

# ST CYRUS NEWSLETTER

16 FEBRUARY 2024

Photo by Snowfox Photography

Hopefully since our first edition our readers have enjoyed a peaceful Christmas and New Year and are looking forward to 2024. Often people use the start of a new year as the perfect time for a period of self-reflection on what has passed in the previous twelve months. This brings to mind the traditional New Years resolution; be it new fitness goals, bad habits to break, to simply to meet friends more regularly, or to appreciate our surroundings more. And let's be honest there is no better place than St Cyrus to appreciate the beauty we have all around us.

We also often anticipate the new year with childlike optimism. It's not just the promise of the new, it is indeed the confirmation that the winter will soon be behind us, and new life is on its way. Already we can sense the spring just waiting around the corner, the nights are starting to draw out just that wee bit. The bulbs are already starting to pop out from the ground, offering us the first glimmer of new life that is waiting to bloom. And bursting forth like spring is our second edition of the St Cyrus Newsletter.

We would like to warmly welcome you to February's issue. We would also like to extend that welcome to the newest members of the editorial team – Andy and Lee. Hopefully you all enjoyed the first issue although we are aware that there were a couple of delivery problems with the December edition and appreciate the feedback surrounding that. However, we would also like more feedback. **Please share your thoughts with us via email at [stcyrusnews@gmail.com](mailto:stcyrusnews@gmail.com).**

Lastly, some of you may wonder how we manage to provide a completely free community newsletter. Simply put we received a certain amount from advertising and a kind donation from the Community Council to meet the remaining costs. Going forward we would ideally like for our local businesses to advertise what they offer via the newsletter. Advertising is £10 per advert or the full year for £50. If this is something you would like to take advantage of just drop us an email at the above address.

Happy reading!

The Editorial Team





Aberdeenshire  
Health & Social Care  
Partnership

## **Aberdeenshire Mental Health Improvement and Wellbeing Service**

**Get free mental health improvement  
and wellbeing help and support from  
our team of dedicated professionals.**

### **What can you expect?**

**Up to 6 weeks of dedicated 1:1  
support from one of our team**

**Confidentiality**

**No judgement**

**Help and support for  
a range of issues**

**Coping strategies and help  
with managing symptoms**

**Support to improve your  
mood and wellbeing**

**Help & support with work stress**

**Help & support with  
relationship/family issues**

**Links to community activities**

**Help with money worries**

**NHS**  
Grampian



**Struggling with  
your mental health  
and wellbeing?**

**Over the age  
of 16?**

**Need a little extra  
support to get  
back on track?**

**Feeling lost?**

**Suffering with  
anxiety?**

**Family difficulties?**

**Relationship  
issues?**

**Get help and  
support from our  
dedicated team**

**SCAN ME**



**Call 01224 557400**

**and leave a message  
[www.nhsgrampian.org/  
mhiws-aberdeenshire](http://www.nhsgrampian.org/mhiws-aberdeenshire)**

# Morrisons

## Daily

Since the last edition of the Newsletter the shop has seen a busy festive period followed by our closure for the conversion. I would like to thank you for your patience during this time and I appreciate how this may have impacted you particularly with the week of bad weather that we had.

For those who have been in the shop since we re-opened on the 19th of January, I am sure you will agree with me that the shop is now looking fantastic. We are now stocking a much greater variety of fresh produce and new grocery lines along with some of our old favourites. If you have any specific requirements that you think would be popular, please do pop in and let us know.

In order for us to keep you up to date with our latest promotions and offers simply follow us on our new Facebook page – Morrisons Daily St Cyrus.

Thank you for your continued custom

Kenny and the team!

## SUDUKO

Fill in the puzzle so that every row across, every column down and every 9 by 9 box contains numbers 1 to 9.

	5		3		6	1	2	
		3	5	2		9	7	8
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3								
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## THE BOY WHO (ALMOST) DESTROYED THE WORLD by Ruaridh Webster

One day in the streets of London a boy was playing with his friends, the boy was called Liam.

"Poowee, that was a stinker Liam!" his friend Theo exclaimed.

If you hadn't guessed, Liam farted a lot. It was the year 2091 and none of the streets had any cars on them because flying cars had been invented twenty years ago.

"Tig!" Ryan shouted as he tapped Theo on the back.

"Damn it!" Theo exclaimed.

"Teatime boys! It's your favourite, chicken fajitas!" Liam's Mum called through the kitchen window.

"Oh yummy!" all the boys exclaimed in delight as they raced towards the door. They were all having a sleepover at Liams house,

"Not again Liam!! That one really stinks!" exclaimed Theo, "you could destroy the world with one of those farts! They're SO repulsive!"

"How do you think I feel? I'm his mum!" Liam's Mum said laughing.

A couple of days later Liam was walking to his favourite shop - Findlay's Sweet Emporium! He was going to buy himself and his Mum some of their favourite sweets, fizzy cola bottles! Suddenly he started to feel especially gassy... and then... he farted!

This was no ordinary fart – NO NO NO! This fart went on for an hour!! (and two seconds if you're being exact). It was so stinky you could actually see it! This fart had engulfed the world!

For a few weeks Liam tried to think of a way to get rid of the fart himself but for every promising idea, he found about a million disadvantages. Then he gave up thinking of ideas and instead tried to think of who could help him. It started off with mum and dad, then the neighbour across the road and then even celebrities. Eventually, he thought,

"I know, I'll go to the King! He'll know what to do!"

He went straight to the King and when he told him. He instantly knew what to do! (Say the next bit in a posh voice if reading aloud!)

## ST CYRUS PRIMARY SCHOOL P7 PUPIL ACHIEVES 1ST ROUND SUCCESS IN THE BBC 500 WORD COMPETITION.

I know! We shall make a giant hoover and suck up the fart cloud with it," the King announced.

So, they got to work creating the giant hoover. Sparks flew here, and metal clanked there. Then the giant hoover slowly started to appear. Three days later they were ready to use it. They wheeled it out of the warehouse and switched it on. As the machine whirled into life Liam and the King took a step back to admire their hard work. Suddenly a loud sucking sound could be heard from within the heart of the machine.

(posh voice) "It's working!" the king cried.

The fart cloud began to disappear. A voice came from behind them,

"And where are you planning to keep this, you do remember last time you used Wembley stadium?"

"Yes, I do and this time I will just use Old Trafford. Sorry Liam that's Alastair he's the most negative man you'll ever meet! Heeheehee!"

-Ruaridh Webster

# FREYA

Hi, I'm Freya. I'm 13 years old.  
In July 2022 all of my dreams became true, I got my very own pony! His name is Quaver. One of my favourite things to do with Quaver is go to the beach. A day spent at the beach is always a great day! I love doing dressage and shows with Quaver too.

Name: Quaver  
Age: 6 years old  
Height: 14 hands  
Breed: Welsh Section D crossed with an Irish Gypsy Cob.  
Colour: Palomino (Palomino is genetic colour in horses, consisting of a gold coat and white mane and tail)  
Favourite food: Stud muffins (and a sneaky orange!)  
Favourite thing to do: Go out in the horse box for an adventure. Quaver also loves to pop a fence!  
Dislikes: Quaver doesn't like when people appear behind him without speaking, especially if they appear from behind a bush! I always say 'Hello!' whenever I approach him, so he knows I'm there.



# WILLOW

Hi, I'm Willow. I'm 9 years old (very soon to be 10!!) My Pony is called Tommy! He is a typical cheeky pony who is very nosey! Tommy came to live with us in June 2022. He travelled all the way from Yorkshire where he used to live at a riding school with his older owners. He arrived on the last day of school before the summer holidays, so we got to spend all summer getting to know each other. It was the best summer of my life!

Name: Tommy  
Age: 14 (soon to be 15!!)  
Height: 13.2 hands  
Breed: New forest  
Colour: Brown  
Favourite food: Bananas! And other fruits.  
Tommy gains weight very quickly due to being a native breed, so we limit his treats!  
Favourite thing to do: Show jumping!  
Tommy enjoys showing of his talents when we go to shows.  
Dislikes: Being schooled (a bit like myself!)



## ST CYRUS NURSERY

St Cyrus School and nursery received a grant of over £11,000 from cycling Scotland. Within the school we have created our own cycling champions to use this grant and improve cycling in St Cyrus.

We have secured a cycling shelter and scooter storage within the school playground which is up and ready to use. We are encouraging this to be used for all in the community. This is located across from the church within the school playground.



### **ARE YOU INTERESTED IN OTHER CULTURES? ENJOY THE EXCHANGE OF IDEAS AND PERSPECTIVES? LIKE SHARING SCOTTISH CULTURE WITH YOUNG PEOPLE?**

There are many wonderful reasons to host our French friends who will be visiting St Cyrus and surrounding towns and villages in 2024 for short stays of 4 – 5 nights.

The students (14-17yrs) are touring in the day but need the following:

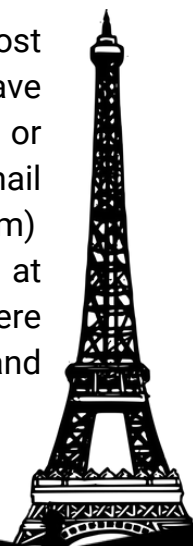
- \* Drop off at 08h00 and pick up at 19h00 from either Gourdon or Stonehaven
- \* Breakfast, packed lunch and evening meal
- \* single or double bed (students can share a room)

ALL FAMILIES MAKE A GOOD HOST FAMILY...! Single parents, families with children, empty nesters, retired couples or couples with no children. What's important is a warm, welcoming spirit.

