

# the SPEAKER

quarterly  
free

March 2022

Published by  
The Ripple on behalf  
of the community

## Act as if you own the place!

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We believe that people living locally have all the experience we need to run a vibrant and well used community Hub. We believe that local people know what is best for them and their local area.

We believe this so much that the Ripple Board has recently voted to open up its doors to everyone who lives in the local area to become a member of the Ripple.

This means that it is you, the local people who will have ultimate control of the Ripple, what we do, how we do it and who we do it with.

We want you, the local people to feel more involved in the Ripple and this is one of the ways to do that.

To become a member the cost is £1, we need to

take your details and we need to add you to our membership register.

As a member you will be invited to all meetings and you will vote on a Board of Directors each year from the membership.

If you want to pay £1 and become a member of the Ripple or if you just want to find out more then come along to our open evening on:

**Thursday 7th April  
Restalrig Lochend  
Community Hub  
5.30pm to 7.30pm**



Minister Lorna Slater spent the morning at the Ripple finding out about the great work we do as well as talking to Rachel Green, Director about what the future holds for the planet and for the Ripple.



**Staff and current  
board members  
will be here to  
answer any  
questions you**

**may have and  
show you around  
as well as tell you  
about the great  
work that we do.**

Editor

**Rachel Green**

Phone

**0131 554 0422**

Email

**thespeaker@theripple.org.uk**

Post

**198 Restalrig Road South**

**Edinburgh EH7 6DZ**

Advertising

**Dawn Baxter**

**0131 554 0422**

Production

**Norman Gilfillan**

Phone

**01968 673229**

Email

**design@gvngraphic.com**

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The Speaker is an independent community newspaper which aims to provide a forum for free speech and debate, an effective method of information sharing and a way to celebrate local achievement. Community involvement is key to its success and an individual or group within Restalrig, Lochend, Craigenfinny and surrounding local area is welcome to contribute. The views expressed in The Speaker are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the editor or publishers. Please note copy may be edited. Any letter or article which is considered libellous will not be published and individuals will be protected from personal attack.

## Speak up! Write to the Speaker

Raise local issues, celebrate achievements, put forward suggestions. Help make sure The Speaker is the kind of newspaper you want to read.

If you would like your letter to appear in the paper it must include your name and address, although these may be withheld from publication at your request.

Send your letters to:

The Editor, The Speaker,  
198 Restalrig Road South

Edinburgh EH7 6DZ

E-mail: [thespeaker@theripple.org.uk](mailto:thespeaker@theripple.org.uk)

## Meadowbank development

### Letter from Richard Murray

It was good to see the short progress report on the Meadowbank regeneration in the last issue of the Speaker. It has been some time since there has been any news on this scheme which is a multi-million pound project with major implications for the area. There are numerous student flat developments underway in the area, however this is one project which may be of actual benefit to the community.

The completion of the new community sports facility seems to have been affected by the delays which appear to affect all Council construction works, i.e.

trams 1, report on trams 1, trams 2 etc. which is unfortunate. Hopefully next year will see it completed.

It was of some concern to see in the article that the work to improve Smokey Brae would seem to be limited to an improvement of the junction at Smokey Brae and Marionville Road. This is not the case with a programme of work envisaged for the Marionville Road and Jock's Lodge junctions and Smokey Brae itself. In short this would result in a route with increased safety for pedestrians and cyclists. It would also accommodate a potential increase in pedestrian and cycle traffic from all the new

developments.

The scheme proposals will be open to public consultation however due to the Pandemic participation in these events has not been easy or straight forward. In this instance a 'feature' insert page in the Speaker with drawings, comments from the designers and local ward councillors may reach a greater number of people. The budget for Meadowbank would no doubt cover this.

Local residents have had to suffer the short comings of Smokey Brae, with the narrow pavements and railings, for years. The changes proposed would be a real tangible and enduring benefit for the local community.

## Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home encourages dog owners to learn life-saving techniques



A leading animal rescue centre is encouraging all dog owners to get to know basic life-saving techniques for their pets.

Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home has launched a new dog first aid course that offers practical training for the many emergency situations that our beloved pets can find themselves in. These include choking, fractures, hypothermia and heatstroke, and other injuries.

The charity said it was important to know when

emergency treatment could be given, and when a visit to the vet was appropriate. Jamie Simpson, Director of Operations at Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home said:

"Dogs are important members of the family and just like humans, experience moments of crisis in their health and well-being. It is really important for owners to know what to do in those situations, their actions could prevent further injury or illness to the dog, or

indeed save a life.

"If your pet experiences any incident that is life-threatening, a visit to the vet is almost always appropriate. But time can be extremely precious when they are in pain or their life is at risk, and small actions can make all the difference."

Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home's Dog First Aid courses provide an ITC certification and are SQA accredited. They are endorsed by both Braid Vets and Abercorn Vets.

Jamie said: "Our course is unique in that it provides in-person insights from some of our most experienced trainers, who themselves work day in and out with dogs in all kinds of conditions. What's more, all funds raised through this course will support the care of stray and unwanted pets that reside here on site."

More information can be found at [www.edc.org.uk/DogFirstAid](http://www.edc.org.uk/DogFirstAid)



# People Know How acquires new space in Meadowbank

People Know How are collaborating with Homes for Students to take up a new community space bringing together students and citizens in Craigentiny and Meadowbank in the new development, Straits Meadow.

Passers-by on London Road may have noticed a new student development opposite the Meadowbank Stadium. It is within this building, Straits Meadow, that social innovation charity People Know How are basing their new office, ensuring that development in the North East remains loyal to its community and drawing on experience of supporting the area for the last 8 years.

