

# woodside free press

Winter Edition 2013



Featured in  
this issue

**Colouring Your Community**  
**Crazy Pavements**  
**The First Church in Woodside**



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## Editorial

Hello and welcome to the Winter 2013 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.

If you have something you would like to say, some local issue you think deserves wider 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 Denise at Station House Media Unit on 01224 515013 - or email [denise@shmu.org.uk](mailto:denise@shmu.org.uk)

And if you would like to boost your confidence with some training, shmu is currently running free journalism courses for the residents of Woodside. This course will take you through all the essential basics of journalism such as interview techniques and how to find a great story. If you are interested please contact Shmu on the above number.

*Cover image by Vicky Mitchell*

FUNDED BY



# Colouring Your Community brightens up Printfield Project



**A recent programme sponsored by a national paint company has brightened up Printfield. It all started when community development worker Jim Duncan spotted a Dulux advertisement inviting applications for funding as part of its Colouring Your Community project.**

The programme allows communities to brighten their environment and Printfield's management committee agreed a lick of paint would make the area around its buildings more community and child friendly. An application was duly submitted.

As part of the bid, it was agreed local children who use the project should be consulted about the colours and images that would become part of

their play environment. This was achieved by a hands-on approach, children working with youth workers to draw and colour in their preferred designs for the project's portacabin and surrounding walls.

With the project due to kick off in Spring 2013, Aberdeen Creative Learning Team was contacted for advice. It was agreed children could not paint above a height of five feet and the council agreed

to undercoat all surfaces. This was completed in April.

An arts coordinator was appointed to assist in planning the work and helping the children draw the images. After much hard work by all, the painting was completed by the end of July, and to celebrate an event was held on National Play Day, August 7 – with lots of games and a barbecue.



# 'Bedroom Tax' wreaks havoc

**On the day UN rapporteur Raquel Rolnik called on the government to axe the Bedroom Tax, Tory chairman Grant Shapps threw a full-blown tantrum. Apoplectic demands for an immediate apology from Rolnik were swiftly followed by a foam-specked letter of complaint to the UN Secretary General as Shapps hurled the Tory dummy right out of the pram.**

But the bedroom tax – or spare room subsidy, as it's now known – was already under siege. Senior coalition MP Shirley Williams attacked the tax as “a mistake” at the LibDem conference, not least because the Housing Benefit bill will rise by £1.5b this year, the opposite effect to that predicted when the charge was introduced. Ed Milliband shortly afterwards announced Labour will scrap the bedroom tax if elected in 2015.

Meanwhile, the tax wreaks havoc on thousands of lives. The tragic suicide of Stephanie Bottrill was only the first. Several others have followed. One despairing tenant unable to meet the demands slashed his wrists in a Fife housing office.

Citizens Advice recently issued an emergency guide to surviving with no food or money after being swamped by pleas for help from people left destitute. A 78% rise in the use of food banks has been reported over the last six months.

Councils have been hit hard. Rent arrears in Aberdeen are spiralling by an extra £40k a month due to bedroom tax. Whether working or not, the majority of tenants receiving housing benefit do not

have the extra money, but as council policy is that 'under-occupancy' arrears are exactly the same as any other housing debt, normal procedures will be followed up to and including eviction. What are these procedures?

“We always try to engage with tenants and work with them to decrease debt,” said a council source. “Eviction is always the last resort. We send out a series of letters and once arrears reach £400 with no payment arrangement in place, we offer debt counselling and advice on money issues. Tenants can pay a small amount regularly from their benefit through Rent Arrears Direct. We will do everything we can to help them.”

Legal action kicks in at £500 arrears with no payment agreement in place. A Notice of Proceedings is sent to tenants, who appear in court within six months of the notice being issued unless arrears are paid. A Sheriff will rule on whether or not eviction should proceed, though arrears can still be paid right up to the day court proceedings take place.

Help is available. Cash In Your Pocket Partnership (CIYPP) adviser Ronnie Wood says: “It is always better to seek help before things develop to that stage. CIYPP is one of the best-placed to offer assistance through its network of more than 60 organisations. Referral forms are available from community centres, libraries, housing offices and volunteer organisations or by emailing me at [ronnie.wood@ciypp.co.uk](mailto:ronnie.wood@ciypp.co.uk). The most efficient means of contacting us is by filling in a very simple self-referral form on our website: <http://www.ciypp.co.uk>”

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## A Conservative Response

***I read with interest an article in the Woodside Free Press about the so called “bedroom tax”, writes Fraser Forsyth, Conservative councillor for the Midstocket and Rosemount ward.***

There is a world of difference between a tax and a reduction in benefit, currently people with spare rooms are receiving a subsidy for a room they do not need.

I would argue that it is a necessary reform to return fairness to housing benefit, even after the removal of the spare room subsidy the taxpayer will still pay over 80% of most claimants housing benefit however the taxpayer can no longer afford to pay for people to live in properties that are larger than they need. It is right that people contribute to those costs just as people in the private rented market do.