This is what one of our fantastic families Michelle said about hosting this year...."Just dropped off the last of my French students for the season. They have all been a joy! I learned a lot from them and they had a great time learning about the Scottish culture. It's an enriching experience, welcoming young students who you have never met into your home. Taking time to talk and gaining knowledge is a 2-way street. I feel uplifted and proud! And have improved my French too".

Fun and rewarding, hosting is a great way to supplement your income.

Join our growing network of caring host families by contacting Clare if you have any questions. Phone (01561 378218) or text on (07787 858368) or email ([clareplaister@languagetraveltours.com](mailto:clareplaister@languagetraveltours.com)) . Alternatively, visit the LTT website at ([www.languagetraveltours.com](http://www.languagetraveltours.com)) where you'll find insights from host families and students from recent visits.





### **ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL USEFUL CONTACTS, EMAILS AND LINKS TO WEBSITE**

Office hours telephone numebers

Please phone the appropriate number for your query. These phone numbers are open  
from 8.45am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

Automated Telephone Payments	0300 456 0634
Benifits	03456 08 12 00
Council Tax, Business Rates and Payments Due	03456 08 12 01
Education and Leisure Facilities	03456 08 12 02
Housing	03456 08 12 03
Planning and Building Standards	03456 08 12 04
Roads Parks and Open Spaces	03456 08 12 05
Social Care	03456 08 12 06
Waste and Environmental Health	03456 08 12 07
General Enquiries	03456 08 12 08
Adult Protection Concerns	01467 533 100
Child Protection Concerns	01467 537 111

Roads ricommsteam@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

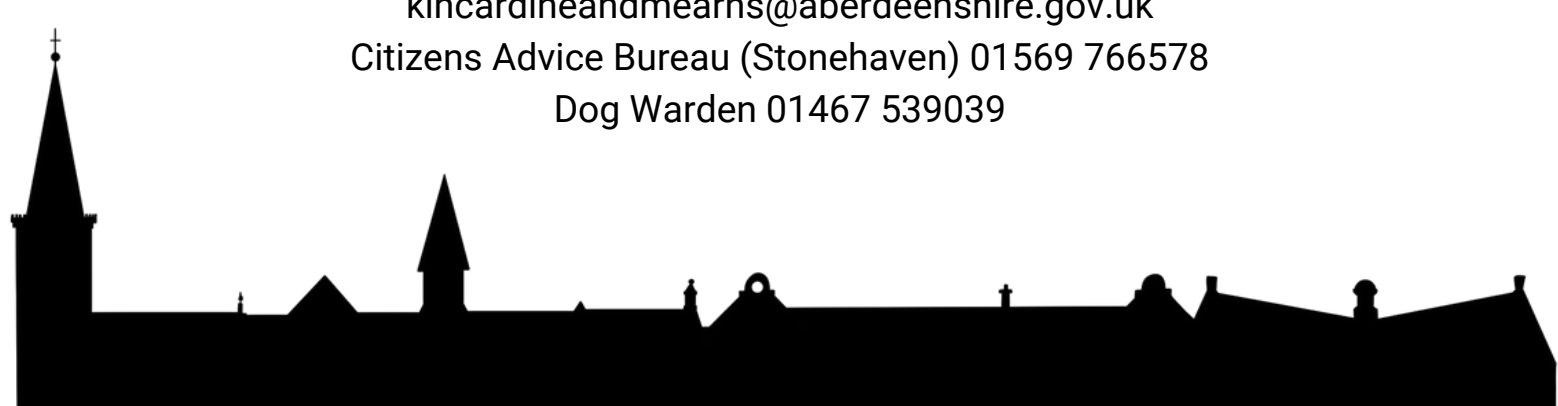
Room Bookings letsteamecs@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Kincardine & Mearns Area Office 01467 539723

kincardineandmearns@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau (Stonehaven) 01569 766578

Dog Warden 01467 539039



### PROPOSED CATERING FACILITIES AT THE OLD FISHING STATION

We aim to offer catering facilities to the visitors of St Cyrus Beach on our property located next to the southern part of St Cyrus Beach in a moveable food shack (food truck). We intend to run the business in a sustainable manner by the means of using local products, minimal packaging and reusable products (e.g. cups and bottles). The reusable packaging will operate on a rent and return scheme whereby customers will pay a small deposit to use the packaging which is then refunded upon return. This is to avoid any disruption to the local environment at the Nature Reserve and beach by the means of any waste or litter in the area.

As part of a proposed planning permission request for a change of use we would like to invite members of the local community to participate in a small survey that allows for any constructive feedback.

The survey can be found by scanning the below code.

Thank you in advance for your time.

Nicci & Philippe Bruyere



### ST CYRUS FRIENDSHIP CLUB

We said a sad farewell to one of our long-standing members Charlie Pirie in December, the family kindly nominated that donations go to Friendship Club and a huge £615.80 was collected, thank you all! We will be organising a trip for Easter in memory of Margaret & Charlie.

Friendship Club restarted on 10th January and meets every Wednesday 10am-1pm – in the Church Gallery (lift access available).

The morning starts with a welcome Tea/Coffee, quiz, gentle exercise, singing, games and finishes with a lovely two course lunch (provided by St Cyrus Primary School Canteen). Members pay £1 per session inc. lunch. The Club aims to offer a warm friendly meeting place to help combat loneliness. Members must be able to carry out their own personal care.

For any further information please contact Elizabeth 850161 or Marion 07891 117898. If you would like to volunteer to help out at the Club or can help with transport please contact Marion 07891 117898.



Photo by Snowfox Photography



# ST CYRUS YOUTH CLUB



We had lots of fun during our winter term with highlights including Mocktail making, a pool tournament and lots of crafts and games in between. We are lucky to have two brilliant youth volunteers, who are working towards Dynamic Youth Award challenges. They are a great help to the committee, running sessions from dodgeball to discos and planning a talent show for March. The children are starting to think about their talents and we are sure it will be a fun night for all the village to enjoy!

Thank you to the team at the St. Cyrus Village Inn for hosting our Christmas party where the children had a top meal and a fantastic time playing disco bingo and singing karaoke. We are grateful for the parents and customers who bought squares for our Christmas hampers and Yvonne and Ian who made a donation to the club from their DISCO BINGO night in January.



We would also like to thank previous committee members Vicki, Susan, Beth and Morag. Without their support and advice restarting the youth club would not have been so easy. The first 6 months really have been great and we are delighted to continue offering a weekly group for local children and young people to have fun with their friends. St Cyrus Youth Club runs every Friday evening (term time) from 6:30 - 8:15pm in the village hall for children in Primary 4 to S3. If your child would like to attend, please register using the QR code below:



# ST CYRUS NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE

19 January 2024

I love winter at St Cyrus NNR, it's so interesting watching the winter wildlife, the resident animals that remain active and the visiting migratory birds escaping more bitter conditions, all busy feeding, surviving and preparing for easier times. The winter light pinpoints the detail in the landscape all around us, giving the berries, mosses and fungi a new vibrancy and giving the cliffs and dunes fantastic, goose bump inducing visual texture. Even the way the bird calls and other sounds travel, changes, muffling them in the snow or carrying them clear and far on the still frozen days.



I haven't seen the reserve so cocooned in snow for many years, it's like a magical winter wonderland! I have been imagining all the life tucked away waiting for spring. Minute by minute of extra daylight, gifted to us, as we go through winter towards spring. Our lizards lie in torpor beneath the ground or within holes in logs. During this time they close most of their bodily functions down so they can survive, remaining at a very low level of 'life' with their hearts slowly beating to conserve energy until the weather improves.

Some of our invertebrates also await better conditions either in the form of hibernating adults, larvae, cocoons, or nymphs!

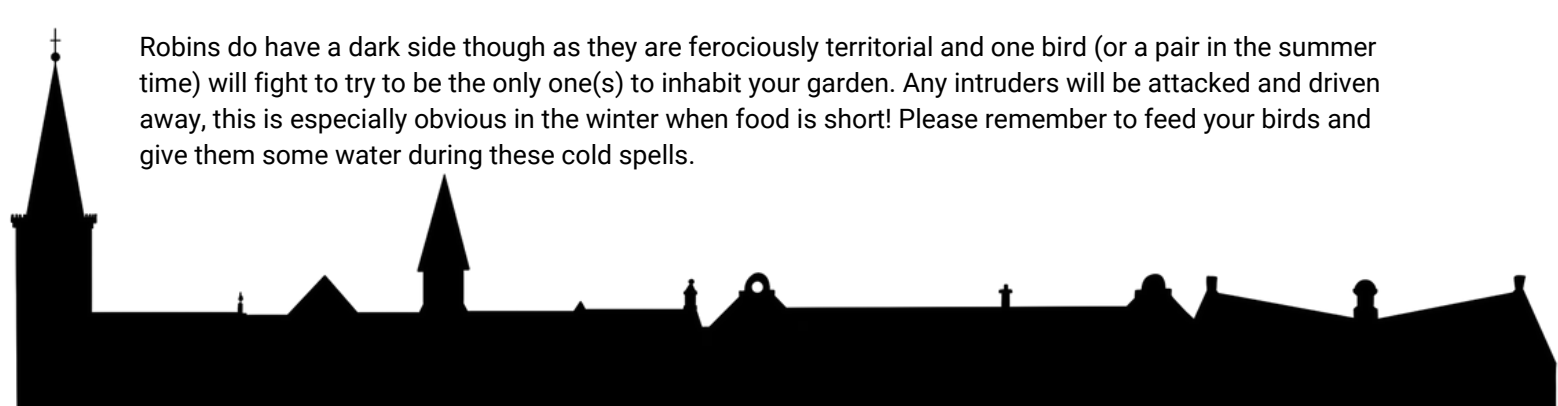
Ladybirds and delicate lacewings are the most commonly found by people as they hibernate, you can even see them tucked away in our leaflet boxes! Some Invertebrates produce their own antifreeze (glycerol) so that their blood does not freeze! If you do accidentally wake/find any of these creatures just gently cover and leave them be, if a butterfly is accidentally awakened by your central heating pop it in a cold outhouse, safe from spiders!

