

woodside free press

Winter Edition 2016



**Green Spaces in Fersands
Woodside Burgh Hall
Woodside 125**

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Fersands and Fountain Project Street Art Project

Young people from the Ferriers/Sandilands area of Woodside have given the space at the side of Woodside Fountain Centre a makeover.

The group completed the project over two days in the October Holidays with help from the Fersands Youth Work team and Marc at Freshpaint. Freshpaint is an organisation working with graffiti artists to create pieces of street art.

The theme was chosen to brighten up the space, encourage children and young people to spend time in the space and promote the animals and wildlife of Scotland.

The project was funded through Fersands and Fountain Community Project through grants received from The Big Lottery Fund, Awards for All and Northsound Cash for Kids.



Editorial

Welcome to the winter 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.

Supported by





Clean up Union Street

By Jodie Molyneux

A project with the mission of cleaning up Union Street to its original sparkle finally launched on 1st September. The project, given the ambitious and slightly 007-sounding name of *Operation Union Street Rejuvenation*, is being led by Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeen Inspired, operator of the Business Improvement District, it will take place over the next nine months it is set to cost more than £1 million.

Council leader Councillor Jenny Laing spoke of the project's aims; "The rejuvenation programme promises to bring benefits for all - residents, visitors, businesses and investors - and once under way will help revive civic pride in the fabulous asset that is Union Street".

In recent days, Aberdonian shoppers have tended to bypass Union Street in favour of the colossal Union Square since its' opening in 2009, leaving Union Street to fall into a state of disrepair and in the need of a little love. The goal of *Operation Union Street Rejuvenation* is to restore its' former sparkle in the hopes of enticing not only customers back to the 'high street', put new businesses into the empty business lots on the ground and first floors of Union Street buildings.

The rejuvenation programme began with a deep clean and power wash of pavements, doorways and street furniture; a similar undertaking as the efforts to clean Marischal College in 2010. Chris Henderson of Nationwide Public Area Cleaning, the contractors involved, explained that they also expected to remove in excess of 250,000 pieces of chewing gum whilst cleaning more than 30,000sqm of the street. In the coming nine months, *Operation Union Street Rejuvenation* plans to carry out a survey into the condition of the buildings in order to prioritise those in need of repair, and they also expect to complete a drone survey in order to take a closer look at roof level conditions.

Speaking directly to *Woodside Free Press*, MSP for Aberdeen Central Kevin Stewart said: "I am glad to see Union Street will finally be getting a much needed clean-up, but am disappointed the council let it get to such a state that it now needs an expensive treatment to improve it and bring it back to the great standard folk were once used to. £1 million is serious money [and] should be used to make life changing improvements, rather than cleaning up after years of improper maintenance and care from the council".

We'd love to hear your views on this story.
Email laura.young@shmu.org.uk or let us know on Facebook.

Woodside Community Centre

In November Woodside Community Centre launched a new group for local young people who are of secondary school age. The group will run weekly at 7:30pm for an hour on Thursdays. There will be lots of activities on offer each week including bubble football. This will be a drop in group and you do not have to commit to coming every week. Hopefully see you there!

Woodside Community Council

As I'm sure you'll know Woodside now has its very own Community Council. We meet on the first Tuesday of most months and all are welcome. The Community Council has a real voice in getting the city council to listen to ideas and suggestions that can help to improve our community. Along with that work we have a legal right to be consulted over planning and licensing issues in our area. Lots of work coming up and we are especially excited about the new Friends of Stewart Park group and hope to be able to work to improve this beautiful park. So if there's anything you think we can help with, do pop along to our next meeting on Tuesday the 6th of December in the common room at Fountain Grange. If you can't make that you can e-mail woodsideccsec@gmail.com or find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/woodsidecommunitycouncilabz/ Doug Haywood, Secretary for Woodside CC.



Fersands and Fountain Community Project worked in partnership with Alcohol and Drugs Action and Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership and carried out a large piece of research on looking at the lives of young people living in Woodside.

The area is one of the catchment areas in the St Machar Learning Partnership (SMLP). We received 129 completed questionnaires that geographically covered the SMLP areas and we are focusing on 71 of these questionnaires that are specific to the Woodside area. Woodside, more specifically Sandilands and Ferriers, is listed as one of the six regeneration areas of Aberdeen and falls within the 10% poorest areas of Scotland. Fersands and Fountain Community Project is based in this community and has been running for over 35 years.

In March 2016, the World Health Organisation (WHO) released a

major piece of research where they compared the health and wellbeing of children in 42 European and North American countries. This is a huge international piece of research. Some of the findings suggested that Scottish children had some of the highest levels of obesity and a high rate of mental health issues.

Our aim was to take these international findings and see how they compared to our findings at a local level. As a partnership we coordinated, developed, carried out the research and we are now in the process of putting together the detailed report of our findings that we hope to complete soon. We have made contact with lots of local young people which hopefully will lead to more young people using our services. We hope these findings will influence and help our services grow to meet the needs and wants of the young people in the Woodside community. Once the report is complete and it has been distributed to the relevant

agencies we will inform the Free Press of any projects developed from these findings.

