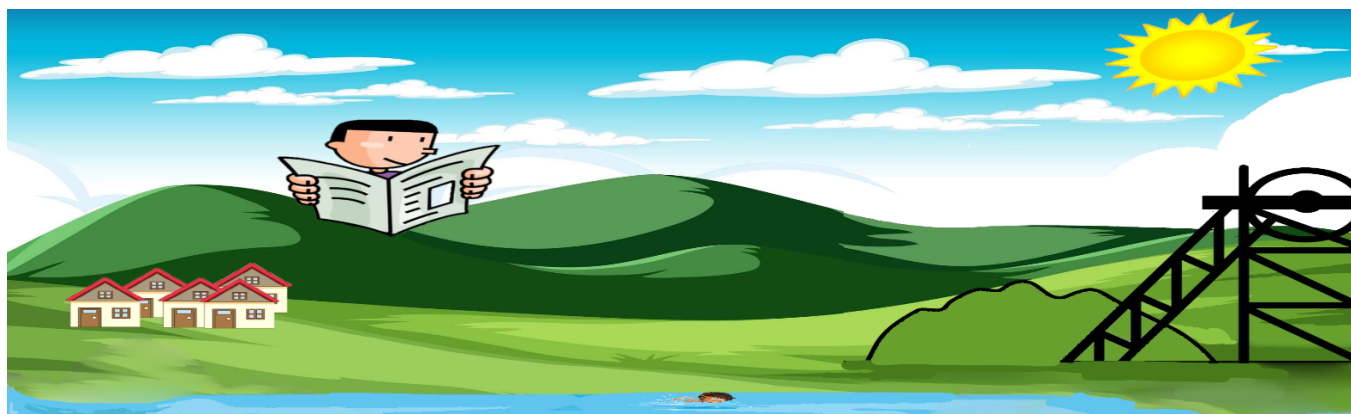


THE BENARTY COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Issue 3: Summer 2023



!!! Mason Wakes the Sleeping Giant !!!

We are delighted to announce that Mason Thomson, age 10, from Benarty Primary School, is the winner of our logo competition!

The entries we received were nothing short of amazing, showing again the depth of talent coming through in our schools, and the final decision was a very hard one to make. All the children did really well.

Mason won because his was the most original idea, in our opinion, and the only one to use the sleeping giant as the main theme for his design, with the Meedies loch and the Mary Pithead frame, in the forefront. All iconic places in Benarty.

We did take a slight liberty with Mason's design, in that he had the giant awake, giving us all in Benarty a cheery smile and a thumbs-up. We edited the design to show the giant reading the Newsletter. We did clear the change with Mason in advance though!

Mason was given a £25 Amazon voucher for winning the logo competition. Well done Mason! We love the new logo, which will now feature on every edition of the Newsletter.



Mason receiving his gift voucher in the Assembly Hall at Benarty Primary School.

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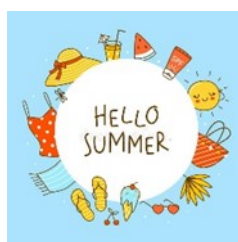
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Benarty Community Council





Benarty Events Group



This group barely needs an introduction, as this is the group that's responsible for putting on the most eagerly awaited, and biggest events in our community; namely the Pipe Band & Highland Dancing Competitions and the Gala in June; the Rockore Music Festival in August; and the Santa Parade & Christmas Fayre in December.

The Benarty Events Group (BEG) are also responsible for the Companions' Club, which meets every Friday in the Benarty Centre in Ballingry.

As if that wasn't enough, the group also pay to send every primary school child in the community to a Pantomime in December; have bought and put up all the Christmas lights around our villages; and make an annual donation to the Benarty Santa Appeal to pay for selection boxes so that no child goes without. This year, the group also donated easter eggs to the Easter Egg Giveaway event that was organised by the Fairy Wood Group.

