



Bridge of Don Community Council Newsletter – Summer 2022

Welcome to the Summer issue of the Bridge of Don Community Council Newsletter. It's been a while since we've felt in a position to publish one of these, but after a difficult couple of years, we're pleased to be able to provide some updates on what's been happening locally. We've also got some information from other groups which are returning to normal operation, and are keen to welcome folks along. The community council continued to meet over the past two years, albeit over Zoom, which was a bit of a challenge, especially in the early days, and we did manage a couple of face-to-face meetings at the end of last year. We're really pleased that as of last month we were able to resume our normal meetings at Scotstown Primary, and hope that that will continue after the summer holidays.

Despite mostly not being able to meet in person, we did manage to arrange the Christmas lights on the Bridge the past two Christmases, as well as a Christmas tree in the grounds of the Scotstown Medical Centre. Although we couldn't do it for the Christmas of 2020, we did again buy Christmas crackers for the primary schools last Christmas (and gave money for Christmas funds to the schools that weren't able to accept crackers). The flower baskets still went up on the Bridge to provide some much-needed colour. Although we didn't ask for donations in 2020, a huge thank you to everyone who gave donations last year that allowed us to fund these.

We decided this year to try a Living Christmas Tree that we could decorate each year, so in the spring we paid the council to plant a Norwegian Spruce for us in Westfield Park. Unfortunately it didn't fare too well, and then was vandalised and pulled up. However, we will be looking to replant a new one in the autumn, so still plan to have some festive lights and baubles – keep an eye on our Facebook page round about October/November for an update.

Men's Shed



Bridge of Don and District Men's Shed is situated within the Old Guardhouse, Gordon Barracks, Corunna Road and is free to join for all Men between 18 and 118 !! We are a very friendly, helpful bunch of Guys and new members are always welcome into our Men's Shed. Here you can work on jobs of your own, or assist with constructing projects, to generate an income to help run our Shed.

We are a registered Charity and a member of the SMSA (Scottish Men's Shed Association) and offer facilities to our Men, such as a wood working shop with a wood turning lathe, jig saws and bench drills, to name but a few of the pieces of equipment in the shop.

In our second workshop, we have a metal turning lathe and a huge variety of hand and electrical tools. We have been very busy constructing flower planters, garden benches, bird boxes and bug hotels for the local Community Councils, Schools, Nurseries and Customers.

The facilities inside the Men's Shed are focused more on the social side of things, with a pool table, darts board, jigsaws, dominoes, and arts and crafts areas, plus a quiet space, to have a cup of coffee and look out the windows towards the Gordon Barracks. On Fridays, the Men can choose from bacon, eggs, black pudding and sausage butties.



Unfortunately, Covid-19 put a sudden stop to all our projects, but thankfully, having been fully vaccinated and come out of the pandemic, our Men are again picking up from where we were pre-Covid.

We have been extremely fortunate in having had support from several local Companies and Organisations. Through Asda Middleton Park's green token scheme, we were able to purchase a belt sander and they also contributed towards our Cancer Support Coffee Morning. M & S, Denmore Road, also contributed cakes etc. for our Coffee Morning and allowed us to assist in Bag Packs, to generate funds. The following have also been of great support to us - Aberdeen University Students, NHS Grampian, Apache, Aberdeen City Council, CNOOC, Enquest. Without their support, it would have not have been possible for our Men's Shed to survive.



A new venture for our Men's Shed started in September last year - a monthly Farmers Market, held on the **third Saturday of the month**, in our car park in front of the Shed. The attraction of the Market is, it is all '**local Traders**', selling locally sourced and produced food, such as bread, tray bakes, fish, meat, cheese, sauces and wood fired pizzas. Ample car parking is available opposite from our Men's Shed, on the Parade Ground, Gordon Barracks, for only a donation of £1.00 or more to cover our costs.

So why not come along and support our next Farmers Market on 16th July?

An awful lot of exciting things are happening in our Men's Shed, so if you think this is where your hubby, father, brother or mate should hang out for a few hours a week, get him joined up, he'll never regret it!

<https://www.facebook.com/BridgeofDonMensShed/>

bodanddmensshed@aol.com



Hermes Bridge of Don



At Hermes Bridge of Don we have been working really hard this last 15 months to create a youth football club that the community can be proud of. We currently have 10 teams in the boys' juvenile section ranging from u18's to u6's. We also have a girls' section that has two teams, which is growing. We have also set up Aberdeen's only Para football team that currently sits at 22 players and counting.