On reflection we have identified some issues that may have influenced some of the findings. Some of the research was carried out in school, thanks to the support of St Machar Academy. This increased the total number of completed surveys, however, we believe that the setting could have influenced some of the answers which young people gave. If we were to repeat this research we would not use a classroom setting.

Every young person who completed the questionnaire received a raffle ticket to be entered into a prize draw for a chance to win an iPad. The winning ticket was drawn at the Fersands Gala Day on the 2nd of July and the lucky winner was Reece Donaldson, 18.

Key Findings from the survey:

40% gave out their social media passwords to partners

**65% DRINK SUGARY DRINKS
EVERYDAY / MOST DAYS**

**46% live with both
parents**

**32.5% HAVE NEVER BEEN ON HOLIDAY WITH
THEIR FAMILY**

59% have been bullied before, 68%
of these were bullied at school

**80% STATE THAT THEY HAVE GOOD HEALTH,
HOWEVER ONLY 57% ARE COMPLETING THE
DAILY RECOMMENDED AMOUNT OF ACTIVITY.**

Only 36% eat a balanced diet

**38% are not getting as much sleep
as recommended**

**80% OF PARTICIPANTS ARE HAPPY WITH THE
MIX OF CULTURES IN THE COMMUNITY**

36% of participants hardly ever or
only sometimes brush their teeth

86% of participants that had tried cannabis
were aged between 10-16 years old

**43% OF PARTICIPANTS HAD TRIED
ALCOHOL BETWEEN THE AGES OF
9-12 YEAR OLDS.**

58% of participants who had lost
their virginity were under age.

**43.5% OF PARTICIPANTS WATCH TV 4 HRS OF
MORE ALONE EVERY DAY (NET IX ETC.)**

26.5% never or hardly ever eat an evening
meal with parents.



Images courtesy of Fotomaki Photography

GALA DAY

The Fersands Summer Gala day took place on the 2nd July 2016 between 11-2pm. It was a fantastic day and we would even say one of our best yet! Tesco gave us a rather large donation of old season clothes to sell and we also had a huge bake sale which helped us raise over £1,400. We also had face painting, a bouncy castle, beauty corner, Reiki in the Community, prize bingo and a BBQ. There were free soup and sandwiches on offer for everyone who attended and live music. We would like to say thanks to shmuFM, Woodside community volunteers, Alcohol and Drugs Action, Reiki in the Community, Aberdeen University Science Team, Woodside Church, CFINE, Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership and all the volunteers who took part and helped on the day.



Cash in your Pocket Focus on Woodside

September was a busy month for Cash in your Pocket (CIYP). We focussed our activity in and around Woodside to raise community awareness of help available with issues relating to money, health and care.

To try and reach as many people as possible we set up a programme of information and awareness sessions at various community locations including Woodside library, Fullerton & Murray Court, Woodside Fountain Centre, Calsayseat & Woodside Medical Centres.

We also worked jointly with St Machar Credit Union to offer £5 free junior savings for new junior savers during September. As a result, 25 new credit union accounts have been opened – a brilliant way to start saving!

A joint free lunch and information event was held at Woodside Fountain Centre on the 29th September. The event was organised by Fersands & Fountain Community Project. Thanks to

Mark, Dorothy, and a wonderful team of volunteers from the community centre and the project working together the event proved to be a great success. Participants enjoyed a fantastic spread of homemade soup and sandwiches and were able to take advantage of information and advice available to help with debt, benefits, fuel costs, household goods, loans and savings.

Patrick Barney, who visited the centre said: "I came here to pay rent and was kindly invited in for free lunch. The soup and sandwiches were beautiful. I've mobility difficulties so find it difficult to get to get about and can't have a scooter because I've nowhere to store it. Cash in your Pocket advised me about the Shopmobility scheme and gave me their contact details to find out more. There should be more events like this."

Throughout the month, visitors to the CIYP stall were encouraged to enter the CIYP free prize draw for their chance to win a £20 shopping voucher.

Diane Simpson of Ferrier Crescent was delighted to win the prize draw.

Diane said: "It was a friend who told me about Cash in your Pocket, having used them before. She invited me along to the free lunch, for information on what help may be available to me. I would definitely use CIYP again and recommend the service to other people."

Cash in your Pocket also increased awareness of Fersands Emergency Food Bank as it gave away 10 food parcels on the day.

If you were unable to get along to any of our information sessions and would like more information about the help we can provide, please get in touch using our freephone number 0800 953 4330. All calls are free from a landline or mobile. You can also pick up a referral leaflet from the community centre or medical practice.

Syrian Scots

Woodside Parish Church are working with a group of Syrian Scots to help them learn new skills and integrate into the community.