There are hardworking living in crowded conditions unable to move in to bigger council owned accommodation because people refuse to downsize this is neither fair nor equitable and the matter needs addressed to bring fairness to those families.

I would ask you to look behind the headlines and look at the cold hard numbers they simply do not stack up we as a nation are spending £22 billion pounds on housing benefit this is more than we spend on the army and navy combined and is more than we spend on the police.

By restoring fairness to housing benefit we are ensuring the most vulnerable in our society are protected that's why there are exemptions for the elderly, foster carers, carers for the disabled, severely disabled children, armed forces personnel and bereaved families.

Being in government is about making hard tough choices we owe it to future generations to stop writing cheques now and expecting them to work longer and harder to pay off the debt we have accrued.

Addressing this spare room subsidy is one step towards this.

# CRAZY PAVEMENTS



**Sometimes you get so familiar with the area you live in that you stop seeing it. I had stopped seeing what was literally under my feet, our pavements.**

It took a visiting relation of mine to point this out. 'Look at the state of these pavements', says she, as we walked along Great Northern Road. And right enough, they looked as though they had been dug up so many times, that they had become a patchwork of bumps and crevasses, which created a definite hazard, particularly for wheelchairs and buggies.

A local campaign was launched, and eventually the pavement between the Central Bar and Iceland supermarket was repaired. However it has taken another newcomer, Woodside's adopted son Markus Aufferman, our Church of Scotland Minister, to highlight the perilous state of some of our other local pavements. He writes:

*It is with great sadness that I notice several streets in my parish of Woodside are in terrible shape, including the pavements. The other day I nearly fell on the very uneven pavement on Marquis Rd (across from where the new Doctor's Surgery in Woodside will be) when I visited a family to make some funeral arrangements. The family told me that their now deceased father, when he was still capable, couldn't get out of his flat to go for a brief walk or to the nearby shops, because the pavements were in such terrible condition! Very sadly, parts of Woodside seem to be neglected; where street, pavement and house refurbishments are in great*

*demand and need. In the past several of my church members, who live in Woodside, have fallen and broken their hands or ankles, have bruised faces and broken their specs because many of the pavements are uneven and not safe for walking (like those on Clifton Road and Grandholm Street). The City should really compensate my church members and anybody else who falls on these uneven*

**“This situation is a disgrace, particularly in a country and a city which constantly promotes, demands and advocates Health and Safety”**

*pavements. This situation is a disgrace, particularly in a country and a city which constantly promotes, demands and advocates Health and Safety for its citizens and residents.*

Lord Provost George Adam replied on behalf of Lesley Dunbar and himself:

As a result of Markus's letter and communication with the P&J the council put out the following statement on 18th September:

*“We do not differentiate between areas when carrying out works, but operate on a priority basis. Safety defects will, of course, be dealt with as a priority.*

*Since the start of this year, we have received two inquiries about the footpaths on Marquis Road and recognised that some work is required, but it is not*

*deemed to be a priority. Safety inspections have shown no defects on it.*

*We have received no contact from the public about the footpaths on Clifton Road. However, a roads inspector identified six defects requiring remedial work (for info, these were not safety defects) and those have been attended to. We have received no reports or complaints about Grandholm Street and no defects have been identified there. Should Rev Auffermann wish to raise any further concerns about the condition of footpaths in the area, we would ask that he contact the council direct in the first instance. Officers would be happy to discuss his concerns with him on site.”*

And as local councillors we would say:

*“When a footpath defect is reported to the council, a roads inspector goes to have a look. The defect is assessed and is prioritised according to the level of defect. Then those who do the repairs, work down that list, repairing the worst defects first, ie. those considered to be safety hazards.*

*We hope the council officer has answered Markus's concerns and we would encourage him to report any footpath defect that he is worried about to the council. If he is not satisfied with this, we would recommend that he takes up the offer of a meeting on site with a council officer and we, as his local councillors, would be pleased to attend.”*

Kind regards  
George

## Aberdeen Foyer Prince's Trust Team Programme

Have you heard about this opportunity for unemployed, 16-25 year olds? It is held at Aberdeen Foyer's Marywell Centre in Aberdeen. It is a 12 week self development course which helps young folk to become work ready. Students are part of Aberdeen College and work towards two SQAs and also gain the First Aid and Food Hygiene certificates, a volunteering certificate and the Prince's Trust Team Award. During the course we fund raise, play loads of games, attend a residential with activities such as canoeing, gorge walking, night walks, we carry out a Community Project and have two weeks work experience. We help you draw up a CV and covering letter and have mock interviews with feedback so everyone knows how to behave at interviews. At the end you will find you can stand with your Team in front of 100 visitors in the Town House to receive your certificates and tell them about your journey through the course. It really does raise your self esteem and confidence and helps you get a job or return to study.

This course is fun but challenging.