Over the last few years, People Know How has expanded to support all of Edinburgh and East Lothian, delivering their projects supporting children, young people, adults and families across both localities. They will be taking up these offices in addition to their current spaces at 525 Ferry Road, their Musselburgh base, and their jointly owned canal boat, All Aboard, in Polwarth.

As part of their new Strategic Plan, the

organisation will work to nurture community cohesion and wellbeing over the next five years as we recover from the pandemic by providing spaces for collaboration, making connections, sharing learning, and exchanging ideas.

## Supporting the local community

Being situated within a student development will allow the charity to encourage students to volunteer and support the community they live in. Here they will be in proximity to the local schools in which they run their Positive Transitions service, as well as the communities of Craigentiny, Lochend, Restalrig and Loganlea, where they support many individuals through their Reconnect service.

The opportunities they'll be able to offer students cover a wide range of themes and support – from becoming a befriender supporting a child or young person in a local school to providing wellbeing and digital skills support to adults and families facing social and digital isolation, to participating in litter picks and community clean-ups.

This new space will also

allow them to strengthen ties with universities throughout Edinburgh, in addition to the placements they provide for social work, art therapy, and occupational therapy students, and internships in all their projects.

"We can't wait to offer our wide range of volunteering opportunities to student tenants. Our space will be open for all visitors interested in finding out more about People Know How, our services, and how to get involved with the local community. I look forward to speaking with the students to identify how we can support them as much as they support us through their volunteering, tailor-making each experience to ensure their goals are met." – Amy Clelland, VIP Manager.

By working close to a student hub of activity, People Know How will develop a reciprocal relationship of support between them, the community, and the students who reside in the building, engaging them in the local area and supporting them through their time at university.

## Influencing policy

Over the last year, the



charity has also expanded its reach to maximise social impact through social innovation as a catalyst for policy and systems change. They have done this through initiatives such as their national Connectivity Now campaign to end data poverty and current action-research project with the University of Edinburgh to improve positive school transitions across all of Scotland. This new location will give the organisation proximity to the Scottish Parliament, as they engage routinely in cross-party working groups and engage with policymakers.

## Community space

People Know How are now fully moved into Straits Meadow alongside its new student residents and are looking at how

the space can be best used by local community groups or charities once fully operational later in 2022. To express interest and share your thoughts, get in touch at [contactus@peopleknowhow.org](mailto:contactus@peopleknowhow.org)

We want to thank HG Developments Ltd., Thornton Solicitors, Clark Contracts, Orbit, the Community Council and local councillors for making this possible.



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# Ash hosts a Ukrainian crisis meeting

On Wednesday 2nd March a group of six Ukrainian citizens living in Edinburgh spoke directly to MSPs at Holyrood amid the ongoing war in Ukraine.

The specially-arranged meeting was hosted by Edinburgh Eastern MSP, Ash Regan, who had met with the group at Saturday's demonstration outside the Scottish Parliament.

The group, who are part of the Edinburgh Anti-War Volunteer Movement, had specific asks which included: supplying Ukraine with further humanitarian and military aid; lifting visa restrictions as the present system is

'impossible' and 'impractical'; to support the Ukrainian army; to apply full political and economic pressure on the Russian government; and to raise public awareness of the ongoing conflict, including running a campaign for Scots to learn more about Ukrainian history and culture.

Those speaking said that "Ukrainians are fighting for European values, freedom and democracy".

Following the event, Ash Regan MSP said: "This war is heartbreaking not just for the brave people living in Ukraine, but it deeply affects Ukrainian citizens living in other parts of the

world – including here in Scotland. They are worried for the safety of their family and friends, and for the future of their homeland.

"Today's meeting was an opportunity for Ukrainian citizens living in Edinburgh to have their voice heard by Scottish parliamentarians representing a number of different parties and areas and to convey what they would like both the Scottish and UK governments to do to help.

"Scotland condemns Russia's unprovoked invasion of a peaceful, democratic country and we all stand in solidarity



with the people of Ukraine.

"The Scottish Government continues to call on the Prime Minister to waive visa requirements for Ukrainians seeking refuge here."

DEC (Disasters Emergency Committee) charities are in Ukraine and neighbouring

countries meeting the needs of all refugees and displaced people. Visit [www.dec.org.uk](http://www.dec.org.uk) for more information or if you would like to donate.

The DEC brings together 15 leading UK aid charities to raise funds quickly and efficiently.

## Brave strong beautiful

In October 2021 the community voted for £16,000 to be spent in the local area on projects that would benefit people in a number of different ways.

This voting process was done via the means of Participatory Budgeting, which is a simple and inclusive way to get local residents voting on their priorities. £1,600 was available for groups to apply for to run services or events that do not already take place in the local area.

We caught up with one of the successful applicants Kerry Anderson on how the recent funding has helped her students at Brave Strong Beautiful.

Brave Strong Beautiful currently run an employability and leadership training

programme for young people aged 15-19, with a keen interest in the hair and beauty industry. This offers opportunities and the potential to full time apprenticeships and permanent employment. They were looking to provide an additional new project working with young people delivering 1-1 mental wellbeing services and development of employability skills.

The new project now provides providing psychotherapy mental health support through 1-1 counselling and workshops to help young people from the area get work ready.

**"When did the project start and how long will it be running for?"**

"The project first started in November, with one to

one counselling on offer to students. A therapeutic counsellor also provides a workshop, one of which has already been completed. These workshops focus on emotional wellbeing and providing students with the tools to cope with everyday life stressors."

