



woodside freepress

Spring Edition 2017

Regeneration Matters
The Brazilian Experience
Farewell George Adam

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Editorial

Welcome to the spring edition of the Woodside Free Press. This is YOUR magazine.

We are here to help you find out what's going on in Woodside and connect with your community.

In our pages you will find news, views, reviews and features plus lots of opportunities to take part in training and leisure activities for everyone in the community, young and old.

Within this magazine we have news from Fersands and Fountain Community Project, Cash in your Pocket and some local history features.

If you have something you would like to say, some local issue you think deserves coverage, or if you would like to get involved by joining the happy band of volunteers that puts this magazine together, please contact Mark Lovie at the Woodside Fountain Centre on 01224 524926 or Laura at Station House Media Unit on 01224 515013 - or email laura.young@shmu.org.uk.

All the content in this magazine has been produced and approved by members of the editorial team.

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

Front cover pic courtesy of Aberdeen City Libraries. Workers crossing the now derelict Grandholm Bridge on their lunch hour.

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Regeneration Matters

Real lives, real needs, real people – working together for change

The Regeneration Matters Group celebrated their 10th anniversary last year and at their residential review from the 1st and 2nd of October reflected on the work they have covered over the past 10 years. The group's first meeting was held at the Town House on the 23rd of November 2006.

The group formed after a meeting held in the previous year (2005) to discuss the potential development of a city-wide regeneration forum, the meeting followed on from considerations by the community representatives of the Great Northern Partnership (GNP) Board. The focus of the group would be:

- 1) Enable cross community working and integration on issues of common interest and concern
- 2) Have a strong and unified voice with a focus on community regeneration
- 3) Share information, good practice and plans for developments
- 4) Improve communication across communities
- 5) Improve communication and consultation with service providers/agencies
- 6) Increase their capacity to influence and develop/improve services within their communities

- 7) Have a focus on change, improvement and action and not to be a 'talking shop'

Since 2006 the group has rebranded and changed from the Community Regeneration Forum to Regeneration Matters group and has members from each of the regeneration areas which include: City Centre, Cummings Park, Mastrick, Northfield, Middlefield, Seaton, Tillydrone, Torry and Woodside.

Seven members of the group are also on the Fairer Aberdeen Board which allocates £1.6m of funding to over 50 projects/organisations in the regeneration areas. These projects include the Community Flats in Seaton, Tillydrone and Cummings Park, Pathways, shmu, St Machar Parent Support Project and the credit unions etc. Further details of the projects can be accessed in the following link: www.communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Fairer-Aberdeen-Annual-Report-2014-15.pdf

For more information about Regeneration Matters please contact Anne Knight on 01224 523532 or email aknight@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Pathways

An Aberdeen charity is to carry out audits in the Woodside area as part of a project aimed at helping prepare people for work.

Residents will be visited by Pathways Services as interviewers seek to speak to people about the Progress Through Positive Partnerships project and how it could benefit them. Up to 200 homes in each area will be visited.

An audit will be made up to help identify who may eligible to take part in the project and will build a clear picture of issues affecting the regeneration areas. As well as going door-to-door, the interviewers will visit community facilities to try to ensure everyone who meets the criteria has a chance to get involved.

Pathways Services manager Malcolm Pritchard said: "Pathways is delighted to be awarded the contract to carry out skills audits on behalf of Aberdeen City Council in each of the next two years. As an organisation which is committed to helping people of Aberdeen inform the funders of the types or service they feel can best help them to find work."

The project will also focus on specific groups, including: unemployed; those in low-paid employment; clients in recovery; women returners; care leavers; those for whom English is not their first language; ethnic minorities; people facing other disadvantages, including those with long term health issues, disabilities, alcohol or drug misuse issues; ex-offenders; and care leavers.

For more information please contact Pathways on 01224 643 697.

Project news



Introducing Lynette Owen, who will be covering Claire Whyte's maternity leave

1: Where do you live?

I have lived in Fersands for 19 years.

2: Where were you born?

I was born in Haverfordwest (Hwlffordd) and brought up in a very small village called Letterston (Treletert) in the county of Pembrokeshire (Sir Benfro). Pembrokeshire is a county in the South West of Wales. The county is home to Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, the only coastal national park of its kind in the United Kingdom and one of three national parks in Wales - the others being Snowdonia and the Brecon Beacons. Over the years Pembrokeshire's beaches have been received many International Blue Flag Awards, Green Coast Awards and Seaside Awards. In 2011 it had 39 beaches recommended by the Marine Conservation Society. Industry is nowadays focused on agriculture and tourism, but historically mining and fishing were important activities. The county has a diverse geography and a complex history. Welsh is spoken a lot in Pembrokeshire and in some families it is their first language.