The group meets every Monday and Wednesday along with local volunteers who help to teach them English and run a crèche for the children. This gives the adults some peace to get on with their session!

The sessions have been running for around a year now and have been very well received by the Syrian Scots who have praised

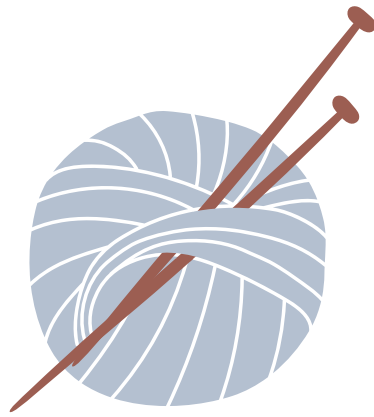
their welcome from people in Aberdeen. They have described Aberdonians as "friendly and outgoing." Volunteers from Woodside Parish Church and St Machar's Cathedral come along twice a week to help run the sessions but they are always looking for more volunteers to help out. You don't need any qualifications, just enthusiasm and a smile.

On the 13th of October the Lord Provost of Aberdeen City Council, George Adam, who is also Councillor for the area, spent some time with the group.

Councillor George Adam said: "I spent an enjoyable couple of hours at Woodside Church with a group of our new Syrian residents. The group which meets two afternoons a week is organised by Woodside Parish Church & St Machar Cathedral congregation members to help make our Syrian refugees feel welcome in Aberdeen. The pre-school age children get to play together while the adults improve their English skills."

If you would be interested in helping out then contact June on 01224 276167.

Clifton Court Knitting Group



The residents of Clifton Court have set up a knitting group on a Tuesday afternoon. They have been focusing on twiddle muffs which they have donated to Alzheimer's Scotland to give out to people with dementia. People who have dementia can quite often be restless and like to have something to keep their hands occupied. The group are looking for new projects

to get involved in so if you're involved in a charity or a scheme then please get in touch with Fiona or Jenny to get something arranged. It is possible for non-residents to get involved and help out but staff would prefer it if you could give them a call first.

**For more information
phone Fiona or Jenny on
01224 485298.**



Printfield Charity Shop

We raised over £1,000 at the Charity Shop on George Street so we are delighted. We were open from Monday to Friday and were very busy for the whole week. It was all down to the local volunteers who put in many hours in the shop, also all the lifting and sorting out of bags of clothes etc. George Street is a busy area with a very diverse community which makes the week interesting and exciting. Everyone looks forward to the week there and the hard work but it is also good to come back to Printfield and the normal routine.

The funds raised will go towards the activities for our children and young people, including Christmas and the Pantomime. During the summer holidays over 90 children and parents went for a day to Blair Drummond Safari Park. An outing takes place every summer at Printfield, the location being decided by the youth groups.

Woodside Health Walk

A short, easy walk around the local community lead by a trained volunteer walk leader finishing with a cup of tea!

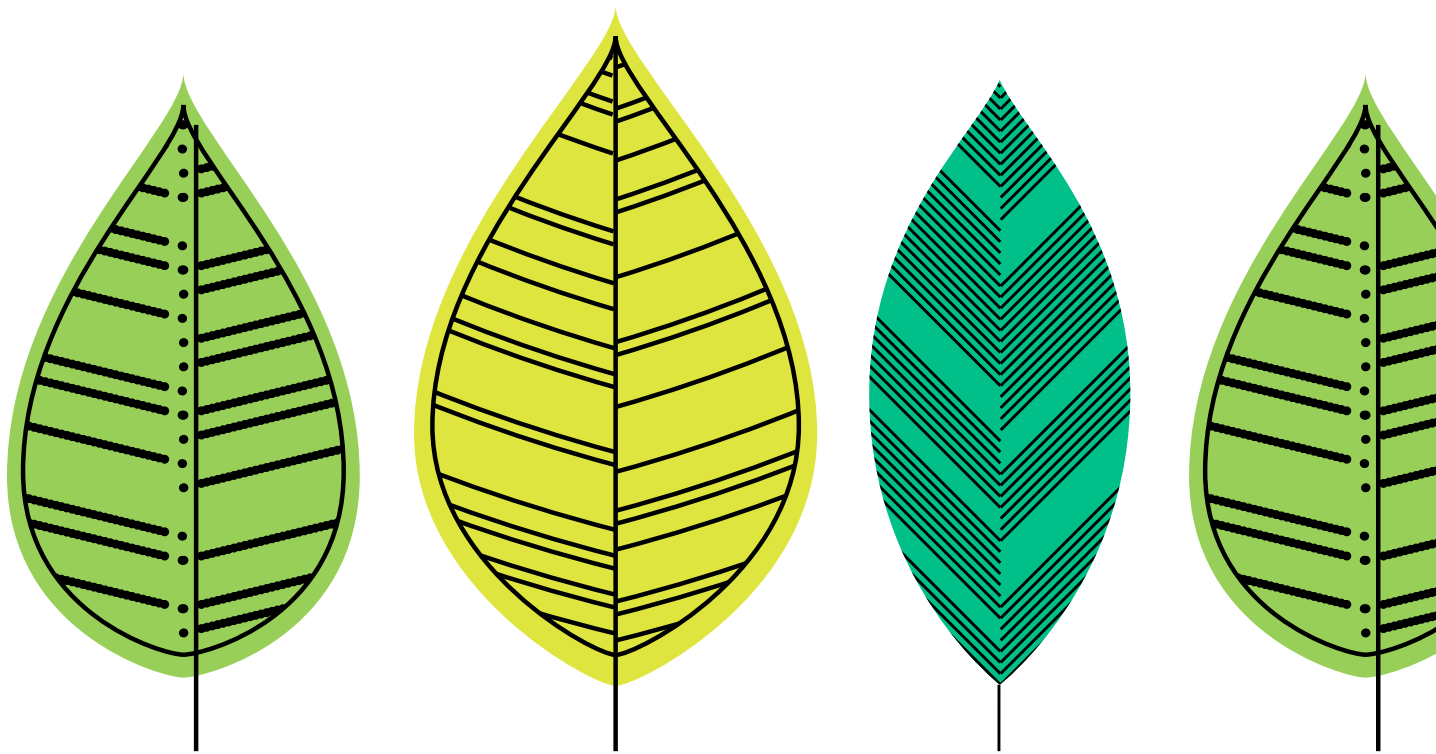
Walk Aberdeen, part of Sport Aberdeen, organises a range of 'Health Walks' across the city. Health Walks are short, sociable community based walks of up to one hour aimed at those who can't go far or fast. The walks