"Three of our students are currently benefitting from the one to one counselling, with another three to be signed up shortly. The majority of the funding will be invested in the one to one counselling as this is where the major demand lies for us."

**"Has the project been successful so far, and if so, how has it been successful?"**

"The counselling and workshops have increased

the confidence of the students and the engagement with customers. The communication and positivity between the team has seen a general improvement as well. The additional supports results in a better service from the salon and improves attendance of the students. These factors result in better outcomes for the community, clients and our young people."

One of the students receiving support as a direct result of the funding said: "You get to speak to someone about issues so you don't have to keep it all bottled up. The counselling offers a good space to explore feelings and emotions. It helps clear your mind so you can focus on what is

important and being present in the moment. With the support I have become more focussed on work and my goals".

There is a chance for any individual, community group or organisation operating in Lochend, Craigentiny and Restalrig to come up with an idea that will be of benefit to the community. The application process for LCR Stands Up 2022 will open at the end of June with the voting to once again be held later on in the year.

Please contact Tristan Green at [tristan.green@theripple.org.uk](mailto:tristan.green@theripple.org.uk) to find out how you can get involved in the process. Don't miss out on this great local opportunity.



# Latest from your local councillors

## Cllr Ethan Young

Party: Scottish National Party  
Ward: Ward 14 – Craigentinny/Duddingston

Correspondence address:  
The City of Edinburgh Council  
City Chambers  
High Street  
Edinburgh  
EH1 1YJ  
Business phone: 0131 529 7400  
Email: [ethan.young@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:ethan.young@edinburgh.gov.uk)  
Download Councillor Ethan Young contact details as VCard

### Committee appointments

City of Edinburgh Council  
Culture and Communities Committee  
Development Management Sub-Committee  
Planning Committee

**Cllr John McLellan** This will be my 30th and final article for the Speaker before I stand down from Edinburgh Council at the elections in May and it has been a privilege to contribute over the past five years. It's fair to say the three other ward councillors don't agree with me about much when it comes to big policies, but there's no argument our first job is to represent local people's views and throughout my time we have found a remarkable amount of unanimity when it comes to defending the area's interests. We also agree one of the ward's defining characteristics is its many smaller communities don't add up to a single identity in the same way as, say, Leith or Portobello. Maybe it's the railway and the busy main roads, but few would argue that Restalrig and Lochend feel part of the same community as Willowbrae or Duddingston. Therefore the Speaker is an essential part of community identity and it was a big miss when the print edition was suspended at the height of the pandemic. I'm sure more than a few more isolated people looked forward to the return of "a friend dropping in" to keep them informed and connected. I've spent my entire working life in print journalism and although many have been quick to write off hard copy publications, I still believe there is nothing quite like papers and magazines to confer a sense of permanence and reality to the material the editor chooses to publish. Maybe I'm just a print dinosaur but that feels more like work to me! Communities like Restalrig deserve a publication like the Speaker and I wish all its readers many years of enjoyment to come. And you will still catch me in the Evening News every Thursday!



**Cllr Joan Griffiths** During the pandemic it became very clear that not all children had access to technology and that some families were trying to do schoolwork on one phone. The inequality of this needed to be addressed so that no young person was disadvantaged because they did not have access to the appropriate technology. The council together with its partner CJI are providing 30000 devices to be rolled out by the end of this year to all P6 to S6 pupils across Edinburgh. I was delighted to attend Leith Academy High School recently to see the young people receive their iPad for their own use. I have campaigned for a long time to upgrade the Loganlea Play Park and in last years budget I was able to secure £30,000 for new play equipment, with Craigentinny/Meadowbank Community Council securing a further £12,000. Work replacing the play equipment should start in March. As Carers Champion I welcomed VOCAL's announcement of a Carer Recovery Fund – a monumental funding package in partnership with 12 Edinburgh charities, to improve carers' wellbeing. The local carer charity, working with partner agencies will allocate the funding pot from City of Edinburgh Council and Scottish Government of over £500,000 to support carers in greatest need. The fund will deliver grants up to £500 per carer household. Carers can apply for support with fuel payments, food vouchers, or general costs associated with improving their financial situation. Carers can apply directly through VOCAL's by calling 0808 196 6666.

**Cllr Alex Staniforth** Hello again. At the time of writing I have just finished putting the Scottish Green proposed budget before full council, as this week was the week the council sets the budget for the next financial year. Our ward is over-represented this year when it comes to finance leads as my ward colleague, Joan Griffiths, is the finance lead for the Labour group. In some ways the budget debate is theatre – before going in everybody knows the SNP/Labour coalition budget is going to pass because they have the numbers – but it lays out what each party considers a priority for spending. This year the Scottish Greens prioritised the climate crisis (as we always do, of course), addressing the cost of living crisis and we invested in public toilets. I am a big believer in the idea that Edinburgh needs more public toilets – they allow people to enjoy our greenspaces for longer and to go for long walks without risking being 'caught short'. In terms of health, both mental and physical, knowing there is a nearby toilet is a boon for many people. This term in council has seen cross-party support for the idea of more public toilets and I hope that will continue next term, whoever is successful in the coming local elections. Outside the budget this week, the project for a masterplan at Seafield has been given support by the council's Policy and Sustainability Committee. The discussion on the Seafield sounding board so far is that the owners are keen to see a coherent development which improves the area rather than see piecemeal planning applications. I am hopeful we can make Seafield into the promenade space we deserve. As ever contact me at [alex.staniforth@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:alex.staniforth@edinburgh.gov.uk)

# What gives us a sense of belonging?

By the People's Parish

In the December Speaker, we introduced the People's Parish project like this:

Would you like to discover, share and tell stories of life around here? Interested in knowing more about the landscape, buildings and historical roots of your neighbourhood? How about helping to create something that celebrates this area's amazing shared local identity, and lifts the spirits?