To find out more contact me Kate Hopkins at;

**Prince's Trust Team Leader,  
Aberdeen Foyer Marywell  
Centre, Marywell Street,  
Aberdeen  
AB11 6JF**

**Ph: 01224 252364,  
Mob: 07971 932840**

## The first church in Woodside



A little book has recently been found which sheds an interesting light on the early days of Woodside. It is based on the records of Woodside Congregational Church which, having been established in 1818, was the first church in Woodside.

There were then two large textile mills in the area. The Woodside Works (on the site of what is now the Parkview flats at the foot of Station Road) produced cotton and carried out calico printing, thus giving the village its then name of Printfield, and the Grandholm Works, which at that time produced linen. Both depended for power on the water from the River Don and for labour on people coming in from country areas of the North-east, the Highlands and Ireland.

The first Minute of the trustees of the new church stated: "A great number of people are employed about these works, who have not the benefit of religious instruction in a public manner on the Sabbath day." The trustees complained there was much loitering on a Sunday. There can have been little time for this on other days as the hours of work at the Woodside

Works were 6.00am-7.30pm except on Saturdays, when the mill closed at 5.00pm. There was no work on Sundays and drunkenness and rough behaviour were very common, especially among the well-paid printers.

The new church opened in 1819 on the site of the Woodside Congregational Church most of us now know, which was built in 1867. There was little money to build the 1819 church, a simple, thatched stone building 42 feet long with flooring only in the passages.

The original parish church (now the flats at the head of Queen Street) followed in 1829 and was designed by famous Aberdeen architect Archibald Simpson. It must have seemed very grand compared to the Congregational chapel, which struggled financially and for members in the 1830s and '40s: at one point in 1844, the treasurer had only four shillings in hand. By the early 1860s the average attendance was about 150 and it was soon possible to borrow the money to build the chapel, which was used until recently.

**Finlay McKichan**

**Sat 07 Dec 10am: Christmas Fair. Tickets as above.**

**Sat 14 Dec 7pm: Countdown to Christmas: a musical for all ages. Tickets 01224 276167 or 01224 277249**

**Tues 24 Dec 10.30pm: Watchnight Service. Carol singing and refreshments.**

**Christmas Day 11.15am: Christmas Service. St. George's Church, Hayton Road.**

# Fountain Grange

**Woodside's Fountain Grange is currently undergoing improvements that should give the 22-year-old housing complex a new lease of life.**

Draughty windows and the expensive storage heating that have frustrated tenants for more than two decades will soon be a thing of the past.

Hailed as an innovative housing project when it opened in 1991, the complex has had its ups and downs over the years. Initially let both furnished and unfurnished to single tenants aged 16-18, this just didn't work. Despite furnished lets costing almost double the rent, furniture supplied by the council was wrecked on a regular basis. The cost of replacement became prohibitive. It was eventually agreed apartments should be let on an unfurnished basis only. A change in the letting demographic was also needed.



Younger tenants moved on and were replaced mainly by single men with drink and/or drug issues. Unsurprisingly, this didn't work either. The police were frequent visitors. Fountain Grange's already dubious reputation plummeted.

In the last few years there has been a major effort to turn the place around, however, and progress has been made.

**“But the fact is, the residents really care about the place.**

**That’s what makes the difference”**

Prospective tenants must now attend assessment interviews and a more balanced mix of single males/females plus several couples has been achieved.

Great efforts are being made to spruce the place up. A large common room closed for some years has been refurbished and reopened, a space where tenants can play games, make tea, have meetings etc.

Stairs and communal areas are kept spotless by cleaning contractors. Workmen are onsite preparing the groundwork for new gas central heating. A council deal with Aberdeen Heat & Power means a charge of £9.40 a week on top of rent will cover a resident's total gas usage, a welcome change from paying excessive charges for inefficient, unreliable storage heaters.

Once the new heating is completed, new windows will be fitted and tenants can look forward to a brighter future but it's not just about the physical improvements. A housing worker insists the real credit for the rehabilitation of Fountain Grange must go to its residents.

“They really have made a huge effort to make the place work and recently started a Neighbourhood Watch,” she said, “But the fact is, the residents really care about the place. That's what makes the difference”.

## Home Warmth Scheme

As the 'Big-6' energy companies prepare for their seemingly annual price hike, leaving many wondering how they will heat their homes adequately this winter, help is available from a recently introduced scheme. The Home Warmth scheme is worth a £135 credit to your account with your energy supplier.

### Eligibility

You qualify for the discount if on the 'qualifying day' (20 July 2013) your supplier was part of the scheme, your name (or your partner's) was on the bill and you were either:

75 or over and getting the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit (even if you get Savings Credit)

Under 75 and only getting the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit (you won't qualify if you also get Savings Credit)

### Broader Group

Customers are also eligible for the Broader Group Warm Home Discount if they are in receipt of any of the following:

### Income Support

Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance

Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)

Who also receive any of following:

### Child Tax Credit

A disability premium, enhanced disability premium or severe disability premium

Disability Living Allowance (For an adult or child within the household)  
Long term Incapacity Benefit

To be eligible for the allowance, your supplier must be part of the scheme. If you have any questions about the Home Warmth initiative, please contact SCARF on email at [info@scarf.org.uk](mailto:info@scarf.org.uk) or call 01224 213005.