During Gala week, it's BEG who buy, and put up, all the bunting through the main streets; and sponsor a Darts tournament; Pool tournament; Putting Competition and Bowling Competition. They've also been known to organise a Pub Quiz during Gala week too.

The group was formed specifically to take over the organising and planning for the Benarty Gala and they are now in their 10th year of operation. Almost every year since their formation, a new event has been added to the calendar, the latest being the Companions' Club, or an existing event made bigger, and the events go from strength to strength.

With the exception of Rockore, all events are either free, or very heavily subsidised by BEG so that our local community gets all the benefit.

Tickets are now on sale for both the Gala and for Rockore 2023. (Note: Since writing this article, Rockore tickets have sold out.)

<u>Benarty Events Group – Summer Events 2023</u>	
Pipe Band & Highland Dancing Competitions	Saturday 17 th June
Gala	Sunday 25 th June
Rockore Music Festival	Saturday 19 th August

All the above events are being held in Lochore Meadows Country Park.

Pipe Band & Highland Dancing Competitions



Entry, for the public, to the Pipe Band & Highland Dancing Competitions is free. Just come down, bring a picnic & a chair or a blanket to sit on, and enjoy the spectacle.

As well as the amazing performances from the Pipe Bands and the Highland Dancers, there will be a few stalls, so bring some money with you to



make a few purchases & help some of the charity/not-for-profit groups and local businesses who have the stalls.

There will also be a few food vendors for those who don't want to bring their own food & drink.

This event also has a limited bar available.

It's a lovely day out... music, dancing, beautiful setting, family friends.. Enjoy!

Gala

Entry to the events field for the Gala is also free. However, you need to buy a ticket (£3 each) if you want a Gala Box, which typically includes a Baynes pie, biscuits & crisps. You'll also get a soft drink and a wristband for most of the fairground rides.

If you don't want to buy a gala box, then wristbands (subject to availability) will be on sale on the day for £7 each. You can't get on the fairground rides without a wristband – so why wouldn't you just buy a ticket which covers it?! An absolute bargain!

The entertainment at the Gala is second to none, compared to other galas around, and it's all provided free of charge.



There will also be stalls and food vendors, so again, remember to take some money with you to help out other local groups and businesses. You also need to pay for the sideshow stalls, for example, the hook-a-duck. They are not covered by a wristband.

There is no bar at the Gala because it is first and foremost, an event for children.



This event is really popular, with over 10,000 people attending it last year. It would be great to see the children and their families following the Gala Parade, as it makes its way, along the bunting-lined streets, from the Benarty Centre, down Lochleven Road, through Crosshill and into the Meedies. The parade will have floats from different organisations and, this year, there is expected to be a few new additions to the parade. It gets the day off to a great start and is a must-see event on its own.

Tickets for the Gala are on sale at The Benarty Community Shop in Ballingry; Benarty Fruits in Lochore, and in Costcutters in Crosshill.

Rockore

Entry to the Rockore Music Festival is strictly tickets-only (£25 each), and the events field at the Meedies is closed off for this event.



This event gets bigger every year, and the line-up for 2023 is better than ever. The bands are:

The Boomtown Rats

QFX

The Sunset Spirit

Deaf Monkey

Big Country

The Columbus Soul Band

Just Jovi

Pretty As Pink

The event has sold out every single year since it started, so don't leave it too late to buy your tickets. Every year, people virtually beg for them on the run-up to the event – but once they're gone, they're gone! There is a strict limit on the crowd capacity, which is agreed with Fife Council, the Police, Fire Brigade etc well in advance of the event and the capacity limits cannot be breached. (**Note:** Since writing this article, tickets have sold out!)

No food or drink is allowed into the arena (unless by prior agreement with BEG and permission is usually only given if there are underlying health conditions), but there is a wide variety of food & drink available for sale inside the venue. Payment for food is given direct to the vendor. Payment for drinks is by voucher only. Vouchers cost £3.50 each and are on sale inside the arena. They cannot be purchased in advance. Nor can they be redeemed if they aren't used, so make sure that you only buy what you think you can use during the event.