3: Do you have children?

I have three children: Scott who is 30, Micha who is 22

and Osian who is 14. I also have a grandson: Cai who is 10 months old. I have two dogs, called Rubi who is 3 and Day-z who is 15 weeks old.

4: What do you like about Woodside?

I like the community spirit in Woodside, even though you are living in city it feels like a village. All the years I have been living in Woodside I have found the locals to be the friendliest people I have met who have accepted me into their community and who have become my good friends.

5: What excites you about starting this new job?

I am excited about working with the young people and meeting everyone at the community centre.

6: What do you like about working with young people?

Young people have so much energy and resilience and are among the most engaging and most intriguing audiences you can work with. They have the same rights to culture as adults, but their circumstances create challenges that can only be met with determination, creativity and integrity. I think it is the challenge that makes working with and for children and young people incredibly rewarding.

7: What is your favourite game or sport to watch and play

Rugby is my favourite game to watch. I don't play any sports at the moment but when I was a teenager I played hockey and I also played hockey for the Welsh under 16's team. I still have my hockey stick that was bought for me when I was 14 years old.

8: Who is your favourite author?

Phillipa Gregory. She is an English author who writes about strong women from the Tudor period.



Fersands Free Meal Event

Local volunteers delivered their ninth free meal to Woodside residents on the 30th January.

As it was close to Burns Night the volunteers offered haggis, neeps and tatties to the people attending. On this occasion sixty people were fed. The previous event was a Christmas meal which had the most attendance of any free Woodside meal with over 100 two course meals served. The festive dinner wasn't to start until 5.30pm but by 5pm the café was full. The tables were laid beautifully in traditional Christmas style which helped welcome the first thirty-six customers. Drinks were served to the thirsty crowd until service was ready.

Right on time the catering staff and waitresses started plating up and serving as the three violinists

arrived and began a recital of festive favourites to add to the Christmas atmosphere.

It took three sittings before everyone was accommodated.

People attend the meals for different reasons - some just to get out of the house for a while, others use it to meet up with friends. Some of those attending are really hungry too. During the December event 24% said they came because they were "skint" or "it would be their only Christmas dinner." Like the rest of Aberdeen, people in Woodside are going through some rough times and the demand for emergency food parcels would back that up. Last October less than 20 food parcels were requested but in January that had increased to over 100.

Thankfully Tesco and their customers have been very generous and their regular donations are transformed in to food parcels by the volunteers working at the Healthy Living Shop.

The Healthy Living Shop tries to sell competitively priced fruit, vegetables and other healthy options such as free range duck eggs and fresh fish on a Friday. We have applied to UDecide for funding to keep these services ticking over. The money would be used to pay the shop rent for a year and to pay for another 8 free meals in the year. This will be decided by Woodsiders by the 4th of March so we will know very soon. Hopefully our team of dedicated volunteers will be rewarded for their magnificent efforts.

Woodside walking group

Walk Aberdeen, part of registered charity Sport Aberdeen, run health walks designed to help and encourage people of all abilities to become more active through a series of short, social and local walks. Health walks are a national programme run by Paths for All and are designed to assist people to become more active through walking. Walking is a low impact activity for everyone, and doesn't need any special equipment.

Walk Aberdeen run a number of programmes based at various venues throughout the city. The initiative relies heavily on volunteers and input from the partners we work with. A walking group based at the Woodside Fountain Community Centre have secured the future of their programme through the training of another walk leader. Margaret Mead recently completed a training course, which will mean she can lead the group on walks around the Woodside area. The group meet on a Tuesday morning in the Fountain café and go for walks of up to an hour, usually on pavements, walking at a speed to suit the whole group's needs. The walks are a great

opportunity to socialise and meet new people whilst engaging in low impact physical activity. The walk finishes with an opportunity to have a cup of tea and a chat. Anyone who is interested in participating should come along to the café at 10.45am on a Tuesday and introduce themselves to the walkers. No special equipment is required other than normal shoes and a coat suitable for the weather. For more information, please contact Sport Aberdeen Walk Leader, Brian Harrison on BHarrison@sportaberdeen.co.uk



The Brazilian Experience:

The participatory budgeting project in Woodside, Tillydrone and Seaton - UDecide

Abeer Eladany

In September 2016, it was announced that the Scottish Government's Community Choices Fund for Participatory Budgeting awarded Aberdeen City Council an extra £100,000 towards the participatory budgeting project, UDecide.