finish with the opportunity for a cup of tea and a chat for which there is a small charge.

We meet every Tuesday at Woodside Community centre in the cafe area at 11am. For further information please contact:

**Brian Harrison
07719 501361
bharrison@sportaberdeen.**





NICER PARKS AND GREENER SPACES IN FERSANDS

Local play parks are to be upgraded thanks to grants from Aberdeen City Council.

Thanks to grants from Aberdeen City Council, the Ferrier Crescent play area is to get a £50,000 makeover. Extensive consultations with local families and children at Kittybrewster Primary School and Woodside Fountain Centre included colourful and attractive displays of play equipment and design options put forward by the four companies hoping to secure the contract.

Set up by council officer Yvonne Macleod, the consultations included exercises through which the community could express its preferred options from those on offer. Residents of the Fountain area between Marquis Road and Great Northern Road were particularly happy that plans to improve their play area are finally going ahead.

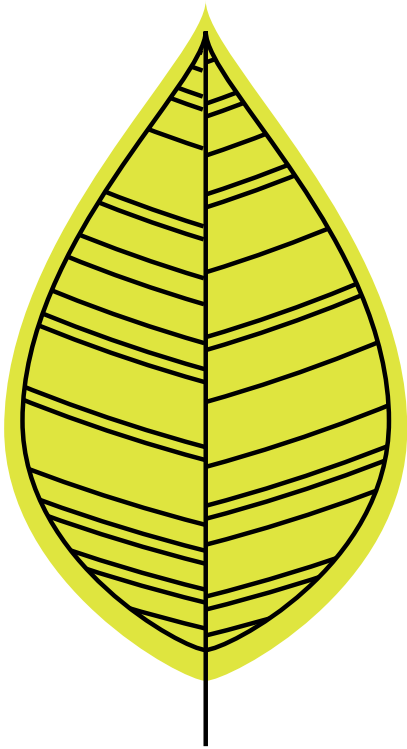
The refurbishment – expected to be completed by the end of the year – will see older pieces of play equipment replaced by more contemporary designs: new swings, a chute, roundabout and springies, all on brighter and safer, crazy-coloured, kid-proof surfaces.

Following a meeting of residents and council officials, other improvements in the pipeline include: repairs to fences around drying greens and new whirlies; paved areas to be blasted clean and trees interfering with housing pruned back; faulty outdoor lighting to be repaired, with the council also investigating the possibility of installing a new lighting system altogether.

In other news, the unsightly concrete platform situated between the railway line and the south

end of Ferrier Crescent (beside the community wall mural) has finally been removed. An eyesore marring an otherwise unbroken stretch of green space, the platform had been there so long no one could actually remember its original purpose.

Residents suffered in silence for years but the platform's recent decline into a dumping ground for unwanted household goods was the last straw – it had to go! A group of concerned tenants got together and applied for green space funding to improve the area. Following consultation with council Community Engagement Officer Stephen Bly, the concrete area has now been demolished with its footprint to be returned to grass in the near future.