BEG takes everyone's safety seriously. The crowd are usually very well behaved, and generally just having a good time, but First Aiders are on hand if needed, as are security personnel, including the police. There are also dozens of stewards to give assistance, direct people, direct traffic, monitor queues, serve drinks, check tickets & bags on entry and on general duty around the arena to help out where needed.

Tickets are currently on sale at the Benarty Community Shop in Ballingry, Benarty Fruits in Lochore and online at skiddle.com. Online orders also attract a booking fee. (**Note:** Since writing this article, Rockore tickets have now sold out!)

Where Does The Money Come From For Events?

So if all the events are either free, or heavily subsidised, where does BEG get the money to pay for everything?

Community Lottery

The group has two main sources of income. The first is the Benarty Community Lottery, which is organised by BEG and properly licenced through Fife Council. Tickets are sold weekly, in outlets around Benarty, for £1 each.

It's easy-peasy... you choose 6 numbers, put your contact details on the ticket, give the top (white) copy to wherever you've bought the ticket from, and keep the bottom copy (yellow) for reference. Every week, the group collects all the white copies from every outlet. They choose a different public place (they work in rotation around all the pubs) & ask an independent person who is in the pub (could be anybody, as long as they are not connected to the group) & they pull the numbered balls out of a bag.

You need to match all 6 numbers to win the jackpot. If it isn't won, the jackpot rolls over to the following week, with £100 added to the pot. Again, if the jackpot isn't won, you need to match 5 numbers to win the consolation prize. If the consolation prize isn't won, it too rolls over to the following week. If there is more than one winner of the jackpot or consolation prize, then the prize is shared equally. It's still a good return on a £1 investment, and you have the added satisfaction of knowing that you've contributed to all the brilliant events that the group put on for the community. You can also set up a standing order to pay for your ticket & keep the same numbers every week.

Music Festival

The community lottery brings in regular, weekly funds for the group, but the second source of income provides the single, biggest amount – and that is Rockore. The group gets its income from the tickets sales, bar takings and payments from vendors for their pitch. It's a lot of money, but bear in mind, that the income also has to cover the cost of the bands, all the technical set-up (lighting, sound, stage etc), all the health & safety precautions, first aid, security, bar stocks, barriers, fencing to name just a few. It's a very expensive event to produce! Whatever's left after all the bills have been paid, goes towards paying for all the free & subsidised events during the rest of the year.

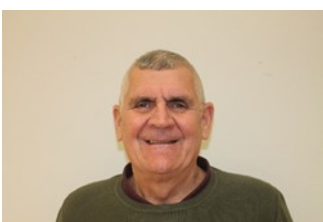
Other Income

The group also applies for grants wherever it can, they get a few donations from kind-hearted individuals and businesses and the occasional sponsorship; but without people buying Community Lottery tickets and Rockore tickets, they couldn't sustain what they do.

The Committee & Volunteers

The most amazing thing about this group – given the size & nature of the events they put on - is that it remains quite small and everybody on the committee is a volunteer. There are 4 office-bearers (Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary & Treasurer) and a maximum of 15 ordinary committee members. Most have fulltime jobs, and everything they do for the community is done within their own personal time. Beyond that, they rely on an army of other volunteers stepping up to help out at all the events, be it organising gala boxes, stewarding crowds, acting as traffic wardens, checking tickets & bags at Rockore, pouring teas & coffees & serving food, and generally being on hand to answer queries or give directions to people. They all do an amazing job and we applaud them for their hard work and dedication to the community.

The group had their Annual General Meeting on 9th May and there are a few vacancies on the committee. If you would like to get involved in the planning and decision-making for the events, please contact Eddie Easson (Chairperson) or Shona Mackenzie (Secretary). The group would be delighted to have you on board. Even if you don't fancy being on a committee, you can still volunteer to help at the events, or at the Companions' Club. You would be made welcome.