Aberdeen is not the first Scottish city to experience participatory budgeting. It was first implemented in Edinburgh in 2010 and allowed communities to be directly involved in decisions on the priorities and spending of public budgets.

Different localities in Aberdeen city were identified to benefit from this additional funding opportunity. Woodside, Tillydrone and Seaton were grouped together and allocated £82,500 of funding to support the delivery of different projects that would take place in each area. Before we get to the details about this process, let's have a quick look at the origins of this idea which was developed in Brazil following a huge wave of redemocratisation in 1980s. The aims were mainly to fight corruption, improve access to government, and strengthen governmental accountability. The process empowered the local community who felt that they are actively

making decisions regarding how the local budget is spent.

As for our local area, anyone with an idea could fill in an application form and the local residents would vote for their favorite projects. The process might sound simple on paper but in practice some decisions had to be made before the process could even start.

There was a steering group of local people who worked with council representatives to decide on the voting age, how the money would be divided between the three communities to ensure fairness, how many applications each individual/organisation could fill in and how many votes each local resident would have. The steering group, supported by council representatives, decided to cap each project to £10,000 which would give a number of projects the opportunity to benefit the local community. The steering group decided that everyone in the community should be included and allowed to vote including children (age 5 and over) as they are the future of our communities and they need to have a say during this process.

Projects in the area, including Fersands and Fountain Community Project, Printfield Community Project and Aberdeen Lads Club,

participated in the meetings with the steering group to provide knowledge of project management in the local community. Budget cuts and applying for external funding have been the main daily struggle for our local projects for a number of years. I cannot remember a meeting that I have attended in the last 10 years where the need to fill application forms was not mentioned. Our community workers go through weeks of worrying and stress waiting to hear about the future of a project which totally rely on that funding opportunity. These projects which are vital to every member of our community are certainly not to be taken for granted.

The group organised a number of drop in sessions for local residents at different locations to inform people about the available funding opportunity, support them to register to vote online and to encourage people with ideas to fill the application. The form was straightforward and the only requirement for applicants was for groups to target one or more of the priorities that were identified by the community in October last year. The deadline for receiving the applications was 1st February and the voting started on 13th February. Please make sure that you have registered to vote on aberdeen.participare.io. The voting process ends on 2nd

“Woodside, Tillydrone and Seaton were grouped together and allocated £82,500 of funding”

March and the results will be announced on 4th March.

Over 70 proposals were submitted for voting and you can have a look and comment on each of them by visiting the abedeen. participare.io website.

The projects cover a wide spectrum of exciting activities that range from street sports, art classes, music, adult computer classes, online courses to Reiki, health walks and childcare. It is your vote that would decide which projects would get funded. Alternative funding advice will be given to the unsuccessful projects.

I believe that at the end of this project there should be an evaluation process which would include all the steps and decisions that were taken as part of the process. It would be a good way to determine if the process was democratic, fair and would allow us to learn for any future participatory budgeting process.

There are questions to be answered, for example is this already excluding some members of our community? Would the popularity of our well-established projects give them advantage over the newly formed groups? Would a project that is supported by the schools for example get all the votes of the local children

leaving projects for adult learning with little support? Did the successful projects delivered what they have promised? I guess we will have some answers to these questions when we evaluate the project at the end.

All what I can say now is that you have 3 votes, use them wisely! It is your chance to decide on what you want to see happening in our community.

On Saturday 18th February, Woodside Community Centre hosted a well-attended event where local residents were shown how to register and vote online. The event was supported by the ACC UDecide team. Some reports mention that a large number of residents had already voted for their preferred projects. The event which ran from 11am until 1pm, attracted over 400 voters. A large number of applicants were there to promote their bids to the residents. There were free fun activities for the kids during the event such as the climbing wall and the bouncy castle which is my personal favourite but unfortunately did not get a chance to have a turn! I saw many familiar faces and managed to get some information about few projects. I believe that now I know which projects will be getting my votes.





Looking back on 18 years of service: an interview with George Adam

Jodie Molyneux

George Adam, Lord Provost of Aberdeen and Councillor for Woodside, Hilton and Stockethill, has recently announced that he will be standing down in the May elections, after eighteen years of public service. I had the chance to sit down with George and find out his proudest moments, the changes he has seen and his plans for the future.