A real star of January for me are the Robins and in the UK we have some of the most bold and 'tame' in the world! In many places on the continent they are shot/trapped for food so unsurprisingly they are not so forthcoming with their approach to humans! Declared our national bird in the 1960's it is unarguably the most well-known and easily identified bird in the UK. Both adult male and female have red breasts (the young are a dappled brown) and both sing and hold territory in the winter, you may see them flitting around after dark if you have the lights on.



Robin Photograph - Pauline Smith

Robins do have a dark side though as they are ferociously territorial and one bird (or a pair in the summer time) will fight to try to be the only one(s) to inhabit your garden. Any intruders will be attacked and driven away, this is especially obvious in the winter when food is short! Please remember to feed your birds and give them some water during these cold spells.



Watch out for the Ravens on the cliffs too, they have been busy re-establishing their territory and have been giving us a wonderful show of acrobatics and glorious vocalisations!



*Fieldfare Lorne Gill natureScot*

'Our' Simon Ritchie has been snowed out of his reserve (Muir of Dinnet NNR) so he braved the roads to visit us instead. I asked him to write a little paragraph about his interesting findings, winter thrush galore escaping harsher conditions to the North.

Biting north breeze was gently blowing at the heed of the brae as I arrived at the top car park. I was immediately greeted by flocks of thrushes heading south in the sky. Fieldfare and Redwing were passing by, indicating that there were indeed some cold weather movements of birds. The field next to the church had a sizeable flock of Skylark and there were a few Common Gull in amongst too. The Reserve looked stunning from the top of the cliff, the dunes were frozen and had a light dusting of snow on them and the sea was calmly shimmering. As I wondered down to the beach, there were plenty of territorial Robin chasing each other around the gorse. The Reserve felt peaceful in its winter dormancy. On the beach were small groups of Oystercatcher littered along the shoreline. There was only one other person on the whole beach, sublime! It's such a magic place in the winter, and we are lucky to have it right on our doorstep!

## NOTICES OF WORK

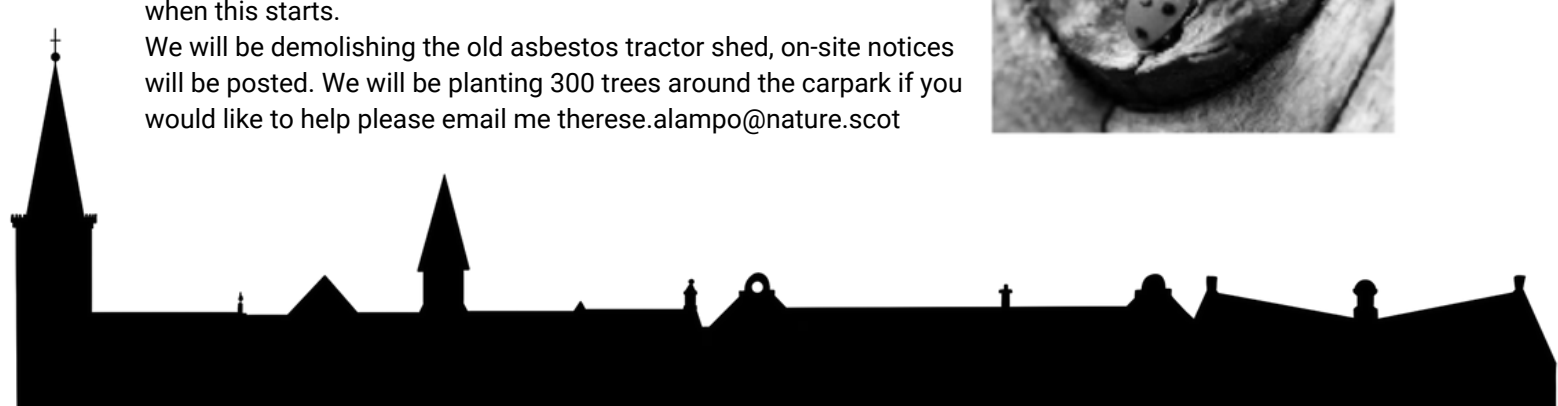
The Donkey path remains closed but we have appointed a contractor to reinforce and add additional gabions.

The annual cliff inspections and scale will be taking place in February/March once we appoint a contractor.

Caspar Lampkin, our invaluable call-off contractor is continuing with his work to improve paths and drainage around the reserve.

We will be building a new equipment store at the back of the office so access to the new 'river' at the back of the office will be restricted when this starts.

We will be demolishing the old asbestos tractor shed, on-site notices will be posted. We will be planting 300 trees around the carpark if you would like to help please email me [therese.alampo@nature.scot](mailto:therese.alampo@nature.scot)



# ST CYRUS PUBLIC HALL COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

Thank you to Mary of Angus Tai Chi Academy and Elizabeth of Scottish Country Dancing for completing the draws. Remember it's never too late to join - £5 monthly and you can get an application form from any Committee Member.

Those who use the car park will have noticed that the gravel has been topped up and hopefully we now don't have puddles. Thank you, Robert Keith. If you're passing on a bonny day you might see Christine, our Hall Chair, wielding a rake. Some of the gravel has accumulated at the side so she's on a mission!

The leaky roof and part of the guttering has been repaired and Tommy Mulholland very kindly replaced the car park lights which is also very much appreciated. We still have a blind to fix in the Main Hall on the 'to do' list along with repainting the posts around the grass but that's a summertime job.

If any of our projects interest you then come and join us on the Committee. Our Annual General Meeting is on Tuesday 6th February 2024 7.15pm in the Small Hall. If you are reading this after 6th February you can still come along and contribute. We meet the first Tuesday of every month and everyone is most welcome.

Hello hello. Our 200 Club winners for November and December were:

Prize November 2023 December 2023

£100 Edna Wallwork Colette Strachan  
£50 Lorraine Morrison Derek McHardy  
£25 Charles Pirie Douglas Hamilton  
£15 Morag Hulme Sheila Fraser  
£10 Diane Bruce Claire Lawson



Photo of St Cyrus Clock - Snowfox Photography

As you will be aware (or maybe not) we should have a long-term plan to reach zero emissions by 2045 - please don't let me still be on the Committee then! We have now secured funding which Aberdeenshire Council received via the Scottish Government's Rural Community Led Vision Fund to allow detailed surveys to be carried out on community buildings in Aberdeenshire. We need to have the walls insulated but we don't want to change the look of the Hall. We are excited to see what the plan looks like, although we are at the very early stages and this could take a number of years. The 'Building Retrofit' is about making the building as energy efficient as possible. This requires efficient insulation with airtight construction and good ventilation for everyone inside before we look heating options. We will keep you posted but finding funding to do this will also be challenging.

# ST CYRUS CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

As you know from the last Newsletter our Minister, the Rev. Norman Trewern, retired at the end of December after 7 years of service dedicated to the local Church. During that time, he was ordained as an "Ordained Local Minister" which allowed for 2 days per week of service to the Church. Norman's commitment to the Church was such that he gave all his considerable energy - with hardly a holiday or day off - to the Church in St Cyrus which now embraces the old parishes of Johnshaven, Benholm and Garvock. This was really appreciated by all and to celebrate his ministry a dinner was held in the Church at the end of January to pay tribute to Norman's dedication to the people in the villages. Over 50 people attended (more than an average congregation!) showing just how much his ministry and pastoral care were appreciated. He brought light to everyone he came into contact with and almost doubled the Church attendance during his ministry. He will be sadly missed.

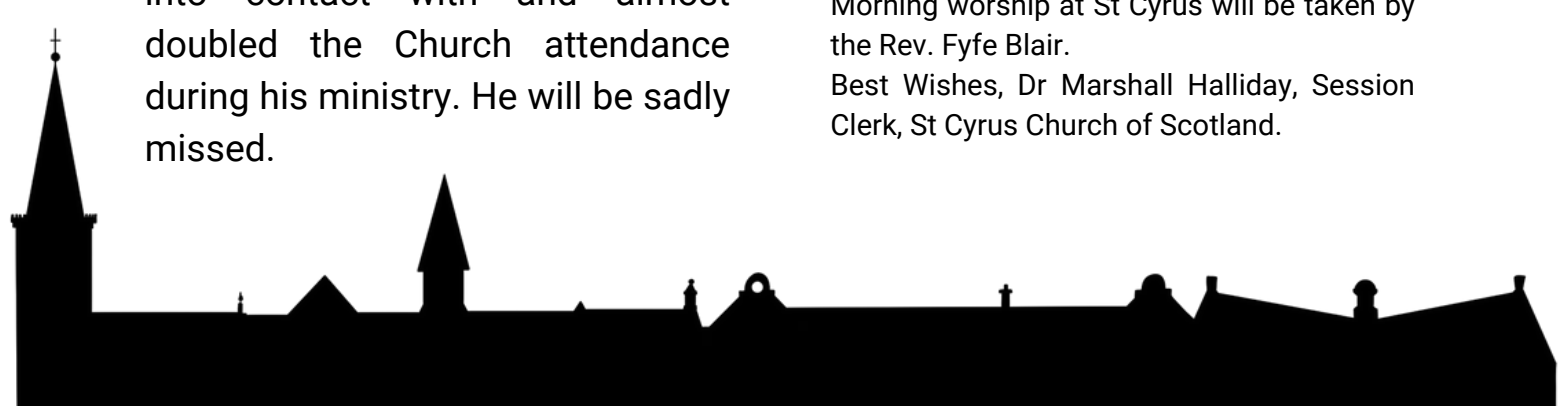
The future will be very different without Norman. Due to shortages of Ministers and financial constraints the Church of Scotland has had to reduce full-time ministry. We are part of a Parish Grouping embracing the Churches at Arbuthnot, Inverbervie and Kinneff, West Mearns, Marykirk, Laurencekirk and Aberluthnott. This group has been allocated 2 fulltime Ministers. The Rev. Brian Smith and the Rev. Andrew Morrison. The Interim Moderator for St Cyrus is the Rev Brian Smith who has been very involved in helping us to organise ministerial coverage for Sundays.