Our aim going forward is to continue to grow but also embed ourselves within the community and offer support and any help we can to all local groups. This isn't just a club for the people attached to it but one that the whole of Bridge of Don can be a part of. We strive to offer football to anyone who loves the game no matter gender, ethnicity or ability.

Without the dedication and hard work of our 64 volunteers who fill various positions within the club we would not have achieved what we have in such a short space of time. The help we got in the beginning from Friends of Westfield Park, BoD Community Council and Councillor Sarah Cross undoubtedly had a big impact on our success. It truly shows what a good community spirit can achieve.

We have recently signed a lease to use and develop the football pitches at Upper Westfield. This is a work in progress but we intend to make what was once a virtually unused area a home for our football club.

We'd love to hear from anyone who wants to join or get involved in any way. You can find out more and keep up to date with our training and matches via any of our social media sites:

<https://www.facebook.com/HermesBoDYouth/>

https://instagram.com/hermes_bod_yfc?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=

https://twitter.com/hermes_bod_yfc?s=21&t=mtuKQB9tIMJnveLb2m39Ww



Better Bridge of Don

Back in early 2020, the community council hosted an 'open evening' where we invited local community groups, churches, schools etc. to get together to see how we could perhaps work together to achieve things that would improve the Bridge of Don that no one group could do on its own. There was a good turnout and people were really interested, but then of course we were unable to progress for the rest of the year. We revisited this again last year, and again got some interest, not as much as the previous year, but enough to get the ball rolling. We pulled together a questionnaire which was posted on various groups' Facebook, Twitter and websites, asking the community what they would like to see change or happen within Bridge of Don.



A subgroup, to be known as Better Bridge of Don, was pulled together to organise the first joint project – The Christmas Big Light Switch On Event 2021. It was a tremendous success and enjoyed by many in our local community. Held on the grounds beside St Columba's Church, many Bridge of Don residents enjoyed listening to the Granite City Brass band and carol singers from local churches, whilst children eagerly participated in a pop-up nativity. The tree lights were switched on by Aberdeen footballer Calvin Ramsay and free hot chocolate and biscuits provided by local shops and community groups helped to keep us all warm on a wintery December afternoon.

The Better Bridge of Don team was overwhelmed by the community support and spirit for this event. Everything we needed to run the event was generously donated by local groups, individuals, churches and companies and it was supported on the day by a team of 83 volunteers – just amazing!

Feedback from the community has been very positive and folk are keen to come along to a similar Christmas event this year. The Better Bridge of Don Group would love to organise such an event but we need help to do this. Could you help??? You don't need any particular skills, just be willing to 'muck-in' and work with a group of volunteers to plan, fundraise, market and organise something Christmassy! If you would like to find out more, please email us.



It's not just all about Christmas though - the Better Bridge of Don group are folk who want to make our community better and give something back. We are an enthusiastic bunch, and the networking of various different types of community organisations has been very useful as there is always someone who knows someone who can help. We'd love to have more people involved so that we can achieve more, so if you are part of any group within the area, be it through a school, church, sports team, lunch club, walking group, knitting class, or toddler or pensioner get-together –

or in fact anything at all – please get in touch. You don't even have to be part of a group– we'd also love to hear from anyone who would like to get involved. It's a great way to meet people and we'd be delighted to hear from you.

<https://www.facebook.com/BetterBridgeofDon>

abetterbridgeofdon@gmail.com

Green Fingers?



We have continued to plant up and maintain planters throughout the Bridge of Don, and we're delighted that some new ones have been adopted by local businesses and residents to look after, including The Barber's Pole (Ellon Road), All Design (Balgownie Road) and Tom in Seaview Park (thanks as always to the Men's Shed for building the planters for us). Tom has also started a Community Garden at Seaview, which we were delighted to help get started, and many thanks to the council for providing him with his first two raised beds. His tatties are now coming along a storm along with the other veggies and flowers that went in in April. If anyone would be interested in helping Tom, please contact us and we'll put you in

touch. And if anyone is keen to have a planter in your area, please let us know – the community council is happy to fund a planter, compost and plants – all you need to do is plant it up, water it, and look after it!



We also got 2,000 crocus bulbs from the council last autumn, some of which we put in the planters for some spring colour, and some of which were planted along Jesmond Drive, up towards Woodcroft Road. We got some spare daffodil bulbs from the council too which had been allocated to the Winter Gardens last year, but since it wasn't able to open, they couldn't really use. We planted them on Jesmond Drive too, by Newburgh Drive (we won't be making the mistake of trying to plant

bulbs in amongst trees next time – very tough digging!) earlier this year, and were delighted that everything came up. We are hoping to get more bulbs from the council this autumn, and would welcome ideas about where to plant them, and especially offers of help when the time comes to plant them!