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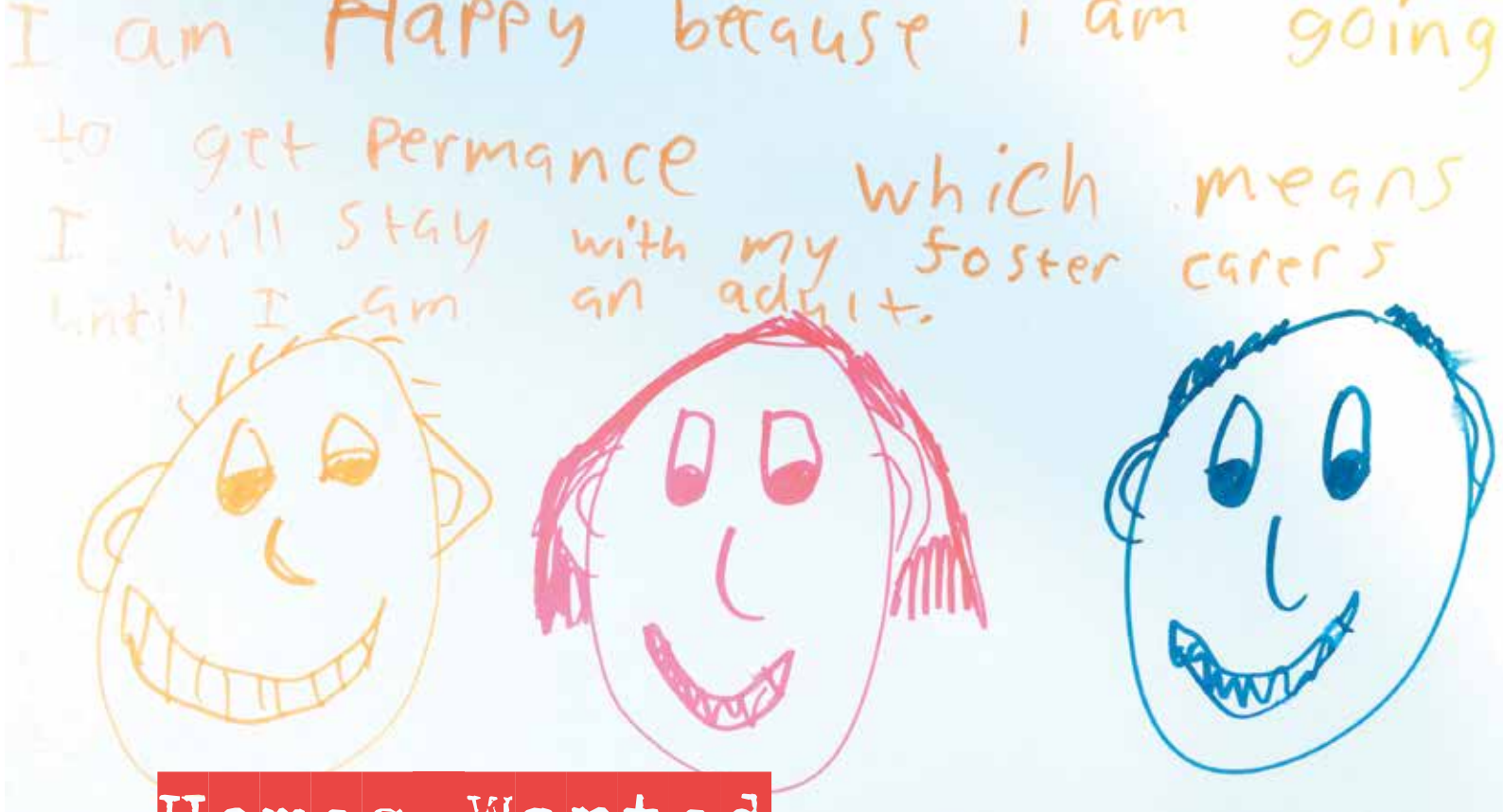
**"NICE QUIET AREA
FOR A STROLL OR
TO SIT DOWN"**

.....

Continuing the transformation, the pathway is to be redefined and three picnic benches installed. That, along with new park benches and several flower planters, will create an area where residents might take a quiet stroll, or pass the time on a fine summer's day, at the same time offering tenants a much improved outlook from their windows.

The above are just some examples of how residents can work together towards improving their environment both for their families and the rest of the community - people power in action! Well done, and please – keep up the good work!





Homes Wanted

Have you ever considered fostering?

Kim McPherson, Operational Manager of Barnardo's Aberdeen

I sit with her in my lap after taking her from her parents. We watch intently as the only item she's brought to her new foster home - her teddy - is slowly heated in the oven to disinfect it. This little girl has been neglected; she has septic sores thanks to untreated lice infestation. Her new carer has the insight to know the girl needs her teddy to feel safe.

As a social worker, I've seen many feats of love and compassion from foster carers and adopters over the years. But they all begin at the same point - with a passion to help and a desire to be part of the solution. You don't have to be perfect to be a foster carer - children will take you just as you are.