Eddie Easson
Chairperson



Shona Mackenzie
Secretary

A decade of hard work has embedded the events this group organise within the social calendar of our community. We love them. Here's to the next decade!

Benarty Community Shop

Our popular Benarty Community Shop, which is on the corner of Benarty Square in Ballingry, has now been open for nearly 6 years. The grand opening was on 17th June 2017.

Award Winning Team

In that time, the shop has, rightly, won an award for the Best Start-Up Business from the Tayside & Fife Social Enterprise Partnership in 2018 – a huge feather in their cap; and has recently been nominated for another award in The Social Enterprising Award Category of Fife's Volunteering & Voluntary Sector Awards. The award ceremony is being held on 7th June in the Glen Pavilion in Dunfermline. Just to be nominated is a huge achievement and we wish our wee shop every success at the ceremony.

What Does It Do?

So what does the shop actually do? You may think that its only purpose is to sell things, but our shop plays a much bigger role, and contributes much more to our community, than you may realise.

The shop carries a huge array of different types of high-quality merchandise, covering clothes for all ages and sizes; shoes; accessories; jewellery; beautiful china & ornaments; books; pictures; toys & games; and many other household items. Everything the shop sells is at an affordable price and there are terrific bargains to be had.

The items in the shop come from donations from within and outside the Benarty community, some from individuals and some from businesses. All are of excellent quality and many are brand new. It's a brilliant way to re-use items that people don't want or need any more; and we all get the benefit, as well as contributing to saving our planet.

Helping the Community

The shop also helps other groups within the community, by selling items on their behalf, such as Rockore and Gala tickets and the recently published book "Beneath the Kingdom: Memoirs of A Miner" by Iain Chalmers. The shop doesn't take a commission on the sales. They're doing it to help other groups.

The shop has also recently started taking in donations for the Foodbank. This saves people having to trail down to Crosshill, particularly if they only have a few items to donate. It obviously also helps the Foodbank by increasing their donations.

The shop will also sell larger items for people, such as furniture, prams etc. The items don't go into the shop because there isn't enough room. Instead the shop publicises the items on their Facebook page, and other social media sites, with the proceeds of sales going to the shop. This saves people having to advertise the items themselves, stops items going to landfill when they're still perfectly serviceable and in good condition and it helps the shop's income.

Café & Meeting Place

There is also a marvellous cafe inside the Community Shop. At the moment, the café sells a variety of teas & coffees, hot chocolate, cakes & biscuits. All available to eat inside, or to takeaway. They do a deal of a drink + a cake for £3. Where else can you get that kind of value for money?!

They're also currently considering expanding the range of food available, perhaps by adding filled rolls etc. Keep a look out for changes.

The café is a great meeting place too; so why not get together with a couple of pals for coffee & cake, or even use the space as a meeting venue.

Community Events

From time to time, the shop will also organise some community events. The latest one coming up is a **Boogie Bingo Night**. That promises to be a guid night out! It's on 15th July at Lochore Institute, from 7pm till midnight. Tickets are available from the shop or from the Tute. Tickets cost £10 each, BUT, that includes all games of bingo and a disco.

The night will also include a few games and a raffle to help raise funds for the shop. You could be a winner; at the very least you'll have a good laugh with your pals & family.

All the money raised by the Community Shop after deducting running costs, goes back into our community via the Benarty Forum. Please see separate article on grants available.

Who Runs the Shop?

The Community Shop is the trading arm of the Benarty Forum, another excellent, local, not-for-profit group that we'll cover in a future edition of the Newsletter.

The day-to-day running of the shop, however, is down to a part-time Manager, Lorna Gallagher, supported by a team of willing and dedicated volunteers.