I noticed that you are originally from Montrose. How did you come to live in Aberdeen?

I still have lots of family connections in Angus, but Aberdeen has been my home for many years. I studied in Dundee and came to Aberdeen for my first job. I've been here ever since and I love the city. I like the whole east coast of Scotland. The perception is that Scotland's major tourist attraction is the west coast, but if you sit on the train and look at the nooks and crannies of the east coast, it's just wonderful.

So you are standing down as Provost and Councillor. Why now?

There are lots of reasons for standing down. The obvious one is that you serve a term, there's an election, new people come in or you stand again. I've weighed up the pros and cons, but I've

come to the end of my term as Lord Provost and I've loved the job so much that I'm thinking... go out on a high! Also, I've served as a Councillor for four terms – that's eighteen years. I feel it's time for someone new - somebody younger - to come in. But I'm not retiring and going off not doing anything. I've got things that I want to do. It's a job that I've loved but it's time for a new challenge. It's a natural ending.

How has the face of Woodside changed since you've been a Councillor?

I've seen changes in Woodside and the wider area. There's a mixed story to tell. It's a very historic area of the city and there's lots of interesting things going on. There's tradition and pride in the area. But on the other side of that coin, there are

people who are struggling and that's been reinforced as the city has found it harder. People are finding it difficult. It's linked to the downturn in oil and gas industry. It trickles down and can touch almost everyone in the city.

Looking back on your term, is there a standout achievement that you can think of?

I don't think there's been any one achievement. There's been a lot of little achievements. When I was first elected I was new to the job and the area. When you come to the Council, you're attending committees and get big piles of paper on policies, and I struggled. I thought they were written in a language that I'm not meant to understand. But the thing I loved was dealing with individual constituents. You never know what someone is going to ask you, and sometimes they

expect me to be the expert on everything! But people were so kind because I was honest and said 'I don't know the answer, but I'll find out.' In that first year it was a partnership between me and the constituents. Sometimes it's about pointing someone in the right direction or getting them the right contact, or helping people with housing and repairs. To an outsider these issues can seem insignificant but I always try and put myself in their shoes and the problems can seem very significant!

You have a keen interest in the arts and once worked in graphic design, so what exciting things have you been to in Aberdeen's art scene recently?

As Lord Provost I get the opportunity of hearing and seeing lots of things that are happening, but the arts and culture in our city are definitely undervalued and don't get the recognition they deserve. We've got lots of amazing things going on in theatre, the visual arts and music. Over the last year, there was 'Granite,' a production with the city and the National Theatre of Scotland. It told Aberdeen's story and culminated in an outdoor theatre performance in the Marischal College quad. There is now a theatre group and a writers group being formed on the back of it. We also had the 'Spectra' light festival, which took me by surprise in terms of the sheer numbers of people engaging with it. I really enjoy Aberdeen festivals. I think the art and culture scene needs to be supported, needs to be praised. The people involved are all doing terrific work.

I present Women's Hour on Shmu FM, so there is always going to be a women's rights question with me! The last female Lord Provost was in 1996, what can we do to encourage more women to go into local politics?

That is something that is important and that I have spent my time in politics trying to encourage. It is interesting to see, looking at the pictures of all the Provosts going back to 1272, that only two women have ever held the position. But now we have our third female Chief Executive and the Director of Education is a woman. On the political side, the leader and deputy of the Council are women. The leader and the deputy of the Labour group are women, as was the former leader of the SNP. While women are underrepresented in pure numbers, you could argue that they do really well in their achievements. We do need to encourage more women into politics, politics can benefit from that and I've seen it here in my time.

How do you feel about Jeremy Corbyn and the Labour Party? And do you plan to remain politically active after stepping down in May?

I hope to remain active first and foremost in my community, and to keep working on community projects. I am, and will continue to be, a member of the Labour party because it's an instinct in my mind. The Labour Party is about equality of opportunity and that is something that I believe in. I think my party is in a very difficult position. The voters can't work out what the Labour party is for at the moment and Jeremy

Corbyn has played his part in that. He divides people in our party, and across the country. I take a different view from Jeremy. I believe that the only way a left-wing party can win power is from the centre. For all the criticisms leveled at Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, they won three elections and the changes they made to child poverty were incredible. They took many families out of poverty and introduced minimum wage. Jeremy Corbyn will never manage to achieve things like that, that's the difficulty. He says a lot of things that I agree with, but he will never be Prime Minister.