In the 1860s, Dublin-born Thomas Barnardo decided he wanted to be a medical missionary in China. In London training, he saw thousands of children were sleeping on the streets and identified a need to help the most

vulnerable in his own community. And so Barnardo's was born.

In Scotland, there were 15,000 children in foster care in 2014 - that's more than the population of Skye. In September 2015, there were 206 children in Scotland that needed to be adopted; 197 of them were boys.

Anyone can apply to become a foster carer. Whether you are single or married, male or female, homeowner or renting, straight, lesbian, gay, trans or bisexual - you could foster a child. However, you must be over the age of 21, and have a spare room at home.

Fostering comes in different forms:

Helping to look after children while decisions are made about their future

Providing a forever family

Giving breaks to full time foster carers or families that need a break

By choosing to become a foster carer you can make a huge difference in a child's life - and yours.

At Barnardo's, we have over 100 years' experience finding families for children in need.

You don't have to do this alone, you will receive support, training, guidance and allowances and fees.

We truly believe there are no unwanted children, just un-found families.

To find out more, please visit: <http://www.barnardos.org.uk/fosteringandadoption.htm>

Or contact the Aberdeen office on 01224 624090.

**Kim McPherson
Barnardo's
Fostering Scotland North**

Woodside in days gone by

Unlike some of Aberdeen's newer areas, Woodside has a long and rich history. In the third of a series taken from the local press, Pete Thomson investigates.

This extract is from an article that first appeared in the P&J on 27 Feb. 1971

A 13-hour day

In the days of the Woodside Works cotton spinning, employees worked a 13-hour day. The company sent a man round the village to blow a horn at 5.30 a.m. Work began at 6 a.m. and lasted till 7.30 p.m. with two 45-minute intervals for meals. On Saturdays the hours were 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. with no dinner hour, making a total of 70 hours, 15 minutes per week.

One would scarce have thought that after a week like this the toilers in the mills would have much energy left over on Sunday – scarcely enough at any rate to make the "long walk" to the Cathedral parish church of Old Machar. Some religious provision was a necessity, met at first by the non-denominational Cotton chapel on the site of the present Congregational Church. Soon the Congregationalists took it over. The old chapel was demolished in 1867 and the present church was built.

The Church of Scotland soon awoke to the need for a chapel of ease and to plans by Archibald Simpson, what is now the Woodside North Church was built and opened in 1830. Its second minister the Rev. Robert Forbes, a young man full of zeal and charity, became the outstanding figure in the church history of the whole area.

A unique situation arose following the Disruption of 1843. Forbes and by far the greater part of his flock joined the Free Church and left the Establishment, worshipping in the playground of the school and then in a wooden church in a field behind. At the time of the "walk out" there was a debt of £1200 on the parish church. The remnant who remained in it claimed the building but repudiated the debt. The case was taken to the Court of Session and the judges ruled that both church and debt must go together.

The Free Kirk congregation was willing to take on the debt and buy back their kirk, and this they did – leaving the Auld Kirkers to their mortification "homeless" in the wilderness. But not for long. What is now the imposing

Woodside South Church was built with the aid of well-wishers from all over Scotland through the indomitable persistence of a Woodside grocer, John Reid.

Following the reunion of the churches, Woodside had two splendid Churches of Scotland within a few hundred yards of one another in the well-named Church Street. Both are highly flourishing, the North with a congregation of nearly 800 and the South with 1300. The Woodside Burgh Hall, formerly the local school, was built in 1837, while the Sir John Anderson Library, gift of a famous native of the "burgh," dates from 1881. Earlier the same year there had been opened the United Presbyterian Church, now the home of a local women's organisation.

All this time Kittybrewster was actually within the burgh boundaries or rather on them, for from early in the seventeenth century it was only referred to in official records as the site of a boundary stone. That boundary stone was in a den – "The Den of Kettibrauster". The earliest references traced by the late G.M. Fraser was in the Aberdeen Burgh Register of June 15, 1615.

Mr Marcus Milne, Mr Fraser's successor as City Librarian, went on record in 1964 with the statement that the name Kittybrewster was a corruption of the Gaelic for a broken cattle fold adding: "The district is where they used and still do take cattle to," while Mr Fenton Wyness in "City by the Grey North Sea" says "the name is certainly of Gaelic origin, its probable meaning being "steep wooded bank".

Mr Fraser himself offered another explanation based on a 1376 reference to "the Brousterlands" which he thinks must refer to "land from which the grain was set apart for brewing purposes." If there is anything in that then William Cadenhead was not so far out in his famous poem "Kittybrewster" first published in his posthumously published collection of verses "Ingatherings" in 1901.

Vanishing Woodside?

Woodside's Neglected Heritage

There was no room at the inn for Network Rail a couple of months ago. The plans to improve the railway are well underway and the negative aspects of the work for the people of Woodside are obvious, not least the noise of all night working. They wanted to hold a consultation exercise, but they simply could not find a venue.