As such we have a variety of Ministers, readers and members of our own congregation taking services during this year. There will always be a warm welcome for any new members or people wanting to find out more about the Church at 10am every Sunday. We hope we can maintain the level of pastoral care in the community and we would be grateful if you know of anyone needing help with transport, shopping, computing or just company to please let a member of the Church know.

We want to establish the Church as an important asset to the community and we can only do this with your support. There are so many unprecedented pressures on just living these days that many, especially older, people feel overwhelmed. If we can help, please let us know. It might surprise some people just how much Christian faith can help in these situations.

The next major celebration in Church is Easter and the following services are planned: Good Friday: A combined service of all the local congregations in the St Lawrence Hall, Laurencekirk. Easter Sunday: Morning worship at St Cyrus will be taken by the Rev. Fyfe Blair.

Best Wishes, Dr Marshall Halliday, Session Clerk, St Cyrus Church of Scotland.



# COUNCILLOR ALISON EVISON

**FIRSTLY,** thank you to everyone who has been attending Community Council meetings recently. The meetings have been really constructive and have highlighted what matters across the community. This is very helpful to those of us elected to serve you in Aberdeenshire Council. If you have been thinking of going along to Community Council meetings, but haven't quite got round to it yet, I would encourage you to do so this year.

As I write, the Lower North Water Bridge has been open again to traffic for several weeks, easing travel for many, but the Viaduct remains closed. The Viaduct is not owned by Aberdeenshire Council, so decisions relating to matters such as repairs cannot be made by the Council itself.

I am aware of many issues related to road maintenance in and around St Cyrus. It is helpful if these issues are reported in the first instance directly to officers through the Road Condition Reporting System on the Aberdeenshire Council website.

At the start of the year, it was very exciting to see all the social media posts about the preparations for 'We Will Rock You - School Edition', being performed by pupils and students from Mearns Academy. A huge thank you to anyone from St Cyrus involved in this production, for brightening up January so well.

Aberdeenshire Council will be setting its budget for the coming financial year on 22 February. Every year the challenges involved in setting a balanced budget get greater as difficult decisions have to be made in the context of higher costs, increasing demands for council services and greater needs across our communities due to changing demographics, while the money available does not grow correspondingly. Thank you to everyone who has shared their priorities for council spending.

For ease of reference, some handy phone numbers:

Power outages – SSEN on 105

Non-urgent medical issues – NHS on 111

Emergency council housing repairs – 03456 0812 03

Emergency social care – 03456 08 12 06

Scotland's 24-hour Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage helpline 0800 027 1234

**"I AM AWARE OF MANY  
ISSUES RELATED TO  
ROAD MAINTENANCE IN  
AND AROUND ST  
CYRUS..."**

Many people will remain concerned about increases to our cost of living. The Council has developed a resource called Worrying About Money which can direct you to a support or advice agency that can help. This can be found at <https://worryingaboutmoney.co.uk/aberdeenshire>

I hold a surgery on the second Monday of most months, 6.30pm-7.30pm, at differing locations across the Mearns. Please contact me for more details of these or for support with local issues.

With best wishes

Alison Evison, Email [cllr.a.evison@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.a.evison@aberdeenshire.gov.uk) Telephone 07855682845

Facebook: Cllr Alison Evison, Mearns Ward, Kincardine and Mearns

Twitter @AlisonEvison



## WINTER BLUES

As we start seeing signs of Spring with Snowdrops popping through the frost & snow, the nights are still dark & Winter seems never ending. Take this time to rest and digest, snuggle up in the way that suits you and lessen the pressure and expectations where you can. After the heightened festive season, being paid early and having to return to the everyday routine we can now feel deflated, low energy and lack motivation. Here are some tips to give 2024 the best start; Don't make unrealistic New Year's resolutions, embrace your routine and be active, get out in the winter sunshine as much as you can in daylight hours. Plan ahead but break it down into manageable steps to help feel less overwhelmed, focus on what you can control, eat and drink well, make time for family and friends connections, lessen your time "doom scrolling", practice gratitude for all that's around you and pay attention to the glimmers no matter how small.

If you find things are overwhelming, here are some useful numbers to call

- Breathing Space 0800 83 85 87
- Samaritans 116 123 247
- Your GP surgery or NHS 111



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☎ 07887490748

🌐 facebook.com/stcyruswoodwork  
🌐 stcyruswoodwork.com



St Cyrus Rainbows and Brownies would like to wish everyone a very happy and healthy New Year. We ended 2023 with a flourish of Gold Awards and a sad farewell to some of our Brownies as they move on to new adventures.

A huge thank you to everyone who supported our chocolate tombola at the St Cyrus Christmas Shopping Evening, **£123.50** was raised for the groups and will help us plan for this year to be as exciting as the last and the leaders are already busy planning trips and new badges.

Do you have a skill that you could share with girls aged 4-10? Could they have a go? Perhaps yoga or tai chi? If you would like to contact us please email [stcyrusrainbows@gmail.com](mailto:stcyrusrainbows@gmail.com)

If you would like to register child or volunteer with us, please visit Get Involved - Girlguiding Scotland.

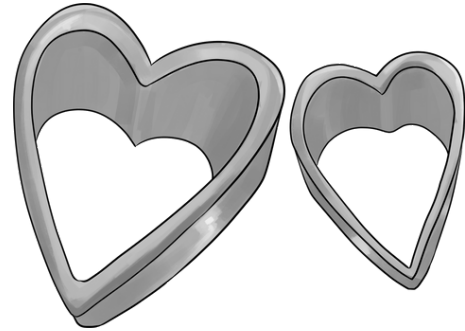
Thanks and hopefully see you soon, Sally and Kirsty

# Valentine's Day Biscuits

A recipe to include the kids!

## Ingredients

110g margarine  
100g caster sugar  
1 medium egg  
1/2 tsp vanilla extract.  
250g plain white flour (plus extra for dusting)  
1/4 tsp bicarbonate of soda  
1/4 tsp baking powder  
1 tbsp icing sugar  
1 tsp cornflour for dusting  
Ready roll icing (white or pink)  
Icing for decoration/sprinkles

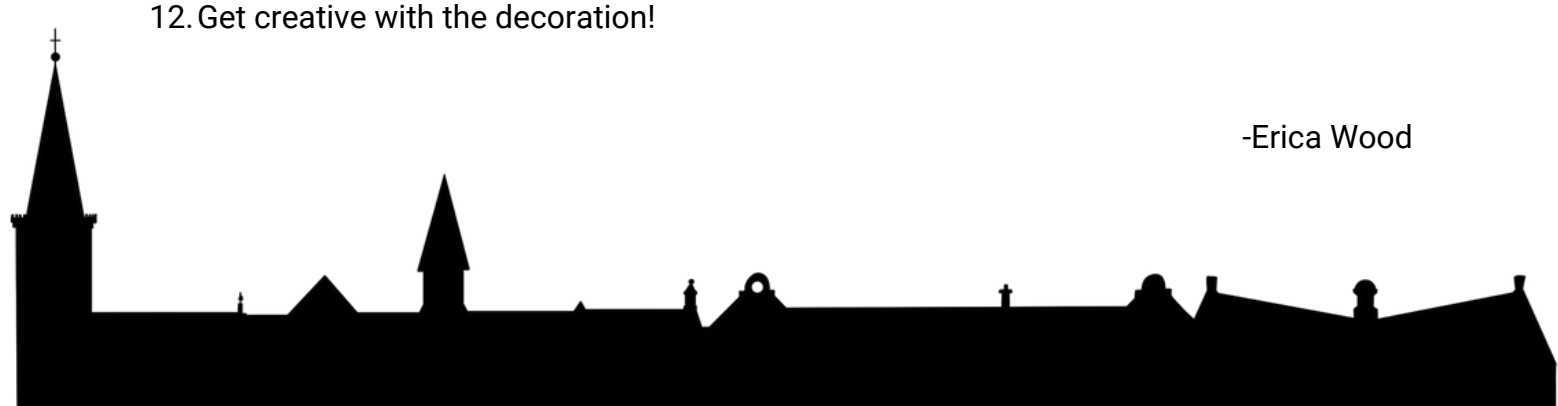


You will need a heart shaped cutter.