# Project news

## Garage Music

**01** Many famous bands started off playing in humble rehearsal spots but while Woodside has few places young people and their friends can practise their instruments together, word is spreading that The Garage is the place to be if you like to play loud music. For three years, Fersands and Fountain Community Project (FFCP) has been using the space under the Woodside Fountain Centre as a home-made music studio where local teenagers can learn drums, keyboards, guitar, bass and vocals.

Tutors Max and Stu run the sessions. Max, who teaches songwriting skills, told us: "I enjoy working with young people, you can see them improve every week and they really enjoy being here. We only open two nights a week but it would be great to open more so other youths can get involved."

Drum tutor Stu said: "It's great to see them become independent and teach each other. The Garage is a place for them to be creative

and learn the music they want to learn."

Music can be a fantastic tool for young people. Learning musical skills not only imparts confidence but is a positive interest they can share with others. The Garage provides access to both electric and traditional drum kits, bass, electric and acoustic guitars, keyboards, amplifiers and microphones.

**"We formed a band Top Hat Cavalry and the workers show us how to work in a band and give us exercises to practice and learn to play better. Some of us study music at school and the sessions help us achieve better grades because we can practice here just before the exams."**

*Connor, Liam, Jonathan*





## The Italian Job

**02** Not the film of that name but an exciting travel opportunity for one of our nursery workers. Marie Macdonald is to attend a Taking Learning Outdoors course in Italy, spending a week in Shilpario, a mountain village north of Milan.

Over the last year, a key objective at the family centre has been to develop the settings, quality of outdoor experiences and learning. This is due to the increased emphasis placed on the outdoor environment, and how specialists believe it impacts on children's social, physical and emotional development.

FFCP nursery children have recently benefited from the help of a park ranger Stephen Bly, who has been making changes to the garden, sourcing natural resources and training staff. Children have already enjoyed using logs for balancing activities, construction and role play. Through this they have increased their imaginative,

problem solving and risk analysis skills.

The course in Italy aims to develop techniques essential for planning and evaluating activities; to give participants the ability and confidence to create and facilitate a positive ethos by encouraging and motivating others. It also very much focuses on experiential learning i.e. how children actively learn when participating in any hands-on activity.

Marie is keen to pass on what she learns to other staff at the nursery and family centre, and hopes all sectors in the community become more aware of the fun and learning experiences the outdoors can offer.

The trip will offer a new and varied perspective of ideas on outdoor learning, and meeting and building relationships with workers from other countries could lead to all sorts of new opportunities for FFCP.

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## All change at Mini Market

**04** Woodside Fountain Centre mini market is run by volunteers and tries to offer a range of healthy and affordable foods. FFCP has taken over the initiative and over the next few weeks will be looking at the services it provides and how best the market can serve the community. A dedicated core of volunteers is keen to make the project work but your support is needed to help us identify the best way forward.

What would you like to see in the market? Serious health

food? A Scoop Shop with small quantities of rice, pulses, dried goods etc. available at competitive prices? Should we offer soup and sandwiches when the café is closed, or start our own sandwich business? Will you buy from us if we continue to sell fresh fish and fruit? Should we start a food bank service or is the community already well-served in that area?

If you are interested in getting involved, or helping us identify our needs in Woodside, please contact Claire Bradshaw at FFCP on 01224 524927.

## New Opportunities for Parents

**03** Fersands Family Centre is partnering Parent Network Scotland (PNS) to provide a range of parenting support groups and development opportunities in the Fersands area.

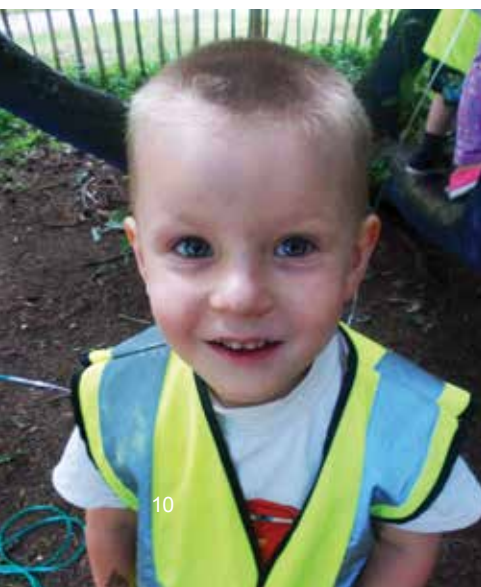
Parents will be invited to participate in groups and workshops facilitated by family centre staff. Much of the training is about building confidence and developing leadership skills. On successful completion of the groups, interested parents may be offered the chance to continue with a PNS Development Award, which skills parents up to deliver parenting support groups to others and is accredited through the Social Enterprise Academy.