Accredited Training

All volunteers undergo training which covers the basics of how to run the shop, for example, the storage system; stock rotation; how to work the till; ironing (yes ironing - the shop takes very good care of the items it sells); how to work the drinks machines in the café; health & safety rules; how to create displays within the shop and customer service. All these are readily transferrable skills to other, paid jobs.

The shop also offers accredited training to its volunteers (and when they can, the wider community). The training has covered food hygiene, first aid, window dressing and an SVQ3 in volunteering skills. Again, all readily transferrable skills as a route into employment.

Can You Help?

All the volunteers muck in to make sure that the shop runs smoothly, and no-one is left to do the same job all the time (unless it's a passion of theirs). Likewise, no-one is forced to do any job that they absolutely hate (for example, not everyone likes to work the coffee machine). The shop will come and go as much as possible with the volunteers.

Similarly, not everyone can work there fulltime. Some volunteers can only manage a few hours a week. All that is asked is that it be a regular few hours and that people turn up when they're supposed to be there. It just helps to ensure that a proper rota can be agreed and that there is enough staff to cover the opening hours.

If you have a few hours to spare each week and would like to do something positive to contribute to your community, please get in touch with Lorna Gallagher.

The volunteers are a great bunch of people, friendly and helpful. You'll be supported through training and be part of an award-winning team. You'll also be helping to ensure that a key community asset goes from strength to strength.



‘Mon the Welfare!

A big shout out to our very own Lochores Welfare JFC who won the King Cup on Sun 14th of May, at Whitburn, East Lothian.

The lads came back from 1 nil against Dunipace. Joe Kirby scored in the 79th minute to equalize, and Ewan Sutherland scored in the 85th minute to put them ahead and clinch the win.

Logan Donaldson won player of the match.

The team invited fans to meet them at their home ground to celebrate when they brought home the cup - ‘a celebration 20 years in the making.’

Well done LW JFC!



KIDZ CORNER



FOCUS ON.... THE LADIES' CIRCLE

The group known by locals as 'The Circle,' is a mainstay of Benarty. The group has been running since at least the 1950s - no one I spoke to could actually pinpoint an exact date as it's seemed to have always been there.

But what is the Ladies' Circle?

Basically, it's a social group/club for women - many versions of the Ladies Circle exist throughout the UK. The Benarty group tends to be over fifty, but they are happy to make some exceptions. Women join the group for various reasons, be it to make friends, have something fun to do, or to give back to the community - whatever your reason for joining there is a ready-made group of friends from all walks of life and from various areas within Benarty.

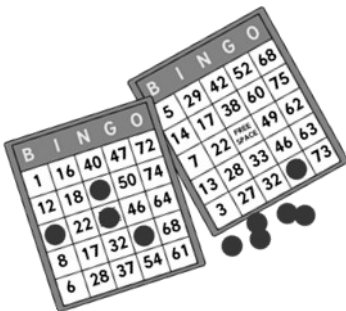
Most famously the dearly departed Christina 'Twinnie' White ran the Circle for decades, alongside other locals, but perhaps most notably with the late Jean Adams. Twinnie was one of the pioneers of the first version of Benarty's community centre - through fundraising coffee mornings, she helped open the building on Hill Road which was

given the nickname of The Hut. The Ladies Circle and other groups would meet at The Hut, and they even managed to add a kitchen and an extension to the building sited next to the church. Sadly, The Hut fell victim to acts of vandalism in the 1980s and was eventually destroyed by fire.



Not thwarted, Twinnie moved The Circle to Navitie Park, and to the first Benarty Primary School which also hosted the first community centre. They had many happy years and adventures here but eventually in 2012 they moved to the newly built Benarty Centre in Flockhouse Avenue, where they meet to this day - thriving and continuing the legacy of Twinnie and Jean, and that the many other ladies of Benarty helped create.