## Method

1. Preheat oven to 200C (180C fan).
2. Beat the margarine, sugar, eggs and vanilla extract until fully combined.
3. Mix in the flour, pinch of salt and bicarbonate of soda until fully combined.
4. Turn the dough onto a very well floured board and knead only as much as it takes to get a smooth ball of dough.
5. Put the dough ball into a clean bowl and rest in the fridge to cool for 15 minutes.
6. Roll out to approximately 7 - 8 mm thick.
7. Cut out the heart shapes (up to 21) being careful not to overwork the dough.
8. Line a baking sheet with grease proof paper and bake the biscuits for 8 minutes or until pale and golden around the edges.
9. Cool on a wire rack.
10. In a small container mix the icing sugar with 1 tbsp of water until dissolved to make a sticky paste.
11. Roll out the icing on a board dusted with cornflour, and cut out heart shapes. Using the sticky paste, stick the iced hearts on top of the biscuits. Also, use the sticky paste on top of the rolled icing for the sprinkles to stick too.
12. Get creative with the decoration!

-Erica Wood





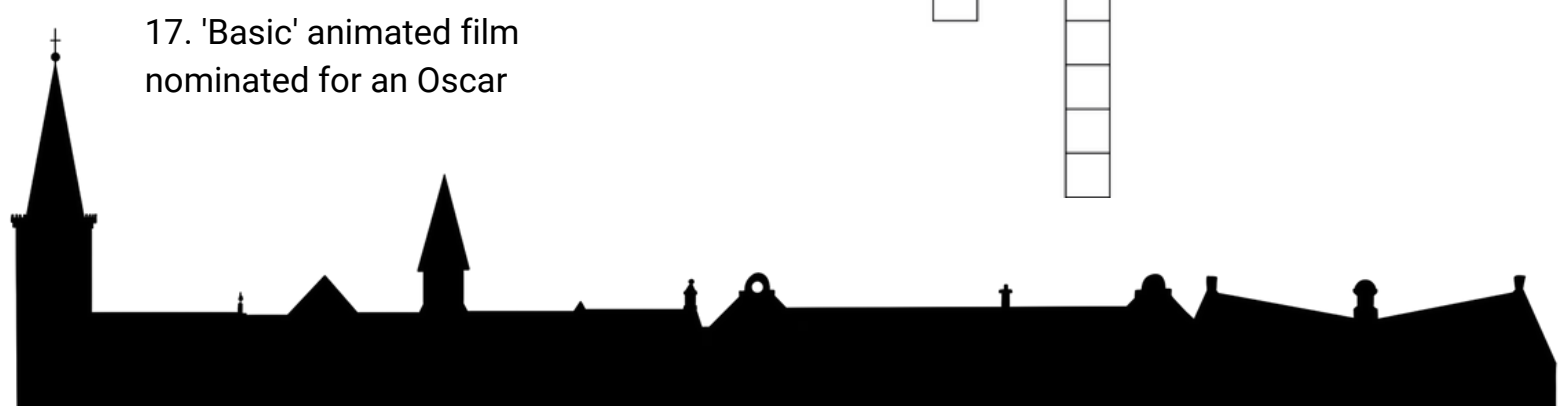
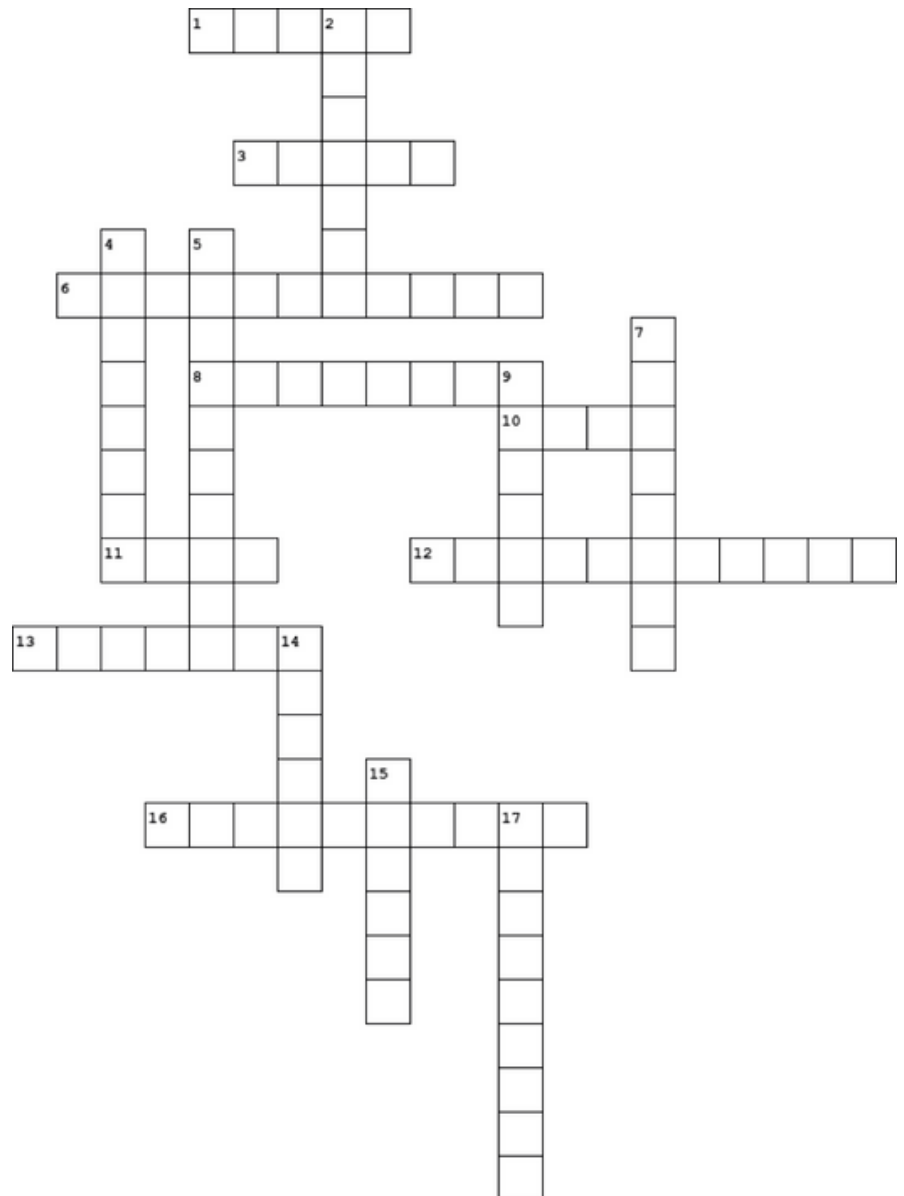
# CROSSWORD

## ACROSS

1. Winners of 2023 women's World Cup
3. Common woodland and hedgerow tree
6. Bringing their Eras tour to Scotland this year
8. Pearlescent clouds formed under specific conditions
10. 80s band that finally hit Christmas number 1 in 2023
11. Found washed up on St Cyrus beach, from a WWII shipwreck
12. Hit TV show revolving around deception
13. Current men's Six Nations champions
16. Member of the weasel family, rarely sighted in Scotland

## DOWN

2. Volcanic rock found at St Cyrus beach
4. One of the first colourful flowers to appear in Spring
5. Village with Scotland's lowest recorded temperature in 2023
7. Whale species previously spotted in St Cyrus
9. Country hosting this year's Eurovision Song Contest
14. Tapestry of this Scottish city on display until April
15. Highest grossing film of 2023
17. 'Basic' animated film nominated for an Oscar



# SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



Last term saw our P5/6 class hosting a Community Coffee Morning in the school hall. Thank you to all those who attended. The super sum of £151.05 was raised for school funds.

On the run up to Christmas, we held a concert, where we sang a variety of songs and carols.

We thoroughly enjoyed entertaining all our visitors. Ava designed the programme cover for it, isn't it great?



This term, both P4/5 and P3/4 will be hosting coffee mornings.

P4/5 is first up, on 21st February, where they will be raising funds in order to adopt a penguin or elephant through the WWF.

P3/4 will then run theirs on 28th March and will raising money for 'MIND' mental health charity.

All our coffee mornings are held from 9.30-10.30am in the school hall. All members of the community are most welcome to attend. It would be lovely to see you!

What a busy time we are having!

# SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

This term, we look forward to seeing people in school for our writing afternoon. We are always keen to share the learning that is happening in school and to demonstrate how it's done. We are planning to hold a drop-in writing afternoon on Tuesday 20th February from 3.20 – 4.15pm when writing from across the school will be on display, along with resources we use. Again, all are welcome! If you can't join us, why not check out our school website – [St Cyrus Primary School \(st-cyrus.aberdeenshire.sch.uk\)](http://st-cyrus.aberdeenshire.sch.uk) as P7s will be creating a 'Writing in St Cyrus School video' for all to see.

We've got lots more to look forward to this term, including our **Scottish Poetry Competition**, a visit from **Coram** life education who will deliver interactive health workshops in all our classes and **World Book Day**. We look forward to sharing how these go in our next school newsletter.