The first groups begin after the October holidays. If you would like to know more, please contact the family centre on 01224 524950 or call in any time to talk to a member of staff. We will be very pleased to see you.

## Active Parents and Toddlers

**05** A new group at the Woodside centre is all about having fun in an open space with lots of energetic games. Open to all parents and toddlers, it's already very popular; group leader Amanda said: "Children get a chance to run off excess energy and learn social skills with other children, like sharing and taking turns. Games are used to help children become familiar with colours and numbers. It's great for their all round development and parents love it, too."

**Thursday mornings 10.30am**



## Sunshine at Fersands

**06** As the country basked in the warmest summer for years, everyone at FFCP seemed to get into the holiday atmosphere. The teenagers, as usual, had a hectic six weeks of activities and camps including a great outdoor adventure exploring the islands of Skye and Raasay.

Our primary kids also had some great days out, visiting local parks as well as Stonehaven and Codona's funfair. They also toured the Highlands of Scotland with three camps: the first was The Big Sleepover at Cullen for 5-7 year olds, Cromdale hosted the 8-10 year olds on a 3-day adventure, but this year's longest junior camp was the famous 5-day Hopscotch Holiday near Fort William.

Even the nursery-age children were out and about on special day trips. Looking for fun, they found it with trips to Dizzy Rascals at Laurencekirk and at a great new park we discovered at Castle Fraser.

Two family trips were organised and great days were had at Stonehaven and Storybook Glen.

Every single minute of these activities - every mile travelled, every entry fee and all camp accommodation, food and equipment - was delivered to the community free of charge by FFCP, and everyone in the area had the chance to attend any of the summer attractions.

# Affordable Borrowing with St Machar Credit Union

**The Credit Union is all about saving and borrowing. You can pay into your credit union account by cash, bank standing order or through your benefits.**

Jackie, who works at the credit union and who puts together reports for the credit union Board of Directors, notes that credit committee reports show that at Christmas, members in the Middlefield community use their credit union for affordable borrowing.

She said, "Members in Middlefield didn't come and withdraw their savings, they borrowed against them for loans for their families Christmas presents and for their holidays throughout the festive period. The low income / benefit £250 loan deal means you pay £12 per week over 26 weeks - this pays back the loan, and the interest charge of £15.72 (26.8% APR) AND you put away savings of £46.28 - do this twice a year and every year you are building up savings of nearly £100 every year. This builds financial security for your future. I personally would not have been able to save as much if I had not borrowed with the credit union"

Board member Molly Sandison, treasurer of the credit union, noted that savings and loans had been offered in the Middlefield community since the credit union widened its operating area in 2002. "As treasurer I have seen many

families in the Middlefield area use their credit union accounts for Christmas and summer holidays time and time again over the years. In fact, junior accounts holders who regularly paid into their accounts are now moving over to have adult accounts and they are choosing to use the credit union for their first time borrowing instead of online high interest lenders"

We have two local collection points in the Middlefield area Every Monday night - from 6.30pm till 7.15pm - we are in the Henry Rae Community Centre.

Tuesday lunchtimes - from 11.45am till 12.45 lunchtime, we're at the Healthy Hoose, Logie



**Left to right - Credit Union staff Jackie, Stuart, Jade, Lauren**

Main office Open Monday to Friday 9.30am till 4.30pm  
(01224) 524935

**email:** [f-credit@fersands.org](mailto:f-credit@fersands.org)

**website:** [www.stmacharcreditunion.co.uk](http://www.stmacharcreditunion.co.uk)

## The Info Hub

The Info Hub is located in the Aberdeen Indoor Market and is a place for people with disabilities, their families and carers to find unbiased information.

The Info Hub offers a variety of support groups and one of our most popular groups is the Job Club. The drop in service, jointly run by Cornerstone and Inspire PTL, runs every Thursday from 10am to midday offering help to people with disabilities looking to apply for jobs and voluntary positions. Support from this service includes help with filling in forms, arranging interviews and interview techniques.

Job seekers enjoying coming to the club, as it offers a social environment where it is possible to meet others who are going through the same experiences as they are.

Once people have found a job, the Job Club can offer further guidance should they need it.

Referrals are not needed to attend and you can come alone, with a friend, family or with your support worker any Thursday 10am to midday.

Other groups at the Info Hub include: Local Area Coordination drop-in on Mondays from 12:30 to 2:30pm and Positive Thinking [mental health] on Wednesdays from 2:30 to 4:30pm.

The Info Hub. Units 8-10  
Aberdeen Indoor Market  
01224 595685. [www.theinfohub.org](http://www.theinfohub.org)

Like us on Facebook at The Info Hub Aberdeen, and follow us on Twitter at theInfoHubAbdn

## SHMU'S YOUTHTV PREMIERE WWII FILM AT 50+ FESTIVAL

Over the Summer Break young people from the youthTV project joined a couple of past trainees from Positive Transitions to take part in a unique film project in conjunction with the St Fitticks Arts Festival.