“arts and culture in our city are definitely undervalued and don't get the recognition they deserve”

Right now there is a lot of fear and uncertainty. What can Aberdeen do to reassure minorities and the vulnerable?

I attended the Holocaust Memorial Day and saw a film about Srebrenica and it brought home a lot about what's going on now. Nationalism and the far-right are growing across the world. Trump is a nationalist and you can see that from his slogan 'Make America Great Again' at the expense of relations across the world. The Holocaust event got me thinking....what can we do? We had two referenda that posed difficult questions that

needed to be asked. But what they've created is division. The amount of anti-English racism I heard during the first referendum was a disgrace, yet we didn't pick people up on it. I heard things being said and on Twitter and Facebook during both referenda as bad as anything Donald Trump has said.. We march against Trump but we allow those things to happen on our doorstep. We have an amazing multi-cultural, multi-national mix in our city and works well. I think Aberdeen can show other cities across the UK how it's done.

Looking to the future, what are the issues in the city that you think that next Provost and Councillors should focus on?

The energy business is big. The oil and gas business will plateau, but it's still going to be important for Aberdeen for the next fifty

years. We still need to look at what else in the energy sphere there is, and that's why we have been experimenting with hydrogen buses and the European Wind Demonstrator Project. Basically, we've moved from being the European oil capital to being an energy capital. That work has to go on. It's about jobs and economic well-being, so that you can afford everything you want in our schools and give opportunities across the board. Good has been done but we need to continue moving down that route. No matter which political party is in control, locally or nationally, I'm convinced local government will have budgets cut, which makes it harder for cities to function and supply the services that the public have come to expect and want. Councils are just going to have to say 'we don't have the money to do that.'

Are you going to celebrate with a holiday now you're retiring?

I have a few ideas, but I quite fancy going to Iceland, given that there are direct flights to Reykjavik from Aberdeen. My ideal scenario? I enjoy this job up until May. Then there is most brilliant, hot, wonderful summer so that I can enjoy our festivals. Then being in my garden and catching up with friends I haven't seen in a while. I'd like to go to Orkney and Shetland by the ferry. I've never been! And then - as if by magic - there's a job ready to welcome me with open arms. You've got to hope and wish!

We at the Woodside Free Press would like to thank George Adam for all his work in Aberdeen and wish him the best of luck in the future.

Cash in your Pocket - Get Help When You Need It

Changes in circumstances such as a sudden deterioration in health, family breakdown, redundancy, homelessness, unexpected costs, caring responsibilities etc. can be situations when help or advice is needed.

The Cash In Your Pocket Referral Service offers easy access to a wide range of benefits and services. By getting in touch with us, we refer you to the most

appropriate organisation(s) to get the information, advice and practical you need around issues relating to money, health and care.

Anyone can make a referral, for themselves, or someone they are helping. The quickest and simplest way to do this is by phone, using our Freephone number 0800 953 4330. All calls are free from a landline or mobile. Referral leaflets are also

available from community and health locations i.e. community centres, GP surgeries, libraries.



RECORD YEAR FOR FARESHARE GRAMPIAN

2016 was a record year for CFINE, which operates FareShare Grampian. Over 400 tonnes of perfectly good surplus food destined for waste was redistributed to charities and community organisations throughout the north east. The food was sourced from the food industry, including growers, suppliers and supermarkets. Almost 20 tonnes of food was delivered to the Woodside area by our volunteer drivers. That is equivalent to roughly 47,000 meals.

This could not be possible without the hard graft of our dedicated team of volunteer drivers and driver's mates such as Syd, Donald, Stuart, Colin, Grant, Goalie, and Steve. We would like to thank them for all their hard work in 2016. Together they put in countless hours to deliver over a tonne and a half per day to communities, with Woodside proving a very popular delivery run (perhaps because of the promise of a bacon roll en route?!). Their dedication has been an inspiration to us all and they can be proud of the difference they have made in the community. This year we are aiming to increase our efforts even further and expect to give out over 500 tonnes in 2017. Please feel free to say a wee hello to our



volunteers if you see them out and about! If your organisation would like to begin receiving FareShare produce, please get in touch with Graeme at grobby@cfine.org.

Tuk In Mobile Community Cafe

As the result of a CityLab initiative in which groups had to create a business idea then present them Dragons' Den style to various businesses and social enterprises in Aberdeen, CFINE can run a mobile food vendor in a unique, quirky and innovative way.