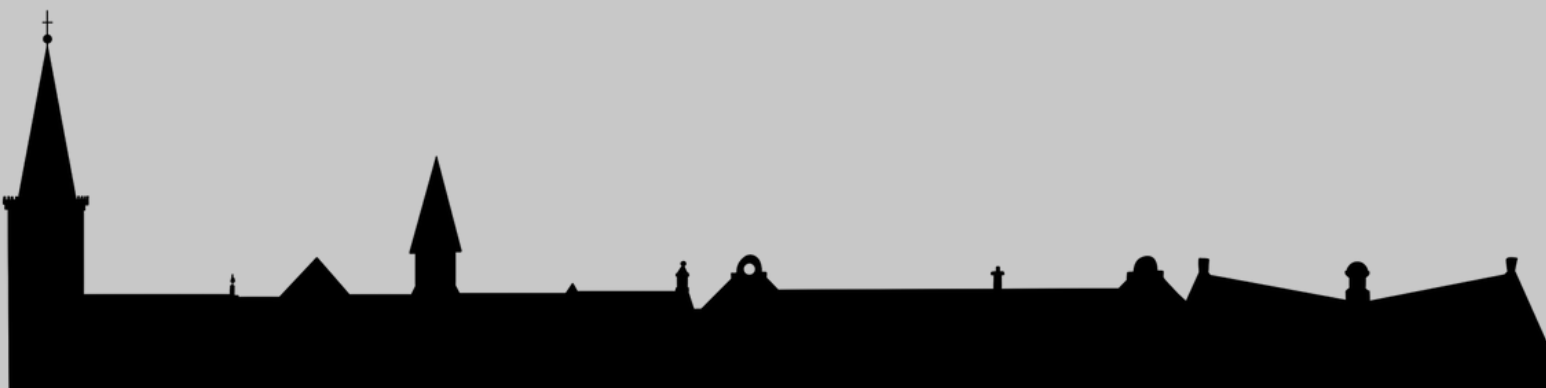
Did you know?

We have a small Foodbank in school, as well as a clothes/uniform bank. Please do pop in if you need anything at all.

If you are unable to come up to school, please contact the school office and we will arrange delivery of the items.

If you are in a position to be able to donate – please do! Many members of our school community are relying on it at this time.

Items which we could greatly appreciate in addition to tins, pasta, rice and sauces are toilet roll, shower gels and toothpaste.



## BEFRIENDING SERVICE

Kincardine and Deeside Befriending has been working for 27 years in rural Southern Aberdeenshire with vulnerable, socially isolated older people. We facilitate a regular befriending visit which in most cases would involve an outing to a garden centre, going out for a walk, going for a bit of shopping or just for a cuppa and a fine piece, and if outings aren't possible, then a cuppa and a chat at home.



We are always on the lookout for volunteers who we try to match locally, so we won't be asking you to travel a long way and we will look after your travel expenses and your snacks. And don't worry if you don't drive – there's always someone who can't get out and about who needs a friendly face.

**What skills do you need to be a volunteer?**

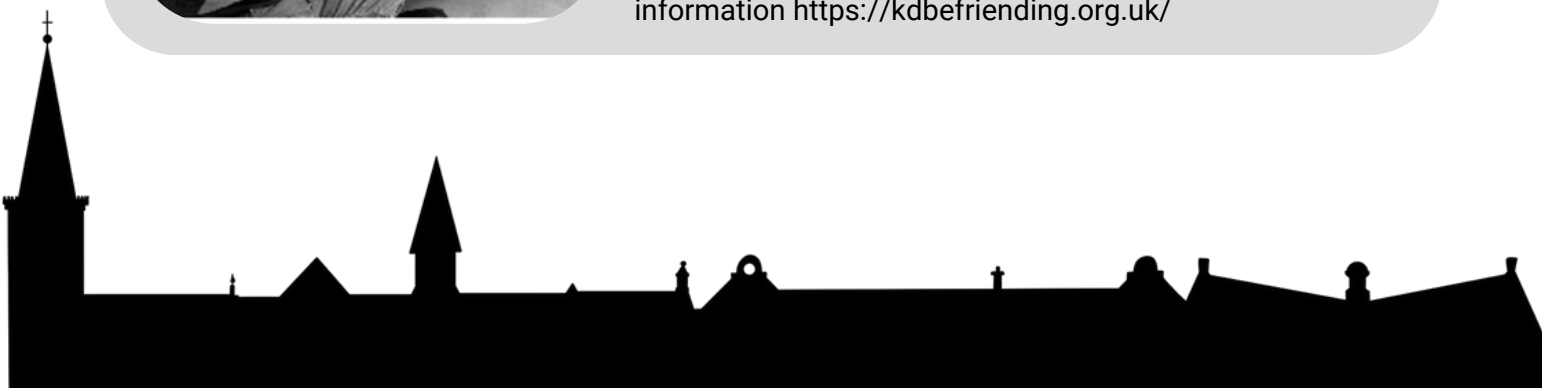
**You need to be kind, compassionate, empathetic and committed.**

We offer a home learning package and a volunteering experience which is well supported with volunteers being screened (PVG checks and references) and supported.

We aim to ensure that the service has a positive impact on self-esteem, reduces feelings of loneliness, keeps isolated individuals linked with their local communities and allows many to remain in their own homes for longer.



Befriending has been shown to have positive impacts on the mental health of all involved. If you think that you might have a couple of hours free once a week or once a fortnight and think that you might like to brighten up someone's day, please get in touch with us either by email [info@kdbefriending.org.uk](mailto:info@kdbefriending.org.uk), or by telephone on 01569 765 714 (for Kincardine and Mearns) or 01330 823 368 (for Deeside). You can also find us on Facebook and we do have a website for further information <https://kdbefriending.org.uk/>



# GALA DAY NEWS!

As many of you will know, the St Cyrus Gala Day is an important event on the village social calendar. Every year we welcome not only the residents of the village but also many visitors from the surrounding locale.



## THANK YOU!

The organising of this event is no mean feat and there is always much activity going on behind the scenes to make sure we can bring this great family day out to our village. That being said, we have become a committee of just a few, and you may have noticed recently on social media that we put a shout out for some new volunteers to join our little team.

Well, what can we say? St Cyrus never fails to deliver when we really need it! In a few short days we had an amazing number of people contact us to offer their time to volunteer.

## GALA DAY 2024 - SAT 15TH JUNE

We still have a few months before the big day though so in the meantime we are hosting two separate events to keep us entertained.

### FAMILY QUIZ & DISCO

SAT 16th MARCH

### LADIES DAY

Saturday 11th May

Full details are on our Facebook page so give us a follow if you don't already do so.





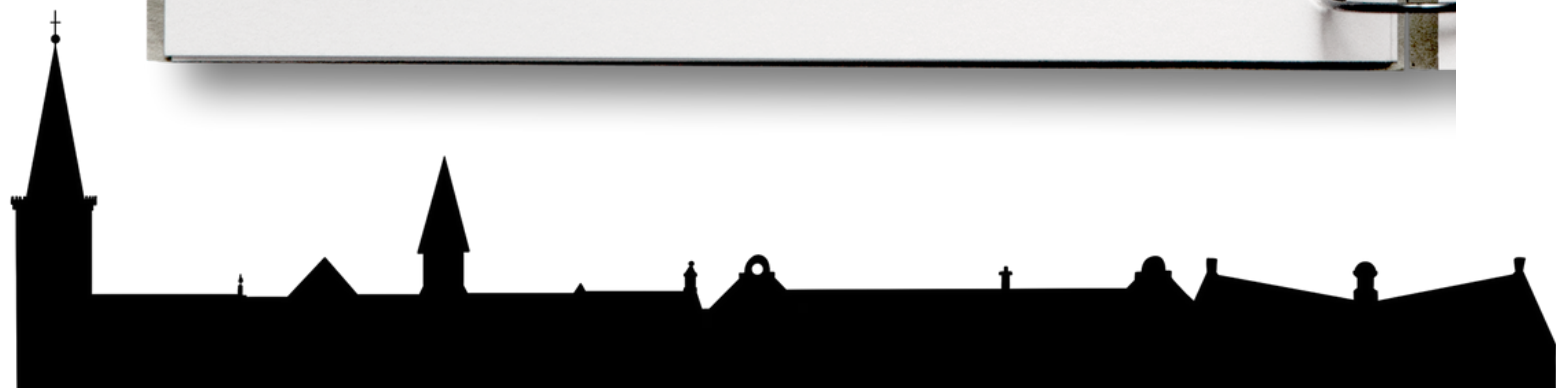
Barry Graham has a deep connection with both St. Cyrus and the poet George Beattie that developed from many visits to the Auld Nether Kirkyard. It was not until he happened to be there on the exact day of the 188th anniversary of the poet's death that he felt compelled to find out more.

George Beattie died on the 29th of September 1823, by his own hand, in the Auld Nether Kirkyard where his monument now stands. He was born in 1786 at Whitehill, a croft the 'Hill of Morphie' in St. Cyrus, to a family of crofters and salmon fishers. His mother and two surviving siblings relocated to Montrose around 1800, where George became a writer/solicitor and factor to Lt. Gen. Sir Joseph Straton's Kirkside Estate.

Beattie was a handsome, generous, and fun-loving man, with a passion for writing. He was a frequent contributor of articles and poems for the 'Montrose Review'.

In 1815, at twenty-nine years old, he penned what would become his most famous and published poem, 'John o' Arnha' - a satirical, comic adventure based on the delusions of the boorish Montrose Town Officer, John Findlay.

George Beattie's tragic story centres around his doomed relationship with the beautiful daughter of Squire Robert Gibson who owned mansions at 'Stone of Morphie' and Kinnaber. Unusually, she had been named William to flatter a relative, William Mitchell Esquire, a sugar plantation agent, and slave owner whom they hoped might leave her some inheritance. George had fallen in love with her at first sight and soon a passionate romance blossomed between them. The ploy of naming their daughter 'William' worked and while still being courted by George and indeed planning to marry him, the wealthy William Mitchell died leaving her, in present-day terms, approximately twelve million pounds. Poor George was abruptly ousted from his engagement with Miss Gibson to be replaced by a foppish corn-merchant, William Smart. He had previously never shown the slightest interest in Miss Gibson, chosen by her mother, Isabell, as being more socially acceptable to their, now-wealthy daughter, William.





