WATER

Scottish Water Emergency - 0800 0778 778

## HOUSING

Emergency Repairs - 03000 200 292

Family Planning - 0345 337 9900

Mental Health Aberdeen - 01224 573892

Breathing Space - 0800 838 587

Samaritans - Need to talk

01224 574 488 or 116 123

## SOCIAL WORK

Adult Protection - 0800 731 5520

Joint Child Protection Team

01224 306877 or 0800 731 5520

Aberdeen Carers Support Service - 01224 914036

Age Scotland - 0800 1244 222

CFINE 01224 596156

Financial Advice at CFINE 01224 531386

Pathways 01224 682 939

Citizens Advice 01224 586255

Mastrick Doctors

01224 662933

## YOUR LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS ARE:

### Local Councillors

Councillor Ciaran McRae

01224 346630

cimcrae@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Councillor Gordon Graham

01224 523594

ggraham@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Councillor David Cameron

07876760760

Dacameron@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Councillor John Wheeler

07500999593

Jowheeler@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Councillor Steve Delaney

01224 346614

Sdelaney@aberdeencity.gov.uk

### Area MSP

Jackie Dunbar

– MSP for Aberdeen Donside

0131 34 85067

Jackie.Dunbar.msp@parliament.sco

## DOMESTIC ABUSE SUPPORT

Domestic Abuse is not acceptable. It is not your fault and you are not alone. Domestic Abuse is when you are hurt, bullied or frightened by: Your husband or wife, your boyfriend or girlfriend, your current or ex-partner

Their behaviour can be; controlling, physical, sexual, financial or emotional.

### Help and support

There are services available to support you, and they are still open. You do not have to wait for an emergency to get help. Tell someone you trust or contact:

### Police Scotland

If you are in danger and it is an emergency, call 999. For non-emergencies call 101

**National Domestic Abuse Helpline Free** and confidential advice. Open to all. 24 hours a day.

Telephone: 0800 027 1234. Website: [sdfmh.org.uk](http://sdfmh.org.uk)

### Grampian Women's Aid

Telephone: 01224 593381. Website:

[grampian-womens-aid.com](http://grampian-womens-aid.com)

**Rape Crisis Grampian** Telephone: 01224 590932.

Website: [rapecrisisgrampian.co.uk](http://rapecrisisgrampian.co.uk)