'Tuk In' mobile café will be an electric Tuk-Tuk fitted out as a mobile food vendor, which will visit regeneration areas, providing tasty, healthy food such as soup, bread, smoothies and fruit pots. The food will be prepared in 'Cook at the Nook' (our community kitchen) by volunteers who we would then aim to employ with profits raised through enterprise sales. We would support this by using FareShare produce to create the food and also by selling food at offices and workplaces around the city. We also have a CrowdFunder appeal that people can donate to, for information and updates keep an eye on www.cfine.org and our Facebook page.



INSTANT NEIGHBOUR APPEAL

We are running out of food due to an increase in clients relying on us for food parcels. This year so far we have given out 663 food parcels to 481 different clients. If you are able to donate, to help us provide this vital service, on behalf of Instant Neighbour and our clients, we would be extremely grateful. We gratefully accept donations of:

Milk (UHT or powdered) / Sugar (500g) / Soup / Cereals / Tea bags and instant coffee / Instant mash potato / Rice and pasta / Jar sauces / Tinned meat & fish / Tinned vegetables and fruits / Biscuits and bar snacks

Fersands Healthy Living Store is located in Woodside Community Centre, is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 1pm



VIEWPOINT

Talking Private Public Blues

Old Wittgentein tells us there is no such thing as a private language. That may or may not be the case, but there is a language of the private.

You hear it all the time. Whenever a citizen expresses concerns about some part of our local heritage, you get either, 'yes, but where's the money coming from,' or a snappy, 'that's private.' Full stop. End of conversation.

Take First Bus. The company took £3,000,000 from the pockets of Aberdonians last year, yet when lines are changed or completely cut, the bottom line is that each route must produce profit and social needs are of little importance. When passengers voice their concerns to our representatives, all we get is, 'yes isn't it terrible, but it's a private company.' Of course, no mention is made that it was their political ancestors that privatised the service in the first place. And it's the same with the trains, the power companies, the Muse development, the list is endless. 'Private.'

It's all part of a nation-wide post banking crisis, which leads to the growing private profit/social austerity

ethos we see on our daily news. And it's all too evident as you walk around your local area.

The problem is especially acute with our historic buildings. Private property speculators are deliberately allowing buildings to rot. The results are all too easy to predict. Just google 'Aberdeen fire derelict teenager charged'. Glen o' Dee, Torryburn hotel, and Broadford Works (several times) are among the 2,450,000 hits. But bored teenagers up to mischief are only the symptom, the disease is the neglect in the first place. It's not the teenagers I would be charging.

Or take a walk along the Don. It's sad to see the stairs leading down to the river all fenced off. You can still clamber over and get down to the river, and it's true that they are in bit of a state, but you do get the feeling that it wouldn't take that much to get them back to their former glory. And then there's the old Grandholm footbridge, which is a famous relic of our industrial past. It was damaged in the recent flood, and has been fenced off ever since. I'm no expert, but it doesn't seem that badly damaged. Trouble is, if it's just left (as it seems it will be) any problems will

just get worse and we'll end up losing another piece of our heritage. 'Private.' And wouldn't it be good to have all the footpaths along the river joined up? That part of the riverbank is 'private.' Full stop.

There is no question that the City Council has done some work along the river paths, but it's all a bit piecemeal. In these days when Woodside has been transformed into one big Haudagain by the new Diamond Bridge, surely a continuous foot/cycle path along the river to Seaton Park makes sense, giving people an alternative to the roads, along with recreational and health benefits.

I suppose that in these days of crises in the health service, social care, prisons and housing, our heritage seems pretty small beer. But all the problems are inter-related (for example, transforming a hotel into a care facility.) The trouble is the micro rather than a systematic approach to problems. And that's down to our political masters. Solutions don't need a Wittgenstein.

Dougie Thomson

Do you have any views about the area (or anything else)? The pages of the Free Press are open to all. Contact Laura on 01224 515013 or email laura.young@shmu.org.uk.



Fersands Family Centre Create Outdoor Play Space

Childcare workers at Fersands are embracing the ideology of outdoor learning. Workers have created several new interesting activity spaces for children to explore. Every day the children are encouraged to spend some time outside and workers want to give the children great number of learning opportunities while they are out. Obviously, they can play with the climbing frame and slide and run around and play with a ball but there's always so much more they can do. The bugs hotel has been developed in a corner to mimic natural habitats of insects to attract a range of different species of "minibeasts." It's hoped the kids will get out their magnifying glasses and investigate the insects and discover what spaces they like and see what they look like and how they move. The children will learn about other life forms and begin to think about the whole world of nature and science.