George was driven to heart-broken madness trying to persuade Miss William's parents to relent and acknowledge their love and informal betrothal, writing copious and lengthy accounts of their love for each other, but to no avail.

On the 29th of September 1823 George Beattie set out with a pistol on a gloomy seashore walk to the old Nether Kirkyard, a place he knew well and where his sister was buried. There amongst the old tombstones he took his own life.

He was found by a herdsman's boy, who thought he was sleeping, leaning against the churchyard wall clutching a letter for his brother in one hand and a pistol in the other. He is buried where he was found, and friends and admirers subsequently erected a monument to him on the very spot.

After several postponements, William Smart and Miss Gibson were married. However, upon returning from honeymoon, they were met at Montrose harbour by an angry mob who proceeded to stone and chase them through the town until they finally took shelter in the Starr Inn. The people of Montrose had little doubt in their minds regarding who was responsible for George Beattie's death.

Miss Gibson died in 1840, after two years of illness. She lived a cold, loveless, but privileged life with William Smart and died, some say, calling out for George Beattie.

Abridged from an article by Barry Dominic Graham

Barry's goal is to secure a permanent and appropriate public memorial to the memory of George Beattie. His book, 'GEORGE BEATTIE of St Cyrus-A Poet lost in Time' contains the full story of George Beattie. Graham, B.D. (2017) George Beattie of St. Cyrus A poet lost in time. The George Beattie Project

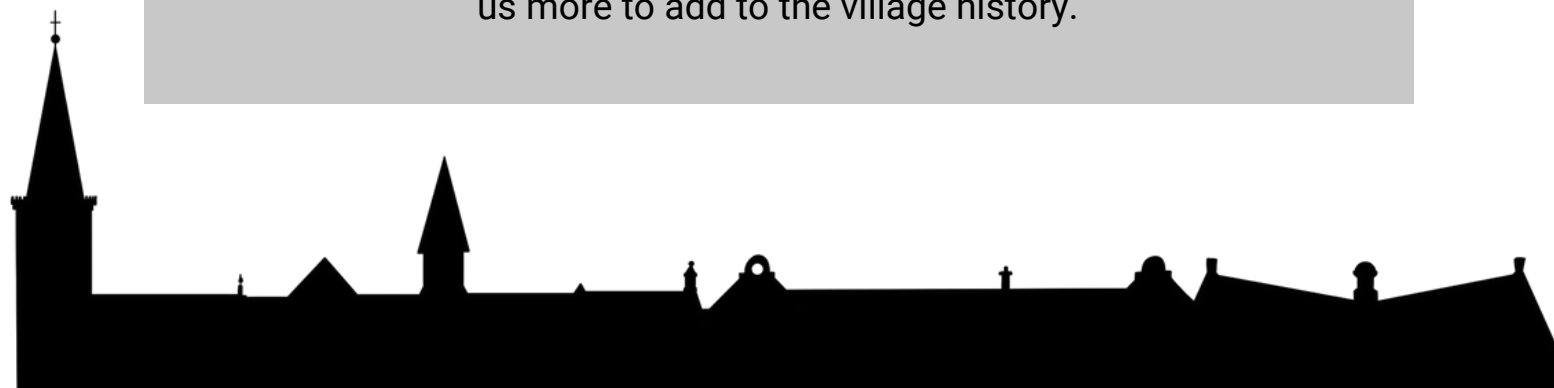
*Barry Dominic Graham / Andy Shanks*





## ST. CYRUS WATER FOUNTAIN

This beautiful little water fountain sits at the side of Main Road, behind the bus stop on the opposite side to the shop. There is no date on it but the inscription reads: "Erected by Mrs Straton of Kirkside for the benefit of the village". Presumably, before mains water was connected this would have been the only public source of drinking water. Otherwise, water would have come from wells on private properties. It would be interesting to know how many private wells there were in St Cyrus, where they were situated and if there is any trace of them now. Maybe place names or house names would give clues, for example Wellgreen, or Well Cottage. Maybe there is someone in the village who could tell us more about the Straton family and why Mrs Straton made her kind donation of a water fountain. Brief research shows that Henry Strattoun owned Kirkside as far back as 1626. Please get in touch if you can tell us more to add to the village history.







## SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

There are 5 differences to find

Photography and editing by Snowfox Photography



# COMMUNITY INSIGHT PROFILE

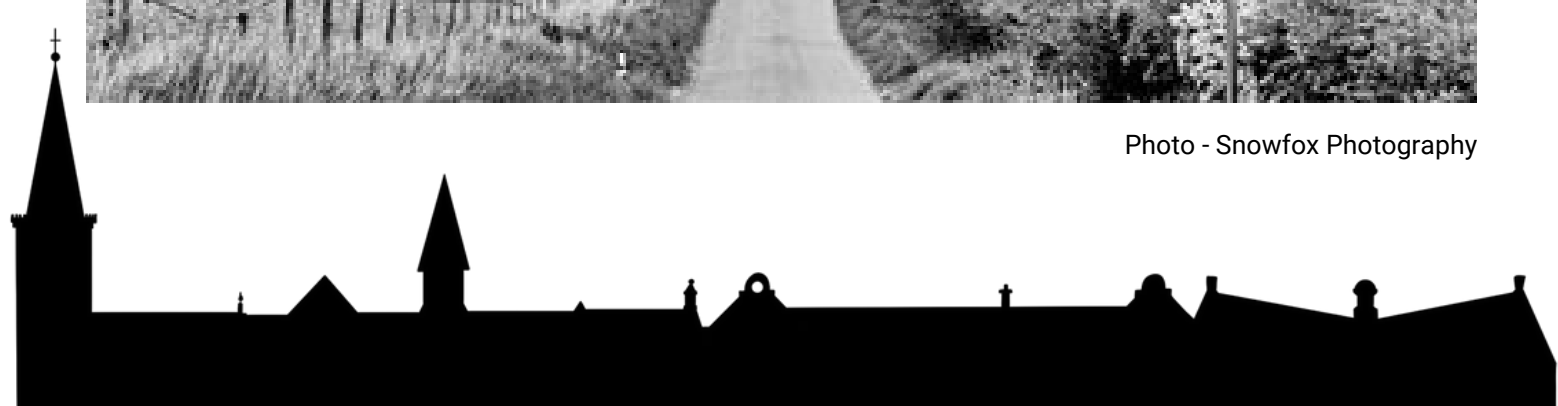
**St Cyrus Community Council** supplied the Kincardine Development Partnership with the 60 Post Codes that apply in the St Cyrus Electoral Ward in order to produce a Community Insight profile for the St Cyrus ward.

*Community Insight* is a joint project from the Housing Associations Charitable Trust (HACT) and Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion (OCSI). HACT helps housing providers build stronger neighbourhoods and resilient communities. OCSI develop and interpret the evidence base to help the public and community organisations deliver better services.

Community Council received the Community Insight Report in December 2023. It covers seven topics including Population, Vulnerable Groups, Housing, Health and Wellbeing, Education and Skills, Economy, Access and Transport. The Newsletter plans to share the contents of these seven themes in the 2024 issues of the Newsletter. Your Council intend to use the Community Insight Report to assist us build “St Cyrus” into a stronger and more resilient community.



Photo - Snowfox Photography



So in this article we share information about the "Population"  
Figure: Population by age. Source: Mid Years Estimates (ONS) 2020

**48.8%** of our community is male and 51.2% is female. 19.8% is under the age of 16; 60.0% are of working age and 20.1% are over the age of 65.

**79.1%** of our community were born in Scotland, 16.2% were born elsewhere in the UK, and **4.7%** born outside of the UK.

**21.5%** are pensioner households, 12.4% are one person households, and 16.6% are lone parent families with dependent children.

**46.2%** are married households and 9.7% are cohabiting households.

48.9% describe themselves as holding Christian faith whilst 41.7% describe themselves as holding no religious belief.

### **A92 : Main Road Crossing**

Community Council have been advised by Aberdeenshire Council that following a recent road survey that it has been agreed that a road crossing will be provide on the northern section of the Main Road. The design of the crossing has now been transferred to the Roads Department for implementation. We have no further details at this stage but will keep residents informed as we get more information.

### **Political Representation**

Citizens of St Cyrus are represented in Westminster by Andrew Bowie, who is the Scottish Conservative and Unionist MP for West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine. Contact details for your MP can be found on the website : [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk)



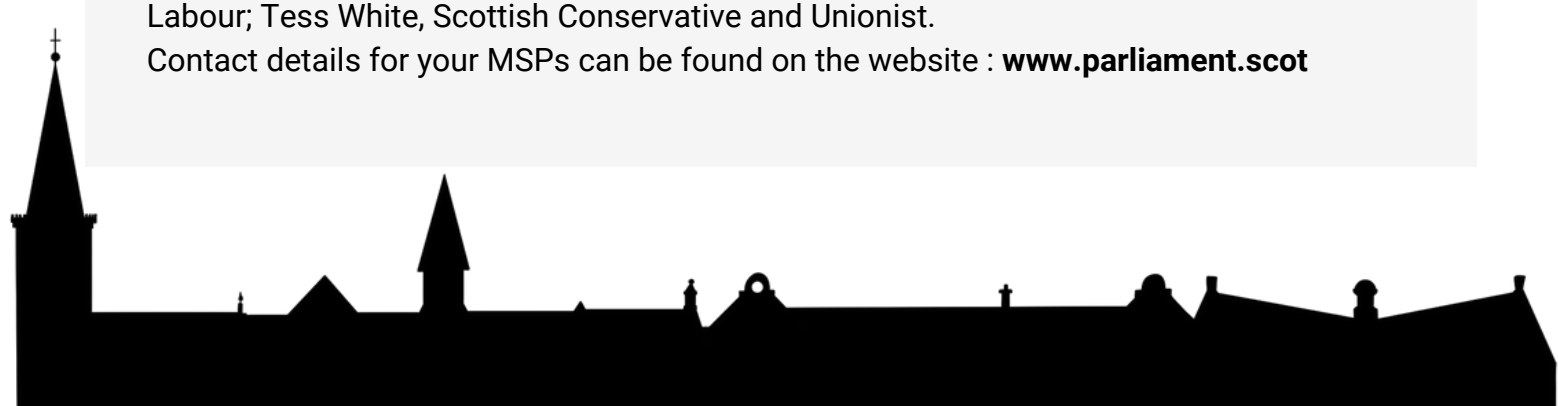
Photo - St Cyrus Clock - Snowfox Photography

Citizens of St Cyrus are represented in Holyrood by: Mairi Gugeon who is the Scottish National Party Constituency MSP for Angus North and Mairns.