The original brief was to interview local World War II veterans to capture their stories for future generations. SHMU teamed up with the Gordon Highlanders Museum to connect with the veterans and the group also spoke to older people who were young children growing up in Aberdeen during WW2. The Gordon Highlanders also very kindly arranged an education session to give the group an introduction to the history of the Highlanders and the wars they fought in.

The interviews and filming all took place over a very hectic 2-3 week period in early August with editing taking place at the end of the month. The group were supported by tutors at SHMU but did the majority of filming, directing and planning themselves. Due to the tight deadline, our resident editor here at SHMU pulled it all together with a little help from a few members of the group.

All of this hard work was rewarded on the 10th September at the official screening at The Belmont Cinema, as part of the 50+ Festival. There were over 70 people in the audience including some of our young people and a few of the 'stars' – the veterans and older people who kindly agreed to be interviewed. The audience was treated to a question and answer session after the screening, giving them the opportunity to ask the young people questions about their experience making the film. The group bravely stood up in front of the 70-strong crowd and answered questions confidently; in fact when asked what making the film meant to

them, Danielle commented that it had really helped to boost her confidence.

The group also agreed that it gave them a much greater insight into the realities of war and of just how close to home it came. They found the subject matter all the more interesting hearing it from a local perspective. It also made them see and think of older people in a different light, now knowing some of the fascinating and sometimes harrowing stories behind them. It made them grateful to be living in a time of relative peace; knowing that the veterans were their age when they were conscripted.

We also had some lovely feedback from one of the veterans – Muriel, who was a WREN during WW2, was present at the screening and said that she enjoyed watching the interviews even more than she did being interviewed!

At the end of the Q&A a number of audience members came down to congratulate the young people on a job well done and to offer their services and stories for future projects. We could have stayed all day chatting!

As a final well done to the young people, the staff of The Belmont treated them to a soft drink in the café downstairs and gave them all a souvenir pack containing a ticket stub from the screening, a programme and two free cinema passes to return and see a film of their choice. This was totally unexpected and the group wish to pass on their sincere thanks.



*Station House Media Unit (shmu) is situated just off Great Northern Road in the old Station House Community Centre, Woodside. We offer free access to, and training in video and radio production, and magazine and online publications to residents of all ages living in Seaton, Woodside, Middlefield, Tillydrone, Torry, Northfield and Cummings Park.*

# Woodside Fountain Health Centre

With the new Woodside Fountain Health Centre emerging rapidly from the ground, we wanted to share a project update with the Woodside community. The structure of the new building can now clearly be seen from Great Northern Road, Marquis Road and the surrounding area. Building work is on programme with the steel frame up and concrete floors installed.

The new purpose built building, which is due to open in May 2014, will house the GP practice with 12 consulting rooms, minor procedures room, treatment rooms and a multi-purpose room. The Community Nursing Team will also be housed in the new development as well as a NHS dental practice with three consulting rooms. We previously told you that the new dental practice would be called

the Woodside Fountain Dental Practice but it will actually be known as the Marquis Road Dental Practice.

The dental service is keen to encourage people from the local community, especially families, to register with the new practice, if they are not already registered with a Dentist. A full range of NHS Dental services will be delivered from the practice, including oral health education. We will be looking to offer pre-bookable appointments, an after school clinic and a drop in clinic to make it easier for people to attend for dental care. Childsmile will also be provided; this is an important programme to improve the oral health of children. More information on Childsmile is available at [www.child-smile.org](http://www.child-smile.org).

Engagement with the local community continues, with

Shonagh Swan, Woodside Practice Manager and Heather Sharkey, Regional Community Manager with the builders, Miller Construction UK, taking part in an interview on the SHMU Health Show. In addition, Miller Construction has involved the Fersands Art Club and Fersands Nursery to draw and paint pictures on the hoardings around the site. Miller has also met with six youngsters from the local job club and has given advice and help with producing CVs.

For more information about the development and Woodside Medical Group please go to [www.woodsidedmedicalgroup.co.uk](http://www.woodsidedmedicalgroup.co.uk) or look out for updates in the practice.

For information about the dental practice, please contact **(01224) 556598**.

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## VSA Update

If you care for your partner, child, neighbour or a friend this may mean that you are a carer therefore you can get advice, support and information from a VSA Carer Support & Development Worker who can offer training, counselling life coaching, complimentary therapies & Support Groups giving the carer a feeling of being listened to which instils confidence and self worth. Some carers can feel isolated due to the nature of their caring role and might benefit from talking to other carers who understand each others situation and can

support and advise one another as well as keeping up to date with current events.

VSA Carers Service is delighted to announce that we have again received funding through the Scottish Government's Short Breaks Fund, carers may be interested in making an application. Carers have benefited from the fund by helping to pay for a holiday, alternative therapies or go to places of interest.