Since then we've been meeting local folk at the Ripple and roundabout, and beginning to collect and record their incredible memories and stories. It's been exciting and awakened long-lost memories for many of us!

Joan, Project Assistant for the People's Parish has

worked, volunteered and spent much time in the area.

"Hello. I'm helping in the new project, and my head has been buzzing, going down memory lane since I started. For once, that's not a bad thing, as this project is about collecting folk's memories and ideas about the area... I'm interested in What Gives Us a Sense of Belonging and what is special about this area?"

During the pandemic, I was thinking about where are the places we go, where do we connect locally, where do we see people who'd know us and who we could turn to if we needed help?

My first memory as I walk into the Ripple is about a priceless act of kindness. I was in the area to empty my friend's flat after she



died suddenly. I needed to get out of the flat and eat. The Ripple community café saved me as I walked in shellshocked... A cuppa, warm welcome, tasty healthy food. The café organiser, Ann saw I was in a mess, put a hand on my shoulder and invited me back in a few hours to get my tea, as a cooking group would make extra... mac and cheese, the best comfort food ever!!! I can't tell you how much that finding a safe place when I had nowhere to go and acceptance meant. I couldn't speak, but food and a warm cuppa helped me feel human and undertake the hardest task. I was lucky I knew where to turn...

Other memories of discovering amazing hidden historical buildings, getting into the ancient part of Link Up women's



centre and finding about its link to the 'Gowrie Plot' and the king's wrath and accusations of treason at the house on the hill... Then I started to find out about the history of the loch and buildings, all thanks to a leaflet that the Ripple produced many years ago and Liz the former boss gave me.

Dog walking at the high flats, Restalrig House, I discovered a medieval type wall and had a strong hunch there had been a BIG house there...

This area has a fascinating past and stunning hidden history, lots of older people who remember things that have been demolished and whose memories need saved now on tape.

The People's Parish Project is hoping to collect folk's photos, memories and ideas of how we can pull them together

somehow in a way that helps us all feel connected to the area...

I'm helping Carol and we're both part time but excited to be here and collecting what people feel like sharing with us.

**Joan Robertson**

## How to get involved?

a) Email us on [carolat@peoplesparish@gmail.com](mailto:carolat@peoplesparish@gmail.com) or

[joan@peoplesparish@gmail.com](mailto:joan@peoplesparish@gmail.com)

b) Find us on Facebook and Messenger: [www.facebook.com/RestalrigLochendCraigintinnyPeoplesParishProject](https://www.facebook.com/RestalrigLochendCraigintinnyPeoplesParishProject)

c) Or ask for us or leave a message for us at the Ripple in the Hub. We will be visiting regularly on a Friday or Monday, but we can also give you a ring or meet online if you prefer.

We will arrange some small gatherings and walkabouts later this year, and start turning your stories and memories into the final product, with creative help from others, by summertime!

We can't wait to hear from you, whatever you want to share.

**Carol and Joan**



## Is tennis coaching for you? Then why not come and volunteer with us?

Are you 16-25 years old? Are you interested in tennis? Would you like to coach children?

If you answered yes then we have the perfect little opportunity for you, why not come and support our

basic tennis sessions here at the Ripple, with the opportunity to take part in tennis training and in future gain your Level 1 qualification in tennis.

If you are interested or want more information,

please contact Danielle Ward at [Danielle.ward@theripple.org.uk](mailto:Danielle.ward@theripple.org.uk) or call/text Danielle on 07398 042072.

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# Youth Wellbeing Day Feb 2022

The Ripple's Youth Services Team recently ran their first Youth Wellbeing Day on Saturday 12th February 2022, in partnership with Craigentiny Primary School. The Ripple's Youth Services Team has been delivering an 8-week block of mental health and wellbeing workshops to all

primary 6's and 7's and as part of this we invited them all to our first ever Youth Wellbeing Day.

Young People came along and got the chance to participate in three one-hour workshops, which included mindfulness, graffiti, and African Drumming, as well

as all participants and staff enjoying a healthy balanced hot meal.

Thanks to Edinburgh Community Food for supplying the ingredients for our community food and development worker to prepare for us.

From the feedback we got from the Youth



Wellbeing Day we will look to run another one possibly in summer 2022. So if you are a young person between 10-16yrs old and are interested in being involved in the next Youth Wellbeing Day or

would like to know more, please contact [Danielle.ward@theripple.org.uk](mailto:Danielle.ward@theripple.org.uk) "It was fun learning new things, can we do more please" (young person)

## News from Leith Academy



### New Netball Strips!

Netball! – Our netball club is going from strength to

strength, to support that we have recently got some new strips. Thanks to

our partner / supporter Utilita who worked with us on the strips.



### Our iPad Launch for all pupils!

At the beginning of the year we launched the Edinburgh wide strategy for all children S1 – S6 to

have access to an iPad to enhance their learning experience. At Leith we have had iPads for S4, 5, 6 for several years and fully see the benefits.



Cllr McVey and Cllr Griffiths both joined us for the launch with some of our S1's.