Your Regional MSPs for the North East Scotland are:

Maggie Chapman, Scottish National Party; Maurice Golden, Scottish Conservative and Unionist; Liam Kerr, Scottish Conservative and Unionist; Douglas Lumsden; Scottish Conservative and Unionist; Michael Marra, Scottish Labour; Mercedes Villalba, Scottish Labour; Tess White, Scottish Conservative and Unionist.

Contact details for your MSPs can be found on the website : [www.parliament.scot](http://www.parliament.scot)



# PARENTS & FRIENDS OF ST CYRUS PRIMARY SCHOOL



As we close in our first year back as a fully formed parent council, we would like to extend our thanks to the school community and local community for all your support. As you will see below 2023 was a very successful fundraising year for us. This would not have been possible without the collective efforts from all our supporters.

We are absolutely delighted to be able to work closely with St Cyrus Primary School and use these funds to support them in a number of ways.

## Funds raised during 2023-

- Christmas Fair raised £985.76
- Stall at the St Cyrus Gala raised £531.95
- Stall at sports day raised £132.80
- Discos throughout the year raised £1211.64
- Scratch cards raised £205
- Donations received £50
- Mediumship evening raised £818.34
- Total raised £3935.49

## Financial support provided during 2023-

- Funding for P7 leavers hoodies and leaving gift for each pupil £659.57
- Funding towards the cost of the Christmas Panto and Ice cream £434.83
- Funding for resources for each classroom £700
- Funding to help stock the school larder and provide breakfast bars £60
- Total funds provided £1854.40

THANK  
YOU

In 2024 we hope to be able to announce some large-scale projects such as playground markings, to work towards helping to improve the school and the overall experience for our children with the funds raised.

As we plan our efforts for 2024, we would love to hear from anyone with any gardening skills or resources they would like to contribute. We are particularly looking for donations of plants, bulbs and plant pots for the children to plant. We would welcome anyone that could volunteer any time to help with gardening round the school grounds.

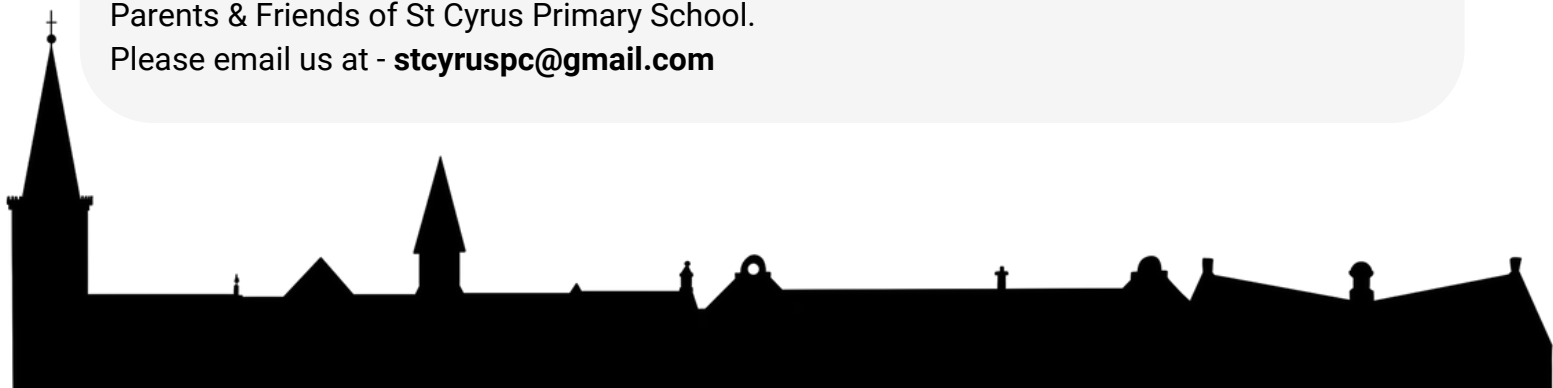
We have already started preparations for some fun fundraising events for the school and hope to have a family ceilidh followed by a kids disco to look forward to before Easter, please look-out for these being confirmed and get your tickets when available!

If you would like to get involved in supporting St Cyrus Primary School, new members are welcome and encouraged to join at any time. Whether you would like to get stuck right in to help, dip in and out when you can or help with a particular event. We are a lovely fun and friendly bunch. Please email us on the details below.

Many thanks again for all your support and kind regards.

Parents & Friends of St Cyrus Primary School.

Please email us at - [stcyruspc@gmail.com](mailto:stcyruspc@gmail.com)



# FUNDING SOURCES

As a small but mighty community, we are very fortunate to have a range of groups; clubs & organisations. However the reality of the financial challenges that go with on-going operational and sometimes capital costs is growing.

Depending on the size/committee/financial status of a group, below are a list of Funds/Community Grants that groups/clubs/organisations could apply to.

## GRANTS AND PROJECTS

Aberdeenshire Council: Area Committee Budget

Kincardine and Mearns area funding - Aberdeenshire Council  
Common Good

Community Resilience Community Food Fund

<http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/communities-and-events/funding/>

Coastal Communities Fund Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action (AVA Search for funding  
([avashire.org.uk](http://avashire.org.uk)) Specifically for groups/cost of living Search for funding  
([avashire.org.uk](http://avashire.org.uk))



Funding Scotland Community Grant

[tescostrongerstarts.org.uk](http://tescostrongerstarts.org.uk)

Scotmid Co-operative Foundation

Asda Foundation

Mearns Area Partnership

Morrison Foundation Making a difference to people's lives ([morrisonfoundation.com](http://morrisonfoundation.com))

Tullo and Twinshiels Windfarm Kincardineshire Development Partnership - Funding  
([kdp.scot](http://kdp.scot))

The Arnold Clark Community Fund | Arnold Clark

If you feel you would like to get some advice on applying for funding please email **[stcyruscommunitycouncil@gmail.com](mailto:stcyruscommunitycouncil@gmail.com)** and we can connect you with some people that could help.

Or if you have experience in writing bids/applications let us know!

*Lets support each other.*



## ST CYRUS BUSINESS DIRECTORY

If you would like your Business to be added to our directory then please contact the team [stcyrusnews@gmail.com](mailto:stcyrusnews@gmail.com)

### Plumber

**Martin Ritchie**

Long Row, St Cyrus

07837 578 454

### St Cyrus Taxi

07889 740235

Local, long distance, airport transfers, etc. phone, text or find me on facebook  
[stcyrustaxi@gmail.com](mailto:stcyrustaxi@gmail.com)

### KDH Electrician

David Hopkins

Invergarry, St Cyrus

07309 694 189

[kdhopkins16@outlook.com](mailto:kdhopkins16@outlook.com)

### Butterflybees Wellbeing:

Holistic therapies, natural therapeutic products and organic skincare.

[www.butterflybeeswellbeing.com](http://www.butterflybeeswellbeing.com)

[butterflybeeswellbeing@gmail.com](mailto:butterflybeeswellbeing@gmail.com)

m

07950562092

### EMac Carpentry & Woodwork Services

1 Spittalmyre Steading. St Cyrus

07873 124 605

[eoghan25@icloud.com](mailto:eoghan25@icloud.com)

Or Find me on Facebook

### LBC Sports Massage Therapy

0779 295 7118

[info@lbcsportsmassagetherapy.co.uk](mailto:info@lbcsportsmassagetherapy.co.uk)

Find me on Facebook

If you would like to submit a story, photograph or any other interesting content then please send to [stcyrusnews@gmail.com](mailto:stcyrusnews@gmail.com) for our consideration. (Photographs to be sent in jpeg. please, and please note Newsletter is printed in black & white).

## EDITORIAL POLICY STATEMENT

St Cyrus News is a free community publication distributed every two months to households and businesses in St Cyrus and its surrounding areas.

Our aim is to provide information, appreciation and celebration of our rich and diverse community. Letters; and articles published do not necessarily reflect the views of The Editorial Team but we reserve the right to shorten, edit or not publish any item.

The Editorial Team will request full written parental permission before including any photographs of children.

Photographic resources donated to & collected on behalf of The Editorial Team remain the property of the team.

As a sub-group of the St Cyrus Community Council, all advertising or sponsorship transactions will be processed via the Community Council account.

Reflecting GDPR legislation, we will only share information once we have consent to do so.

Next Issue is out February 2024, any submissions due by 20th Jan 2024.