The flower baskets are back up on the Bridge of Don – we were especially pleased to be awarded some money earlier this year from the council's Coastal Community Fund which will fund not just them this summer, but also the Christmas Lights that we put up along the Bridge.

With summer just about here (hopefully!) we are delighted to announce that we have restarted the Bridge of Don Gardening Competition. See below for details.



Bridge of Don Gardening Competition



This summer, we're giving you the opportunity to show off your garden. No matter how big or small, if you can grow plants, you can take part!

There will be three categories – you can enter all of them if you want.



Garden displays – For gardens which add colour and interest to your street and surrounding area (must be visible from the pavement).

Fruit & veg garden – The most productive, innovative or attractive veggie patch, bed, or pot.



Tallest sunflower – One for the young (at heart). How high can you grow yours?

You'll need to email us up to three photographs for each category you want to enter by July 17th. Judging will take place between then and August 7th – we may come and visit your garden, but we'll let you know beforehand if so.

For more details and application information, go to <https://bridgeofdoncommunitycouncil.org.uk/>, email us on bodccevents@gmail.com, or scan the QR code.



Rotary in Bridge of Don

Who are we, what do we do?

For starters, we are not a secret society! Most of our weekly meetings are held in the conservatory of the Mains of Scotstown Inn, in full view of the other customers and the nearest we come to any arcane ceremonies are toasts to The Queen and to the world-wide association that is Rotary International.

During our meetings we enjoy a meal and the company of our fellow members while we discuss our various activities; social events, community service projects, sporting competitions and charity fundraising activities. On occasion we have speakers, usually informative, sometimes amusing, and often both. And sometimes we go on outside visits to nearby places of interest.

We no longer have an attendance rule. Unlike the early days of Rotary, members are not under an obligation to attend a minimum percentage of meetings. Nor is there a dress code. Occasionally there may be a social event, for example the upcoming thirtieth anniversary of our charter, when the ladies will put on their finery and the men may wear black tie, but even that will be optional.

Membership is not limited to the movers and shakers in the community. That was the case in the old days when business proprietors, managers and senior partners were invited to become Rotarians. Not any more. Our membership is drawn from all walks of life and from all ethnic identities.

Here are snapshots of some of our activities to date. We hope, as the limitations imposed by the pandemic ease, to return to many more such in the years to come.



1. Sponsored walk re-enacting a cattle drove over the heritage path called The Fungie. Sponsorship funds raised for the homeless.
2. KIDS OUT, a fun day out for children of special needs; games, rides and activities provided.
3. Helping the Friends of Westfield Park to remove worn-out fencing.
4. Conference at Aviemore in company with fellow Rotarians from other clubs in Scotland.



5. Competition at Curl Aberdeen.
6. A potentially life-saving defibrillator installed at the Co Op. Our Rotary club provided funds and the First Responders accomplished the installation.
7. Primary School Quiz, organised annually with all our local schools participating.
8. Annual tournament at Carnoustie, since moved to Gleneagles.

If you'd like to join us, or would just like a bit more information, please contact us via Facebook or drop us an email:

<https://www.facebook.com/Balgownie-Rotary-club-104811738882615>

rcabalgownie@gmail.com

River Don Heritage Trail

About eighteen months ago Danestone Community Council approached the Aberdeen City Council Environmental Services team about an idea that they had developed with the Aberdeen Women's Alliance to develop a series of interpretation panels to raise the profile of the fascinating history and heritage of their areas and particularly the significant role of women in this history.

Countryside Officer Ian Talboys was asked to take on the project and suggested extending the area covered to take in the whole length of the River Don from Persley Bridge to Donmouth as there had been interest from some of the other areas to interpret the heritage of the area. Ian approached the other community councils, community and residents' groups along the Don to see if they wanted to be a part of the project and they all were keen to get involved. The project brought together the Danestone Community Council, Aberdeen Women's Alliance, Woodside Community Council, Aberdeen Community Energy, Tillydrone Community Council, Friends of Seaton Park, Bridge of Don Community Council and the Donmouth Local Nature Reserve Committee.



Each group was asked to contribute content for the nine interpretation panels at locations agreed amongst all the groups. The added challenge was that this was all done during the Covid-19 lockdown, so all the meetings were online, and information shared by email.

Once the project scope had been agreed, the next challenge was to find the funding to deliver the project which was expected to be between £15,000-£20,000. Some funding was made available from the Crown Estate Coastal Communities Fund and a successful application was made to the Suez Community Trust for the remainder of the funds needed. This process took about five months to complete. Once the funding was in place contracts could be let for the construction of the cairns for the panels.