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**0131 672 1537 (a/machine)**



# Local churches' news

## St Margaret's

### Holy Week

#### 11th -15th April

Monday, Tuesday,  
Thursday, Friday

Evening Service 7pm

Wednesday

Afternoon Service 1.30pm

### Easter Sunday Services

Early Morning Service 7am  
Easter Sunday Service  
10.30am

All are welcome to come along and join us in exploring Holy Week and Easter with

the friends and members of St Margaret's Church  
Rev John R Wells

## Christchurch

We were able to keep Sunday services running right throughout the pandemic, either online or in person. But we are pleased that for the past few months things have been back to more like normal. Both our morning and evening services are back (11.00am and 6.00pm), with Sunday School for the children during the morning service. We have to wear masks, unless exempt, and we are a bit more socially distanced, but otherwise it's good to be back. We also have our Prayer Meeting or our Home Groups on

Wednesday evenings. If you're interested in what goes on but are still a bit wary about actually coming in person, our 11.00am service is live-streamed every week on our Facebook page [facebook.com/christchurchedinburgh](https://www.facebook.com/christchurchedinburgh) and the recording is available afterwards. Audio recordings of our evening services are also available on our website [www.christchurchedinburgh.org](http://www.christchurchedinburgh.org) Our ladies Bible-study group has also restarted, though as it doesn't meet every week, please check first if you'd like to attend.

## St Ninian's

### Easter

Lent has begun in preparation for Holy Week culminating in Easter Sunday on 17 April at 10.15 Mass. A week's a long time it's said and it was certainly true for Jesus. From welcomed with palms as the Messiah, He was soon accused of blasphemy, arrested, put on trial, publicly humiliated, sentenced to death and cruelly executed. But that week hadn't ended. He rose from the dead and the scared friends who had deserted Him became fearless in telling the known world about His life and work. Please, you're very welcome to

join us on

- Holy Thursday, 14 April at 7pm. The Last Supper is especially celebrated including Jesus the Master's lesson of washing his disciples' feet.
- Good Friday, 15 April at 3pm. His arrest, trial, stumbling walk of shame under the Cross and death upon it are solemnly remembered.
- Holy Saturday, 16 April at 8pm. From the darkness of death to bright, new life in God is marked with fire, light and water.

### Synod

We've just had parish meetings as our contribution to Pope Francis's Synod for the

whole Church. This is to help the Church further its mission of bringing people to God through Jesus. This includes those who were with us once but, for whatever reason, are not now.

### Men to the Fore!

The Men's Group hope to emerge from the Secret Bunker in Cold War-era Fife next month. In May they are determined to prove capable of organising a trip to an Abbeyhill brewery then some sore heads in June at the Observatory taking in the universe. In July at North Berwick putting green, they hope the white holes will suck in their little spheres.

## Willowbrae Parish Church

At Willowbrae Parish Church our congregational life seems almost like 'normal' except that (at the time of writing) we still have to wear face-coverings inside the building. On Sundays our Morning Worship is at 10.30am. All are very welcome to join us!

Coffee and teas are now allowed again after services, and visitors are warmly invited to join us at that. We have also resumed our Soup Lunches on the first Sunday of the month, with a voluntary donation to a charitable cause – a different one each month.

Our 'Parents and Toddlers group' has resumed on

Thursday mornings from 10am – 12 noon. Our Fellowship Group has also resumed on two Monday afternoons a month at 2pm.

The repair work on our church spire is now completed, so we are able to offer some Hall bookings once more. Enquiries from individuals and groups to rent the Halls are always welcome. To do so, please contact our team of volunteers via email: [halls.willowbrae@gmail.com](mailto:halls.willowbrae@gmail.com) or by leaving a voicemail on our office phone number: 0131 661 8259.

Our minister, Rev Malcolm Ramsay, retires on Easter Sunday, 17 April.

At the time of writing we have not yet finalised the details of our Easter services. Once we have done so, they will be displayed on our website and social media channels. We would love to welcome you to them! Please look for details:

On our website  
[www.willowbraeparishchurch.org/](http://www.willowbraeparishchurch.org/)

On Twitter  
[@willowbraecom](https://twitter.com/willowbraecom)

On Facebook  
[@willowbraeparish](https://www.facebook.com/willowbraeparish)

On Instagram  
[@willowbraeparish](https://www.instagram.com/willowbraeparish)

**St Margaret's Parish Church will be hosting a free Easter Family Craft afternoon on Tuesday 12th April at 2pm – 4.30pm**

**This is an opportunity to learn a new skill and make some gifts for Easter in a fun and friendly environment. Afternoon tea will be provided and both adults and children are welcome.**

**Please do come along and join us at McLaren Halls, 48 Restalrig Road South EH7 6LE**



# Art is everywhere

Are you into arts and crafts? Did you enjoy art at school but haven't had the chance to be creative since? Or maybe you were told you were 'no good at drawing' and this put you off art altogether.

Whatever the answer, Collage – gluing together all kinds of images, words, and materials to make something new – is right for everyone who wants to try something different and create fun and beautiful art, no matter their level of skill.

## Workshops

A six week programme of 'Art is Everywhere' collage workshops, led by illustrator,

Sasha Saben Callaghan, starts at the Ripple on April 2nd from 10.00 -12.45.

These Saturday morning 'family friendly' workshops are suitable for absolute beginners – no previous experience is required!

During each session we will look at the history of collage and Sasha will provide step-by-step demonstrations and guide you through making your own series of collages.

The workshops are free, and all materials are provided but numbers are limited, and prior booking is essential.

To register for the workshops or find out more

about 'Art is Everywhere', please email Sasha at [ArtisEverywhere@gmail.com](mailto:ArtisEverywhere@gmail.com) or drop in at the Ripple for more information.

## World Collage Day

There will also be the opportunity for workshop members to display their creations when we celebrate World Collage Day at the Ripple on Saturday 14th May.