Woodside Fountain Centre was the first port of call, but they were informed that the centre was 'fully booked'. This may seem surprising as the Community Centre is shrouded in darkness most nights. This highlights both the lack of community space in our congested area and the under use (or non-use) of some of our historic buildings, not least Woodside Burgh Hall.

It's a problem across the city. Within our immediate area we have the Masonic Hall, the Congregationalist Church and the ever neglected Wallace Tower. If money can be found for endless new offices and shops, why can't we find the resources for our historic buildings?

At this year's *Mayfest* at the University, there was an event called *The Future of Aberdeen's Past*. Councillor John Corall opened with a talk on the history Aberdeen's architectural heritage.

This was a sorry story of neglect, lack of imagination and downright corporate vandalism. But I was surprised when Councillor Corall said that certain people were guilty of 'allowing buildings to rot', in order to get by a building's listed status. When asked, the councillor asserted that the Local Authority simply did not have the resources to take over the neglected buildings. He seemed to be laying the fault at the private sector, but many buildings are publicly owned.

Woodside Burgh Hall is a case in point. The hall is located next to Woodside Library and once played a central role in the life of Woodside, serving as a meeting place and the local school before Woodside School and served an assortment of functions before being closed in 2012. There was some talk of a community takeover, but nothing came of it. There are some structural problems (not least with the roof), but, of course, every year the building is left to the mercy of the elements is another year closer to demolition, and another part of our city's heritage will be lost forever.

The Burgh Hall is just one more example of the criminal neglect of our historic buildings in Aberdeen by both the private and public sectors. There is the equally widespread feeling that

the opinions of Aberdonians are ignored when it comes to planning.

As well as our collective responsibility to preserve our history, we also must remember the planning calamities inflicted on the city in the past (e.g. the Guest Row), and continuing architectural horrors (e.g. the Muse development). These neglected buildings are hardly a good advert for the city, making Aberdeen seem run down. There is also a question of public safety, with the local news is full of stories of damage to these buildings, not least Broadford Works and Glen o' Dee hospital.

So, what is to be done? There is a widespread conviction that when it comes to planning decisions have already been made and it doesn't matter what the public say. The Muse development in the city centre does raise questions about local democracy. However, it is amazing how resources can be found, if local opinion can be mobilised. Woodside Library was saved by public opinion and there is no reason the Burgh Hall can also be preserved. The Tillydrone Community Development Trust are coming up with innovative ideas concerning the Wallace Tower and we should be thinking along the same lines with our historic buildings here in Woodside. Choose it or lose it.

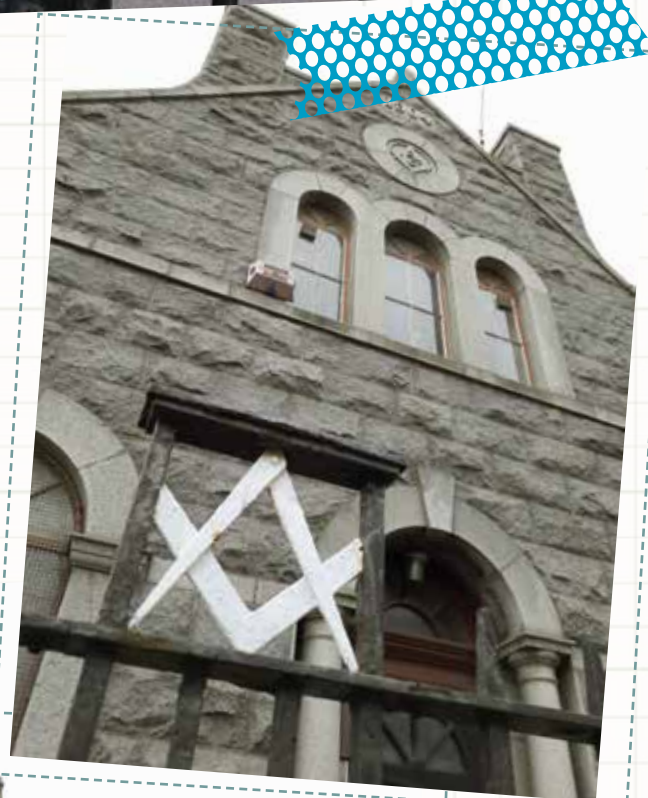
Dangie Thomson



The Burgh Hall

Woodside
Masonic
Lodge

Artist impression of the Wallace
Tower redevelopment



Woodside
Congregational
Church





The BIG shmu Celebration

The first ever Big shmu Celebration Event was held on Tuesday the 13th of September at the Northern Hotel. This was an opportunity for us to showcase the brilliant work that all our staff and volunteers do and say thank you to the volunteers for all the time they put into making shmu the success it is.

The night was full of surprises, from musical chairs to comedy videos and the shmu staff team performing the evolution of dance. We had a variety of testimonies from volunteers of all ages which were very moving a lovely reminder of why we do what we do here at shmu.