The children can play with water at the water wall; a series of connected pipes and tubes which the children can pour water down to see how it flows and travels along. Next to the water station is the weaving wall where youngsters can practise their coordination and dexterity skills with strips of fabric

they can weave with. The children now have a sensory area, where they've planted colourful and aromatic flowers and herbs. Nearby a birdfeeder is filled by the children to attract garden birds and they can learn about other aspects of nature. The children can learn about weather while they measure rainfall or play inside the adventure role play area where they can let their imagination "run wild." Our garden has transformed to challenging and stimulating outdoor environment that will offer children with great opportunities to increase their confidences and self-esteem.





shmuTRAIN

shmuTRAIN, the employability arm of Station House Media Unit (shmu), supports 15-19yr olds who are in, or likely to fall into, the MCMC category in the city into a positive destination (education, employment or training).

On Monday 30th January, shmuTRAIN Positive Transitions 27 & 28 held their Graduation Ceremony at the Town and County Hall. The event was a particularly inspiring one which left many of us with a lump in our throat after the emotional and heartfelt speeches.

On the night, the 11 trainees were presented with their certificates by Lord Provost George Adam. Each trainee had completed a 12-week Employability course, and in doing so received an SCQF level 4 in Employment, SCQF level 5 in Radio and an SCQF in Film, as well as the shmu in-house digital music module.

“Have seen such a change in my brother. So happy to see his confidence grow. Thank you” (from our Graduation comments book)

Elaine Hughes, Internal Verifier Bon Accord Care, spoke about how the organisation is working in partnership with shmu to introduce the world of care to the trainees, and offer interviews for a Modern Apprenticeship. As a result of this partnership, 3 trainees from PT 28 were successful at interview and been offered a Modern Apprenticeship with Bon Accord Care.

From the 11 trainees who began the courses 6 are now in employment and 2 have started college courses. Two trainees not yet in a positive destination are continuing to work with shmu towards an outcome.

“Thank you for making my son the confident and enthusiastic young man he has become - all thanks to shmu” (from our Graduation comments book)

If you would like to find out more about shmuTRAIN, Positive Transitions courses or our Graduations, please contact Brian Webb, shmuTRAIN Coordinator on 01224 515013 brian.webb@shmu.org.uk.



Pete the Punk

old roots, new shoots

Heading to the Lemon Tree one fine February night, I'm not quite sure what to expect from *Old Roots, New Shoots*, but I am delighted to find it's an all seated affair. Old age doesn't come itself and all that. Tonight's show is the culmination of Aberdeen impresario Susan Whyte's long-held dream of Northeast musicians being properly represented at Celtic Connections, Glasgow's international festival of all things Celtic. Mission accomplished - and in considerable style, by all accounts - they've headed north for one final fling. Speaking to the Free Press, Susan told us: "I wanted to bring together a group of musicians with strong roots or ties to the area, encourage them to mess about a bit with their music, collaborate with each other, try out new arrangements of old tunes etc. - and I didn't want it all to be traditional music or folk."

The success of this approach is immediately evident as the entire ensemble (around a dozen musicians) takes the stage and performs an unlikely juxtaposition of traditional Scottish music and rap featuring city rapper Jack Hughes - Jackill, as he's known - a combination that works surprisingly well and is very warmly received. The stage then empties but for Jonny Hardie and tonight's musical director, Simon Gall, collectively Clype but best known for their work with Old Blind Dogs and Salsa Celtica respectively. They've already released one acclaimed album, its rich melodies the perfect counterpoint to Gall's biting social and political commentaries, though this evening they offer but two: *The Brush To Paint Us All* and their splendid reworking of timeless socialist anthem *The Internationale*.

Moving from Clype's universal themes to the more personal, Jenny Sturgeon's unaccompanied voice on *Judgements*, a song written with her mother about the iniquities of a system that finds very ill people fit for work when they are clearly far from it, serves as a powerful reminder that folk music has always been a voice, and sometimes the only one, of the poor and dispossessed. Katie Buchan aka Best Girl Athlete is the newest of New Shoots on show. Despite her tender years, she has already released one excellent album (with another on its way) and undertaken a US tour. She plays a beautifully low-key set before handing over to one of the evening's surprise packages, Huntly quine Iona Fyfe, a lass who follows a more traditional path but one which, on tonight's evidence, will surely lead to greater things.