While the funding was being sourced the Councils Media Team started to develop the designs for the panels which took a few drafts to get to the final designs to get the correct content agreed with the groups and relevant to the locations and in a format that was accessible to as many as possible. The groups were also responsible for identifying as many of the potential historical images for the panels, some from online sources, others from personal contacts. Many fascinating stories were uncovered and even contact with some of the last mill workers from the Grandholm Mill who had many memories of working in the mills.



By early May 2022 the designs were all complete and were sent off to get the panels manufactured and then installed at the end of May with the assistance of the Countryside Ranger Service.

Ian Talboys said “this was a project that came from, and was developed by, the local community with support from the Council teams to bring the groups together and deliver something of interest to the local communities and visitors, as well as recording many memories and local knowledge that could otherwise be lost. Even though I retired part way through the project I was keen to see the project through and so volunteered to continue with the project through to completion.

Thanks to all the groups and individuals who helped bring this project to completion.”

An official launch event is planned for the River Don Heritage Trail later in the summer.

Many thanks to Ian for not only continuing to work on this project after retirement, but also writing this piece for us!

Friends of Westfield Park

The Friends are a small but enthusiastic group of volunteers who help look after and make improvements to Westfield Park in Bridge of Don. They work closely with Aberdeen City Council, the local community, local schools and a range of other partners to make sure our park is a space for all to enjoy.

Westfield Park is the largest community green space in Bridge of Don, but many local people don't know about it or how lovely it is. The Friends hope to change that a little at a time by promoting the park and holding community sessions and events that everyone is welcome to come along to.

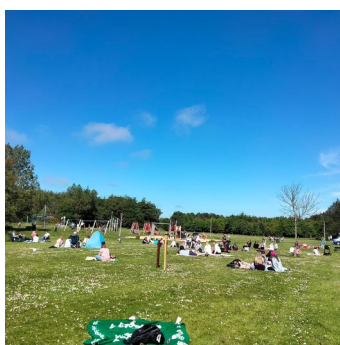
Although the Friends were limited in what they could do at the start of the pandemic, as soon as it was safe to do so, they were back out in the park – there's always plenty outside to be doing! Apart from the general maintenance tasks of litter picking, bench painting and removing the broken-down fencing (and there's a lot of that), there were new projects. A new wildflower meadow area was cleared and planted, and the original one had some of the more virulent weeds dug out and new planting done. Several public sessions were held to dig, rake and sow, and many thanks to everyone who came along to help. There will be more sessions held, so keep an eye on the Friends' Facebook page if you fancy a bit of fresh air and exercise.



One of the highlights of last year was the creation of a rubbing plaque nature trail which features some of the species that call Westfield Park home. The trail is made up of 17 wooden posts with plaques that you can create a rubbing from. There's also a QR code on each post which you can scan to find out more information about each bird, animal, tree or flower – give it a try on the one shown here. There's a map showing the location of the posts on the Friends' website at <https://www.friendsofwestfieldpark.co.uk/rubbing-plaque> but only 16 of the 17 posts are shown – you'll need to do a bit more exploring to find the last one!



Several other events have been held, including a couple of spooky campfire tales evenings last Halloween. These were extremely popular, even though the weather was, to be honest, less than ideal! But with a move into the Scout hut



(always best to plan for all eventualities when dealing with Scottish weather) everyone managed to stay dry and have a great time. More recently, the Park hosted a Queen's jubilee picnic, organised by the Better Bridge of Don group, complete with Mr Whippy ice cream van, and thankfully the weather was a lot nicer! Plans for the future include a complete revamp of the skatepark (a separate group has now spun off from the Friends, but with several of its members still involved, to concentrate on this), and the creation of a sensory garden in a quieter area of the park. You can find out more about these, and the other projects on the go, on Facebook or the Friends' website. Anyone who is interested in joining, or just wants to come along for a chat or to help out is very welcome.

<https://www.facebook.com/WestfieldParkBOD>

<https://www.friendsofwestfieldpark.co.uk/>

Bridge of Don Library

News from Aberdeen City Libraries

Bridge of Don Library Is Open

We look forward to seeing you over the summer



Our current opening hours are Monday and Wednesday 10am-7pm, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 10am-5pm and Saturday 10am-1pm, 2pm-5pm. Visit <https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/libraries-and-archives/find-your-local-library> for information on our other libraries.



This summer, Aberdeen City Libraries is challenging you to take part in our Aberdeen Reads Challenge: The World Tour.

Help us send Library Bear around the World this summer by earning "bear miles" for every book read or challenge completed. Can you help us get Library Bear all the way round the world and home again before the summer ends?