Funding has been secured by the Princess Royal Trust For Carers where a grant of up to

£500 to support the purchase of a service or essential household equipment that will have a long term impact on the carers quality of life.

To discuss any of the above and many other services we provide please contact:

Tracey Harrison, Carer Support & Development worker for VSA Carer Services.

**Tel: 01224 679026/212021**  
**[tracey.harrison@vsa.org.uk](mailto:tracey.harrison@vsa.org.uk)**  
**Mobile:07885803046**

*Registered Scottish Charity SC012950*

# food banks

## Partnership Aberdeen

In December 2012, the organisations presently involved in providing food banks in Aberdeen City agreed to form a Food Bank Partnership. The Partnership successfully applied to the Fairer Scotland Fund to support the development of an infrastructure behind the Food Banks and to ensure that every effort is made to realise quantities of produce from food producers and retailers.

As well as providing emergency food, all partners are committed to promoting employment, signposting to money advice, debt management and household budgeting services, and other sources of support to develop resilience and help people to move on and out of poverty.

The Partnership has developed a Memorandum of Understanding and an Information Sharing

Protocol and partners will sign these at a launch on October 7th to formalise the Partnership.

The Food Banks Aberdeen Partnership organises food drives with the help of the public, private and Third sectors. The food donated is distributed through existing food banks and other community outlets.

CFINE is a local Social Enterprise which has been supplying fruit and veg to deprived communities since 1996, developing a volunteer network, tackling food poverty, building resilience and raising awareness, and is the local distributor for the national Fare Share scheme. Food donated by Fare Share is also distributed locally through food banks and other community outlets and augments what is collected locally.

How can you help?

- **Take part by organising a food drive**
- **Be a volunteer**
- **Sponsor a Food Bank in your area**

### **CFINE**

4 Poynerook Road  
Aberdeen

Tel: (01224) 596156

Mon-Thurs 9-5, Fri 9-4

### **Instant Neighbour**

Charitable Trust

5 St Machar Drive

Tel: (01224) 489955

Non – Perishable food parcels available

\*Service user card available from Cyrenians' Duty Team at Summer Street Mon-Fri, 10-3

For more information contact:

**Ailsa Duncan**

**Tel 01224 596156**

**Email [aduncan@cfine.org](mailto:aduncan@cfine.org)**

[www.foodbankspartnershipaberdeen.org.uk](http://www.foodbankspartnershipaberdeen.org.uk)

## Recycle your food in Woodside

How much food do you throw away? The answer is probably more than you think. But now there is another option available – you can recycle it instead. Food waste recycling bins have already been put in at Clifton, Murray and Fullerton Courts and are being well used by residents. Other streets in the area are due to get food waste recycling bins in early 2014. Look out for a letter from the Council with more information. You'll also get a free

kitchen caddy and a supply of biodegradable liners delivered, so when the bin is put in you can start to recycle right away. If you already have a brown wheelie bin, you can use this to recycle your food waste. You can recycle all food waste, whether the food is cooked or raw.

Recycling is good, but it's even better if you can avoid food going to waste in the first place. We recently produced a recipe book,

Love Your Food, which is full of ideas of things to make with leftovers. Pick up a free copy from the library, or download it from our website at [www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/wasteaware](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/wasteaware). If you'd like more information about food waste recycling, please call us on **08456 08 09 19** or email [wasteaware@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:wasteaware@aberdeencity.gov.uk)

**Erica Manfroi,**  
**Recycling Officer,**  
**Aberdeen City Council**



# Pete the Punk

## The culture of culture...

**Legendary comedian/activist Mark Thomas appeared at the Lemon Tree recently. Pete The Punk caught up with him.**

**PTP:** *Your show is called 100 Acts of Minor Dissent. You've become known for your high profile protests. What are you most proud of?*

**MT:** I've been around 28 years now. I'm very old in terms of being a comedian – I should be hosting chat shows now, the kind of thing I dread – but of all the stuff I've been involved with, I'm most proud of running a campaign that stopped a dam being built in the Kurdish region of Turkey. It took us three years, but we beat seven governments, seven multinationals, seven credit agencies and a torturing state – which isn't bad for a bunch of letter writers, so I'm proud of that one.

**PTP:** *How do you think we're faring here under the present coalition government?*

**MT:** I think it's a class war waged by the offspring of Eton on anyone that's poor, frankly. With so many cuts in benefits, cuts to people with disabilities and the whole ATOS process, where some people have died because of it, committed suicide, you are looking at something that is just monumentally wrong, disproportionate to the way the world actually works. This idea that you can assess someone with cerebral palsy every three years - just in case it gets better - is absolutely insane. Welfare fraud is actually 0.7% of the sum total, infinitesimally small compared to the budget fraud that goes on within government departments, so there's not huge reason to believe people are claiming disability benefits fraudulently. But thousands are challenging their ATOS assessments and 40% are being overturned, and that's why Amnesty International got involved, because you can't have this level of assessments overturned without there being institutional failure.