A finalist in this year's BBC Young Traditional Musician of the Year award, the fabulous Ms. Fyfe opens with *The Two Swans* before delivering her own remarkable take on one of the best-known Aberdeenshire ballads, *Glenlogie*, a sublime rendition that sends shivers up my spine. I'm just thinking it can't get any better when up steps

Rick Redbeard. Despite his claims that his mum is in the audience putting him off, the glorious, offbeat romanticism of songs like *The Golden Age* and *The Night Is All Ours* is enough to convince me - and others, I hope - that here is an artist worthy of further investigation. That his performance strongly reminds me of a legendary Bonnie Prince Billy Lemon Tree show is a happy bonus.

The Old Blind Dogs are next and this always formidable, often uproarious live act appears to have been inspired to even greater heights of late by the arrival of percussionist Donald Hay. Hardie leads his troops into a spirited set including *The Copper Kettle*, a collection of Breton tunes and Brian Cromarty's *A Ring On Her Hand*, closing in style with a fine set of reels and Strathspeys.

Hardly pausing for breath, the full ensemble gathers for one last, climactic push taking in rap, reel and riotous acapella - *The Alford Cattle Show* - before charging into the final, high energy rush of Maurice Lennon's wild Irish reel, *The Golden Stud*, and that's it.

As the last notes fade into the night, it seems that though I came prepared to be underwhelmed, I'm left feeling rather privileged to have witnessed an extraordinary event. The music has been great, yes, but more than that, the engagement of the musicians, the communality of purpose that was plain to see, that seemed the crux of the thing. Long may it continue.



Iona Fyfe

Community Contacts

Alcohol

Alcoholics Anonymous 0800 9177 650
Drinkline 0300 123 1110

Crime

Crimestoppers 0800 555 111

Drugs

Drugs Action Helpline 01224 594700

Dentist

Emergency - G-Dens 111

Doctors

NHS 24 Emergency 111

Electricity

If you have a power-cut 105

Family Planning

Aberdeen Community Health and Care Village 0345 337 9900

Gas

Gas Emergency 0800 111 999
Gas emergency with a meter 0845 606 6766

Housing

Emergency Repairs 01224 219 282
Call Centre Emergency 0845 608 0929 or 116 123

Police

Non-emergency 101

Samaritans

Need to talk 01224 574 488 or 116 123

Social Work

Social Work Duty Team 0800 7315520
Emergency Out-Of-Hours 01224 693936

Young Carers

VSA 01224 212021

Water

Scottish Water Emergency 0800 0778 778
CFINE 01224 596156
Pathways 01224 682 939
Woodside School 01224 484778
Kittybrewster School 01224 484451
Woodside Parish Church 01224 484562
St Machar Academy 01224 492855
St Machar Parent Support Project 01224 487813
Aberdeen Lads Club 01224 492672

Community Information for Woodside

Woodside Community Council

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of every month in the Fountain Grange Common Room at 7pm

Contact: woodsideccsec@gmail.com

Fersands and Fountain Community Project

01224 524925

Printfield Community Project

01224 276788

Woodside Fountain Centre

01224 485983

Woodside Library

10am – 1pm 2pm – 5pm

Contact: 01224 484534

Woodside Medical Practice

8am – 6pm

Contact: 01224 492828

Woodside Network

Contact: printfield@printfieldproject.co.uk
or mark@fersands.org

St Machar Credit Union

Info: Credit Unions are financial co-operatives owned and controlled by their members, that offer savings accounts, low cost loans and other services.

Phone: 01224 276994

Opening hours: 9:30am – 4:30pm every weekday except Wednesday (12:30pm finish on a Wednesday)

Cash in your Pocket

Info: Working with partner organisations to reduce inequalities for people living in economic disadvantage within Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

Phone: 0800 953 4330

Citizen's Advice

Info: Aberdeen Citizen's Advice Bureau gives residents of Aberdeen free, confidential and impartial advice on a range of topics including benefits, debt advice, work related problems, immigration and housing.

Opening times: Wednesdays 10am-3pm in Woodside Community Centre

Legal Advice

There are law students who visit Woodside Community Centre every second Thursday. Their sessions started on the 26th of January and will run every two weeks from then. If you need legal advice you can visit them between 5:30 and 7pm in the centre.