Throughout Twinnie's tenure and beyond, the ladies have held their weekly meetings - now between 2-4 p.m. on a Wednesday at Benarty Centre. The members pay a few pounds weekly, which they term 'dues'. This money is used to fund day trips, Christmas dinner and their charitable donations. The ladies regularly donate to charities such as C.H.A.S. (Children's Hospices Across Scotland), and in the past they've also organised trips to pantomimes in Edinburgh - a favourite of Twinnie's.



I attended one of their meetings - I was warmly welcomed, and introduced to more versions of bingo than I knew existed. The ladies also regularly bring along delicious home baking, and snacks for their tea break - the teas and coffees, and room rental are also funded by their dues.

Each member receives a gift on their birthday, and the ladies do a Secret Santa at Christmas.

Bi-weekly, they also have a raffle and they run a bonus ball lottery for their members, too.

They are a lovely, welcoming bunch of women, and if this sounds like something that might interest you, pop along to the group and let's continue this fantastic Benarty legacy and make Twinnie proud.

Planning Proposals

Over the past three months, the following planning applications have been registered, and decisions on existing applications have been taken.

5 th May 2023	Housing Development South of New Flockhouse, Lochore: Compliance with condition no. 11. Prior to work commencing on site, adequate wheel cleaning facilities approved by the Fife Council Planning Authority in consultation with the Transportation Services being provided & maintained throughout the construction works so that no mud, debris or other deleterious material is carried by vehicles on to the existing public roads; and	Application Permitted
	Compliance with condition No. 14. Prior to work commencing on site, a phasing plan showing details of development phasing including the construction of roadways/ footpaths, dwelling houses, implementation of public open space/play areas & boundary treatments (walls, fences etc) to be submitted to Fife Council.	Application Permitted

Caravan Storage at Lochleven Road, Lochore

As previously reported, the planning application for the above was rejected, but that fencing had been erected and caravans were onsite. The Community Council wrote to Fife Council Planning Department to ask what enforcement action would be taken. We have now had a reply.

The Enforcement Officer has confirmed that the period that is allowed for applicants to seek a local review of the decision (60 days) has now passed and that an Enforcement Notice will be served on the applicant.

However, the Enforcement Officer also pointed out that this can be a lengthy process. The Enforcement Notice must be served not less than 28 days before it takes effect, and that it must give the recipient a reasonable period of time for compliance. There is also a statutory right of appeal to the Scottish Government's Department of Planning & Environmental Appeals.

The planning process can be frustratingly slow, but the Enforcement Officer has given an assurance that the Community Council will be informed of any material developments in this case. For our part, the Community Council will keep the issue under review and will report on developments.



William Starks Butchers

98-100 Lochleven Road
Lochore
Fife
01592 860 336

Gift Voucher



Family is very much at the forefront of Stark's Butchers. They're a family-run business that tirelessly serves the community of Benarty. To say that they're an institution is no word of a lie.

While Stark's Butchers have been operating for around twelve years, Wullie has been a butcher in the shop for forty years, working for Bayne's Butchers before taking the shop over and running it with his wife, his daughter and his sister. Further, they always employ local staff, one of the many ways they give back to the community.

Stark's have helped out every local community event, supplying vouchers, butcher meat or both. They've donated to both primary schools, and helped out with events and projects, for example with St. Kenneth's donating vouchers to customers during Lent, vouchers the school children saved up for, many of them donating their pocket money.

They've helped out the Companions' Club, Lochgelly Lunches, the Community Shop as well as their charitable work further afield, doing a lot of work to help out the Ukraine and the shoebox appeal for Romania, filling up shoeboxes with gifts and care packages so women and children didn't miss out on Christmas presents.

Christmas is something they help the local community out with also, helping those who are struggling to ensure that they have food on the table and gifts for the kids.

Within the shop they run a Savers Club—whilst it is year-round, many use it to save for Christmas and shoppers regularly donate extra money they've accrued to those who may need it, and Wullie and Mary make sure no one misses out. It's their busiest time of year, and in the days running up to Christmas have been in the shop from 3 a.m. - talk about dedication!