**PTP:** *Here at SHMU we produce community radio and magazines. How important do you think projects like ours can be in redressing the balance against a mainly corporate media?*

**MT:** I think it's vital. For me it's all about how local communities take control of their own affairs. How we control our local high street, our local businesses. How our communities support each other. There are not enough primary school places in many areas, yet free schools and academies are opening in places where there are already enough schools. The pet projects are taking over, it's becoming more about central government or private companies taking control, rather than local authorities and communities working out what they need and making sure they get it. Community media is a really important way of reflecting the community's desires and putting forward a community agenda.

**PTP:** *One problem we have in Aberdeen is when communities come into conflict with big business, notably*



*in the case of Donald Trump. Anthony Baxter's award-winning film You've Been Trumped explored this issue, how do you see that situation?*

**MT:** I met Anthony recently. I'm a big admirer of his work and I thought his film was amazing, a genuine blast of fresh air in a world of corporate crap, and I like that. The struggle isn't called the struggle for nothing, it's hard, and these campaigns take time, but we need to fight them and it is outrageous the needs of a billionaire can be put before those of the community.

**PTP:** *We had a similar situation in Aberdeen where the community fought off a bid to concrete over the beautiful Victorian gardens in our city centre. Despite that success, many people still seem to feel a bit helpless. What would you say to people who would like to see some change in the system, or society, but perhaps feel that one person can't make a difference?*

**MT:** We can all make a difference, that's the point. A friend of mine was a prisoner, a Kurd. He was tortured, and he was Amnesty's first prisoner of conscience. He was released after a letter-writing campaign, left Turkey and studied human rights in Ireland. He set up a group that took Turkey to court for breaches of human rights, including the most horrible village destruction, systemic rape by Turkish security forces, extra-judicial killings and torture. They won compensation for victims, and the U.N. declared torture was [Turkish] state policy as a result of the work this man did. The people in his group are now involved in the peace process in the Kurdish region, and it's on the verge of something very significant. When I tell people that, they say, "Oh, I can't do that myself," and that's true – he is an exceptional human being. But the thing we all can do is write that letter for Amnesty that gets him out of jail. All of us have got a role to play. These things always take longer than we think, and they always take more effort than we think, but paradoxically, we always have more power than we think.

**Hear the full interview at:** <http://www.shmu.org.uk/fm/mark-thomas>

# COMMUNITY CONTACTS

## Alcohol

Alcoholics Anonymous **0845 769 7555**  
Drinkline **0800 917 8282**

## Benefits

Benefits Agency Advice Line **0800 587 9135**

## Crime

Crimestoppers **0800 555 111**

## Drugs

FRANK – National Helpline **0800 776 600**

## Dentist

Emergency - G-Dens **01224 558 140**

## Doctors

NHS 24 Emergency **08454 242 424**

## Electricity

If you have a Power-Cut **0800 300 999**

## Family Planning

Square 13, Support & Advice **01224 642 711**

## Gas

Gas Emergency **0800 111 999**  
Gas Emergency with a Meter **0845 606 6766**

## Housing

Emergency Repairs **01224 480 281**  
Call Centre Emergency **0845 608 0929**

## Police

Non-Emergency **101**

## Samaritans

Need to talk **01224 574 488**

## Social Work

Social Work Duty Team **01224 522055**  
Emergency Out-Of-Hours **01224 693 936**

## Young Carers

Support & Information Service **01224 625 009**

## Water

Scottish Water Emergency **0845 600 8855**

## Alkohol

Anonimowi Alkoholicy **0845 769 7555**  
Problemy z alkoholem **0800 917 8282**

## Zapomoga

Agencja doradztwa w zapomogach **0800 587 9135**

## Przestępstwa

Przeciwdziałanie przestępstwom **0800 555 111**

## Narkotyki

FRANK – narodowa linia pomocy **0800 776 600**

## Dentysta

Nagle wypadki **01224 558 140**

## Lekarze

Nagle wypadki **08454 242 424**

## Elektryczność

W wypadku odcięcia energii elektrycznej **0800 300 999**

## Planowanie rodziny

Square 13 wsparcie i doradztwo **01224 642 711**

## Gaz

Nagle wypadki **0800 111 999**  
Nagle wypadki w związku z licznikiem **0845 606 6766**

## Pomoc mieszkaniowa

Nagle naprawy **01224 480 281**  
Centrum pomocy **0845 608 0929**

## Policja

Zgłaszanie przypadków nie wymagających nagłej interwencji **0845 600 5700**

## Samarytanie

Telefon dla potrzebujących rozmowy **01224 574 488**

## Praca społeczna

Dyżur pracowników społecznych **01224 765 220**  
Nagle wypadki poza godzinami pracy biura **01224 639 936**

## Pomoc w karierze

Wsparcie i informacje **01224 625 009**

## Woda

Nagle wypadki **0845 600 8855**