More exciting news about World Collage Day will be coming soon. This event will be a first for Edinburgh so keep your eye out for our posters and future announcements on social media.



# Free on Thursday lunchtime?

Fancy getting out of the house, a bit of exercise and a chat with some new people?

Join us Nordic Walking 1.30 - 2.30pm at Leith Links every Thursday. Phone Rafal Lesniewski on 07377 340 815.

Nordic walking was developed by a Finnish gym teacher so people could use their ski poles in the summer when there was no snow! It's a great form of exercise as when done correctly it uses 98% of your muscles. It's great

for everyone as the poles help push you along and help you balance as they are held behind you.

Our group was started by Rafal (pronounced like a raffle) as he was working 1-1 with older people for the Cyrenians and wanted to open it up to more people. It is funded by Hibernian Football club's community outreach so it is completely free and used to be held in Easter Road before it was shut due to Covid-19 and

moved to the links.

We meet at the Leith side of the links where the paths meet the pavement on Duncan Street just up from the Community Croft. You need to speak to Rafal first to ensure he has enough poles for everyone.

It's great fun and you can go at your own speed depending on your level of fitness or your mood on the day. Please join us!



# The Story Shed

Once upon a time, in a land known as Lochend a youth worker was stood down from his work. It was a hard time for him and all the people around him. So he thought, and thought and thought some more. What can I do to make life a little lighter. He took some lights and a new fangled device known as a tablet down to his shed. He set it all up and recorded stories.

And that my dears is where we are now. The Story Shed has been putting out videos on and off for nearly two years. There are now 130 videos of various tales, to amaze, to make you wonder, and hopefully to make you laugh as well.

Every day we live with stories. We tell our own stories about our lives, we love to hear tales told, as they help us to understand the world. Albert Einstein said "If you want your



children to be intelligent, read them fairy tales. If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairy tales."

But remember these stories are not only for kids. Adults too can enjoy a bit of time being read to, to relax and get away from the bustle of life, if only for a few minutes.

So why not come and join us in your local Story Shed for a tale or two, and maybe you too could write a story for reading on the channel: Storyshedblog – YouTube



# Diet and dementia

## What is Dementia?

Dementia is not a specific disease but is rather a general term for the impaired ability to remember, think, or make decisions that interferes with doing everyday activities. Alzheimer's disease is the most common type of dementia. Though dementia mostly affects older adults, it is not a part of normal aging.

Analysis of the Global burden of Dementia predicts that by 2050, 153 million people will be living with dementia worldwide, up from 57 million in 2019. The numbers for UK are no less frightening and stands at a staggering increase by 75%, from 907,000 in 2019 to 1.6 million by 2050.

The reasons cited for this leap is population growth and ageing population but studies have indicated four common key risk factors – smoking, obesity, high blood sugar and poor education.

Heart disease, diabetes and cancer are scary conditions but at least they don't take away who you are. Alzheimer's is a different beast: it takes away our memories, makes us forget people we love and is a heavy burden for individuals and their families.

We used to think that it's impossible to recover lost or damaged brain cells. But exciting research is starting to uncover why this is not the case. Our brain has the ability to adapt, change, grow new neurons (brain cells) through a concept known as **neuroplasticity**, which means we are not

doomed to become a statistic as we get older. We can start taking steps right now to boost our brain health and prevent the onset and progression of Alzheimer's and dementia.

## Nutrition & Risk of Dementia

The link between diet and brain health is profound. You name it, **Food plays a role**. Depression, anxiety, ADHD, dementia, behaviour problems, violence, or just plain old brain fog are all connected to what we eat.

The relationship between diabetes and dementia is not surprising either. Doctors don't yet understand exactly how cognitive decline and diabetes are connected, but they do know that high blood sugar or insulin can harm the brain in several ways:

- Diabetes raises the risk of heart disease and stroke, which hurt the heart and blood vessels.

Damaged blood vessels in the brain may contribute to cognitive decline.

- The brain depends on many different chemicals, which may be unbalanced by too much insulin. Some of these changes may help trigger cognitive decline.

- High blood sugar causes inflammation. This may damage brain cells and cause dementia to develop.

Most people with diabetes have Type 2 diabetes, which is linked to lack of exercise and being overweight. When diabetes is not controlled, too much sugar remains

in the blood. Over time, this can damage organs, including the brain. Scientists are finding more evidence that could link Type 2 diabetes with Alzheimer's disease.

A little more than two decades of research on nutrition and dementia reveal a strong evidence for preventative measures which can be applied by scaling up low-cost programmes that support healthier diets, more exercise/movement, quitting smoking and better access to education.

The good news is you can still do a lot to protect yourself and your brain by making simple diet and lifestyle changes.

## Eat a brain-healthy diet.

**1. Fat is back** – and our brains couldn't be happier. And this fat is not the processed fat found in biscuits, pastries, muffins or spreads.

Our brains are 60 percent fat, and half of that fat is **omega-3s**. Docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), an omega-3 fat abundant in grey matter, plays a role in memory, learning, and cognition. Sardines, mackerel, anchovies, salmon, and herring are good sources of omega-3s. Eat two servings a week of either of them.

Additionally, monounsaturated fats from olive oil, nuts, seeds, and avocados can boost acetylcholine, a neurotransmitter that plays a role in **memory** and **cognition**. You can also look for medium-chain triglycerides, or MCT oil, a super fat that you can get from coconut oil. MCT is

great for mental clarity and focus.

Nuts and seeds are rich in Vitamin E and omega fats. Do not hesitate to include them in your diet in moderate amounts.