The more books you read or challenges you complete; the further Library Bear can travel!

Running from Saturday 25 June until Saturday 27 August, this challenge is open to people of all ages, so get family and friends involved and encourage each other to keep reading over the summer and help us send Library Bear on his holidays!

For more details visit www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/AberdeenReads



Our Bookbug team is reintroducing our popular in-person sessions. To make sure that these are run as safely as possible, we are hosting smaller sessions across the city. Spaces are extremely limited, and booking is essential. Bookbug sessions at Bridge of Don library are held fortnightly on a Thursday morning and monthly on a Monday afternoon. Look out for details on our Facebook page or check with the library.

Visitors to the library can browse and borrow items. We offer books (including large print and audio books) and Junior and Adult DVDs. Borrowers can also request items, subject to availability.

If you know anyone who would be interested in borrowing library items but are unable to visit the library due to disability, illness, shielding or caring responsibilities, give us a call and we'll let you know about our Home Library Service where we deliver the items to them every 4 weeks.

We offer up to two hours per day of PC access. These slots can be booked online at <https://pcbookings.aberdeencity.gov.uk/netloan> or by contacting the library directly. We also offer printing services and have photocopying and scanner facilities.

Visit: www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/library for information on our online services.

We are always delighted to meet new faces. For more information on how to become a member, please visit our website or contact your local library.

For information on our services, please visit www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/libraries or contact Bridge of Don Library by email: BridgeOfDonLibrary@aberdeencity.gov.uk or telephone: 01224 702800. Our events are publicised on our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Bridge-Of-Don-Library/382043239021534>

Oldmachar Church



We have our services every week at 10.30am including a Children's Club and the following activities during the week:

Tuesday - 9.30 - 11.30 am Kids & Co (Toddlers group)

7.15 - 7.45pm Prayer Group meeting on zoom

Wednesday - 9.30-10.30am Little Jammers (Pre-schoolers and parents/guardians)

7.30pm - 8.30pm Bible Study meeting on zoom

Friday 9.30 - 11.30 am Friday café (fortnightly on week 1 and week 3 monthly)

Whilst the summer is coming up and some of these activities close down for the holidays, please keep an eye on our Facebook page for more details! We are a welcoming church to all – we'd love to include you!

<https://www.facebook.com/oldmacharchurchpage>

<https://www.oldmacharchurch.org/>

Councillors

The council elections were held recently - there are four Aberdeen City Council councillors who represent the Bridge of Don area and who are available to help with your queries and issues. Their details are given below:

Nurul Hoque Ali	Alison Alphonse	Sarah Cross	Jessica Mennie
Phone: 01224 013903 nhali@aberdeencity.gov.uk	Phone: 01224 346628 Mobile: 07551 135788 aalphonse@aberdeencity.gov.uk	Phone: 01224 346626 scross@aberdeencity.gov.uk	Phone: 01224 346625 Mobile: 07970 065055 jemennie@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Surgeries are not currently being held – email councillors directly if you need information or assistance

About us

The Bridge of Don Community Council needs your input! Primarily, we're here to represent the local community in dealings with local authorities and to work with our local councillors, MPs, officials, the police and others to tackle the local issues that concern you. We want to make the Bridge of Don an excellent place to live, to encourage the feeling of belonging and to facilitate activities which promote the well-being of the community. But we need more people to get involved, to tell us what's needed, bring in new ideas, or just let us know what's going on.

You don't have to join the community council (although you'd be very welcome): please contact us or come along to some of our monthly meetings if you have any concerns, information you want to share, things you think we should be doing, or just to listen in to what's going on. You don't have to do, or even say anything (unless you want to) – now that physical meetings are back on, we want to open them up to members of the public again, but please contact

us if you plan on coming along, just so we can keep track of numbers. Details of meetings are on our website, and we put up information we think will be useful there and on our Facebook page. The latest community council elections were last October (they're held every three years). There are 12 members out of a possible 20 allowed for the Bridge of Don, so if anyone is interested, please get in touch, as we can add more members in between elections. You can see information about community councils, including the Bridge of Don members, at <https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/council-and-democracy/community-councils>

Our next newsletter will be out in November, where we plan to have a round up of forthcoming Christmas festivities. So please get in touch if you have anything you'd like to share, or would just like to comment on anything. You can contact us via email at bodccsec@btinternet.com If any local businesses are interested in advertising, just drop us a line.

Next community council meeting dates: August 16th, September 20th, October 18th

Contact us:

Email: bodccsec@btinternet.com

Web: <https://bridgeofdoncommunitycouncil.org.uk/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BridgeOfDonCommunityCouncil/>