We would like to thank the Northern Hotel for letting us use the venue free of charge and putting on all the catering. Thanks must also go to AVC media for lending us equipment to help the night run smoothly. The biggest thank you of all must go to our Board of Trustees and the volunteers who are here day in and day out – your commitment and hard work is truly inspiring.





Woodside 125

The Woodside 125 project shows what can be achieved when a community comes together.

The exhibition was displayed in Woodside Library for a week in October. It was organised to celebrate the 125th anniversary of Woodside joining Aberdeen and consisted of photos and memories from local people. The school children have been very enthusiastic in researching the project and have made a tremendous contribution. They have also been able to discover the rich history of Woodside and how the area has changed over the years. My thanks to the Mrs Cook and Mrs Clark, the Head teachers at Woodside and Kittybrewster for agreeing to take part.

The older people have provided some photographs and pictures, had memories re-visited and it has stimulated many conversations. Their contribution to the project has been greatly valued.

All this would not have been possible without the help of the Aberdeen City Council Library Service who have done Woodside proud. They have also decided to extend the exhibit for the whole of October to allow as many people as possible to see it.

Finally, a big thank you to everyone who has taken part and made this landmark occasion such a success.

Karis: "I found it interesting. It was nice to learn about the history of Woodside. I did not know that Woodside used to not be a part of Aberdeen. It was also cool to learn about the people that lived in Woodside during the time that it became a part of Aberdeen. The pictures provided a clearer insight into what Woodside used to be like."

Lukasz: "It was interesting learning about the industry and the history of the area I live in. It was interesting learning that Woodside was not always officially a part of Aberdeen city."

Yasmin: "I enjoyed learning about what Woodside used to be like. I also loved seeing the pictures from long ago. This interests me because I enjoy history, particularly the history of Aberdeen."

Quotes from the
Youth Media Team



Pete the Punk

The Fall

You have to be something of a masochist to attend Fall gigs these days. Last time they played Aberdeen, the band's founder and mainman Mark E. Smith found himself somewhat out of sorts after a bout of pre-gig fisticuffs with his drummer and graced the stage for all of 25 minutes before storming off into the night, leaving his band to deal with the hundreds of disgruntled punters who had paid to see them.

Many offended that night swore never to return, a reaction doubtless reflected in tonight's middling turnout. But here we are, anyway, and the lights go down to a great cheer, a buzz of real anticipation. What kind of state will Smith be in?

The band takes the stage and kicks into the first number, a new composition as many of tonight's will be. There's no sign of Smith yet and we hear him before we see him, his notoriously wayward voice drifting from the PA in even poorer shape than usual.

He eventually makes an entrance, gazing imperiously about him. He's clearly had a few, but at least he hasn't pee'd himself like he did last year at Glastonbury.

For the first couple of songs, Smith struggles to read his lyrics from the back of some old sheets of paper – he really should put on his glasses – but they are soon discarded, freeing Smith to prowling the stage as usual.

The welcome return to a two-drummer format adds an extra dimension to their sound, some compensation for the absence of Elena Poulou, Smith's wife and Fall keyboards player of some twelve years standing, though her presence is definitely missed.

While Smith's voice may have deserted him, his swagger most certainly has not. As the set wears on, he amuses himself, as always when not singing, by interfering with his band's amplifiers or running his fingers tunelessly along the vacant keyboard at the side of the stage.

Despite these unwelcome, if inevitable, intrusions, the band is in fine fettle, tight as ever and motoring along nicely. We're nearly halfway through the set before we hear a song familiar to us, the storming garage blues of *Hittite Man*, from the 2013 *Re-Mit* collection. Things are looking up.

Smith, perverse as ever, picks this moment to wander to the back of the stage, kick the bass microphones from both drum kits and turn the volume on the bass guitar full up. He is clearly enjoying himself.

As the night goes on, Smith occasionally disappears from view altogether, delivering his vocals from an old cupboard by the stage. Just as we're thinking he must have a bottle in there, he re-emerges with off-key but well received versions of 1991 single *White Lightning* and *Tuff Life Boogie*, closing out with the much loved *Theme From Sparta F.C. #2*.

As the final chords ebb away, Smith (now back in the cupboard) addresses the audience for the first and last time tonight: "That's it, folks!"

And that is it. No encore, just a collective sigh of relief that we've made it through a full set with Smith relatively intact and, for all his shenanigans, it has been a strangely enjoyable show.

Would I go see them again? Yes. Because like Fall fans everywhere, I live in hope that some day Smith will confront his demons and return to the force he once was. Meanwhile, The Fall's status as one of the most influential bands of all time remains, for now at least, undiminished. The original post-punk, Smith has always claimed to despise musicians – sixty-six have passed through The Fall over the years – but in reality they are his safety net. Without his genius, there would be no Fall; without The Fall, Smith would probably be sleeping on a park bench somewhere. Long may they continue.