Be mindful to not overboard yourself. Talk to a nutritionist on portion sizes which depends on your age, weight and physical activity.

**2.** In addition to fat, you need **adequate protein** from high-quality sources – foods like wild-caught fish, pasture-raised organic meat, and eggs – and a variety of colourful berries, apples, pears, plums and other fruits, dark green leafy vegetables for their phytochemicals and fiber. These types of foods feed our good gut bacteria, strengthen our intestinal barrier, and help lower inflammation. Remember to cook with spices like rosemary, turmeric, and oregano, too, for their amazing disease-fighting benefits.

**3. Movement.** Exercise boosts nitric oxide, a molecule that enhances blood flow and promotes neuroplasticity by producing brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), which is essentially "miracle grow" for your brain. BDNF supports the connection and growth of new neurons. The best exercise is any type of movement you enjoy, like a 30-minute walk, riding your bike, yoga, hiking, digging in your garden, dancing, or playing with your grandchildren. Don't be afraid to make it fun!

**4. Stress management.** Did you know that stress can actually shrink your



**Ayesha Mir**  
M.Sc Nutrition and Dietetics) CNHC, mBANT

brain? Cortisol, our stress hormone, binds to receptors on the hippocampus, the region of the brain that's responsible for memory, and wears it down. That's why stress management is so important. Journaling, mindful meditation, exercise, or working with a therapist can help you find ways to better manage your stress.

**5. Sleep.** You can't underestimate the power of a good night's sleep. Sleep is critical as we age, because so much happens – and needs to happen – while we're at rest. Our immune system is hard at work at night recharging, repairing, and clearing away damaged DNA and cells. The glymphatic system (our brain's immune system) does the same thing, plus it helps get rid of neurotoxic waste like amyloid-beta plaques that gunk up our brain and cause inflammation. It's critical to establish a bedtime routine for yourself, just like parents do for a young child.



# Playlists for life

## Homemade vegetarian chili

### Ingredients

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil  
 1 medium red onion, chopped  
 1 large red bell pepper, chopped  
 2 medium carrots, chopped  
 2 ribs celery, chopped  
 ½ teaspoon salt  
 4 cloves garlic, pressed or minced  
 2 tablespoons chilli powder  
 2 teaspoons ground cumin  
 1 ½ teaspoons smoked paprika  
 1 teaspoon dried oregano  
 4 large vine tomatoes, chopped  
 2 cans black beans, rinsed and drained  
 1 can pinto beans, rinsed and drained  
 2 cups water  
 1 bay leaf  
 2 tablespoons chopped fresh coriander, for garnishing  
 1 to 2 teaspoons sherry vinegar or red wine vinegar or lime juice, to taste  
 Garnishes: chopped coriander, sliced avocado, sour cream or crème fraîche, grated cheddar cheese

### Instructions

1. In a heavy-bottomed pot over medium heat, warm the olive oil. Add the chopped onion, bell pepper, carrot, celery and ¼ teaspoon of the salt. Stir to combine and cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are tender and the onion is translucent, about 7 to 10 minutes.
2. Add the garlic, chilli powder, cumin, smoked paprika and oregano. Cook until fragrant while stirring constantly, about 1 minute.
3. Add the diced tomatoes and their juices, the drained black beans and pinto beans, water and bay leaf. Stir to combine and let the mixture come to a simmer. Continue cooking, stirring occasionally and reducing heat as necessary to maintain a gentle simmer, for 30 minutes.
4. Mash a quarter of chili for a creamier texture
5. Add the chopped coriander, and vinegar or lime juice, to taste. Taste and add salt as needed.
6. Divide the mixture into individual bowls and serve with garnishes of your choice. Serve with Brown rice or Quinoa. This chili will keep well in the refrigerator for about 4 days or you can freeze it for longer-term storage.



The Ripple Friday Club was delighted to welcome Ela and Peter from Playlist for Life for an afternoon session of music and memories. Our members chose 8 songs as their Desert Island Discs and each castaway told the group a bit of the story behind their choices. We heard lots of great stories and songs, often very emotional, which

had us singing and dancing together.

Playlist for Life is a charity founded in 2013 by writer and broadcaster Sally Magnusson aimed at helping people living with dementia and their family, friends and carers connect through music which is personally meaningful. The charity provides lots of ideas and resources on its website – [www.playlistforlife.org.uk](http://www.playlistforlife.org.uk) – to help organisations and individuals use music to spark memories and positive emotional

reactions. With the support of Ela and Peter our volunteers will learn to run these sessions for our club. While the Friday Club is not a dementia group our members have enjoyed sharing memories, some long forgotten, and we have since delved into TV themes and Christmas tunes.

The Friday Club is a social and activities club run by local people for local people 65+. To find out more just come in and meet us on any non-trip weeks.

**the ripple**  
**FRIDAY CLUB MUSICAL AFTERNOON**  
 Your local social and activities club for people 65+  
**LIVE MUSIC**  
**FRIDAY 3RD JUNE**  
 1pm start  
**Harry & Ian**  
 Two musical rouges!  
 Restalrig Lochend Community Hub  
 198 Restalrig Road South  
 Edin. EH7 6DZ  
 £1 towards refreshments.  
 Just pop in and join us for a fun afternoon of golden oldies, laughs and tea!

**DIXIE SALTIRES**  
 With Sandra Craig  
 BWDA Line Dancing Instructor  
**Absolute Beginners.**  
 An introduction to the basic line dance steps through easy to learn dances, while having fun!  
 Wear comfortable shoes and bring a drink.  
**Thursdays 10am – 11am**  
**5 week block – £15**  
 Advanced booking and full payment required.  
**21st July to 18th August**  
 To book contact Sandra 07970389505  
 or e mail [craig-Sandra@sky.com](mailto:craig-Sandra@sky.com)  
**Restalrig Lochend Community Hub**  
**198 Restalrig Road South, EH7 6DZ**

**EXERCISE FOR ALL**  
 FUN DANCE MOVES TO UP-BEAT MUSIC  
 HAND WEIGHT EXERCISES  
 NO BOOKING REQUIRED  
 £3 PER CLASS  
**WEDNESDAYS 10AM TO 10.45AM**  
**RESTALRIG LOCHEND COMMUNITY HUB**  
**198 RESTALRIG ROAD SOUTH**  
**EDINB. EH7 6DZ**

**Healthy Hub Walkers**  
 Restalrig Lochend Community Hub  
 198 Restalrig Road South, EH7 6DZ  
**2 WALKS EVERY THURSDAY**  
 9.15am brisk pace  
 10am gentle pace  
 Your first step to getting more active. Walk together and get some fresh air in good company.  
**FREE, no booking required.**  
 Tea/coffee and lots of chat in the Hub after.  
**Just pop in and join us!**  
 paths for all  
[www.rippleproject.org.uk](http://www.rippleproject.org.uk)  
 Twitter @ripplerestalrig  
 the ripple

**Restalrig Lochend Community Hub**

(closed Friday 15 and Monday 18 April)

198 Restalrig Road South, Edinburgh  
0131 554 0422

Regular programme of activities

A Hub of activity you can join in with

**Politicians' Surgeries****Tommy Sheppard MP**

Friday 1pm – 2pm

1 April

6 May

3 June

**Cllr Joan Griffiths**

Friday 12pm – 1pm

29 April

27 May

24 June

**Ash Regan MSP**

Friday 12pm – 1pm

8 April

13 May

10 June

**Hub Grub Café (Closed 15 and 18 April)**

Open Monday – Friday 10am – 1.30pm.

Our community café offers tasty, affordable homemade food, hot and cold drinks and somewhere sociable for you to meet and eat. Free internet access for café customers.

**Lunch Club for Older People****(Closed 15 and 18 April)**

Monday – Friday 11.30am. Advance booking required. 65+, £4.50 per day. Two delicious and nutritious courses, plus tea/coffee and biscuits. Limited door-to-door transport available in Restalrig/Lochend/Craigentinny areas. For more information or to book call 0131 554 0422.

**Monday****HOP Community Shop (closed 18 April)**

Monday to Friday 9am to 11am and 1pm to 3pm Local people selling handmade crafts, gifts and printed tee-shirts alongside a pay-what-you-can pre-loved items shop.

**Dixie Saltires Line Dancing (closed 18 April)**£3 per week. Wear comfortable shoes.  
10am – 11am Beginners (class FULL)  
11.30am – 12.30pm Improvers. Spaces available for dancers with some experience.**Yoga (closed 18 April)**

1.30pm – 2.30pm.

Please call 07510 521759 to enrol.

**The Likely Lads Men's Social Group (closed 18 April)**

Run by local men for local men.

An opportunity to talk about how your week went. Regular trips. 3pm – 4pm. Call 07547 794604 for membership details.

**Catch Your Breath Group for people living with long term lung conditions**

Drop in information meetings 14 March, 11 April and 16 May.

2pm to 4pm. For more information call Frances McLennan 07479 284330 or email [breatheeasy@theripple.org.uk](mailto:breatheeasy@theripple.org.uk)**Knitting Network**

2pm – 3.30pm.

50p per session for tea, coffee and biscuits. All ages and abilities welcome. We have wool and needles to get you started. Just drop in.

**Exercise for Everyone**

10am – 10.45am. £3 per class. Suitable for men and women of all ages. Just turn up.

**Seated Exercise**

11am – 11.45am. £3. Just turn up. Chair based exercise for all ages.

**Tuesday****Wednesday****Thursday****Boxercise for Beginners** 6.30pm – 7.30pm. Boxing moves combined with circuit training. Suitable for beginners. No booking required. £5 per class or £25 for block of 6 sessions. For more information call 07814 847755.**Cyrenians Pantry**

Affordable high quality food.

Held fortnightly 10am to 11am £2 for 10 items. Membership required, contact Michelle 0131 554 390. Dates 9 &amp; 23 March, 6 &amp; 20 April, 4 &amp; 18 May.

**Wednesday Market** 10am – 1pm.

Fresh fruit and veg sold at cost price to us and supporting local enterprise Edinburgh Community Food. Weekly, open to all.

**Yoga** 4.45pm – 6.45pm.

Please call 07510 521759 to enrol.

**Healthy Hub Walking Group**

Half-hour walks 9.15am and 10am start. Gather at the Hub and join in on our free Thursday walks to meet new friends, improve your fitness and discover local landscapes and places of interest.

**Lochend Seniors Computer Group**

50+ computer support. 2pm to 4pm £1 per week. NEW 6 week rolling programme. No booking required, just come on the day. Bring your own device or laptop.

**Restalrig Benefits Advice**

Provided by Granton Information Centre. Call 0131 551 2459 for an appointment.

**Friday Club 65+ (closed 15 April)**Your local social/activities club 1pm – 3pm.  
25 Mar Poetry Slam!

1 April What gets on yer goat?

8 Easter bonnets, old photo memories

29 Bingo Café

13 May Indoor curling and skittles

27 Crafty Aft in the Hub

Sorry, all current trips are full. Above weeks no booking required, just pop in and join us. £1 for tea/coffee.