They also do deliveries - and not just of the vast variety of produce they prepare on their premises, but they will collect items from surrounding shops too and deliver them for only £1. This service is a lifeline for many, as well as helping any who struggle to get to the shops. Wullie has even been known to play taxi to folks, driving them up the road with their shopping.

The butcher shop also offered their delivery service throughout the Covid pandemic and helped keep our wee community safe and fed.

And nearly every bairn in the place has popped in and gotten a slice of their famous chopped pork - Wullie says 'the no so wee bairns too!'

Shop local if you can; vendors like Starks make our community great and everything is produced on their premises, and they also give cooking and recipe advice too!





Antisocial Behaviour

Over the last few years, acts of antisocial behaviour have been steadily on the increase within the Benarty community.

But what is antisocial behaviour and what is being done to prevent it?

Antisocial behaviour means behaving in a way which causes, or is likely to cause, alarm and distress to the community. This covers a broad scope of things, such as:

Dog fouling, littering, illegal dumping, excessive noise (at any time of the day or night, it's a myth that it is only between set hours) wilful fire starting, vandalism, threatening behaviour and behaviour that causes risk to others, hate crimes and more. Police Scotland's Community Police officers work alongside the Safer Communities Team to tackle these issues, with help from the Fire Service where needed. Sadly, like most things in the public sector, resources are stretched thin. For example the safer communities team for this area is made up of four individuals. Two deal with environmental concerns (Ronnie and Aiden) and from 12 noon til 10 p.m. David and Christine deal with antisocial behaviour.

Most recently the site at Ore Park, Glencraig has been drawing in large numbers of youths, some of whom are - at times - terrorising the people who live close by in or around Clune Terrace.

One of the largest causes for concern is the stealing and setting fire to wheelie bins. Over and above, being a nuisance to the residents who have their bins nicked, wheelie bins are made from high-density polyethylene, which releases carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide into the air when set alight.

These dangerous gases starve the brain of oxygen, creating an intense headache that people misinterpret as a 'high'.

It's believed that different dyes used to make coloured bins give off different fumes. However, all wheelie bins are made of the same plastic and will all give off the same hazardous gases, so saying specific colours cause more intoxication is just a new twist on an already dangerous trend.

Anti-solvent abuse charities said, inhaling the bin fumes could be more dangerous than sniffing glue or petrol.

The inhalation of these toxic fumes, and other acts such as buzzing petrol, deodorant etc can be deadly.

Anyone experimenting with gases and solvents is at risk of sudden death. Death may occur at the first attempt or following many attempts – it can happen at any time.

The causes of death include:

- Choking on vomit.
- Suffocation or asphyxiation – when someone is unable to breathe in sufficient oxygen. This can occur if someone chokes, or if they have a bag or mask over their nose and mouth.
- Burns injuries, as many gases and solvents are highly flammable.
- Fatal accidents, such as being hit by a car, bus or train as your judgement and mobility are impaired.
- A heart condition called 'cardiac arrhythmia' – also known as Sudden Sniffing Death Syndrome (SSDS). Most deaths from solvent abuse are caused by SSDS. Inhaling the gases and solvents causes the heart to beat irregularly. The heart can then fail if the person experiences a sudden

rush of adrenaline – e.g., if they are excited, frightened or if they engage in physical activity. Unless a defibrillator is available, death can result within minutes.

- Poppers can be fatal if the liquid is swallowed.
- Nitrous oxide (ever spotted those wee silver cannisters around?) can cause anaemia and peripheral neuropathy.

Not to mention the risks involved if the bin fires get out of hand - especially as these bin fires are set in the woods or next to people's homes, or if the melted plastic comes in contact with skin. A recent bin fire resulted in the exploding of aerosol cans inside it, the cans becoming projectiles, reported David and Christine from the Safer Communities Team.

Another big problem is binge drinking - drinking to get drunk in a short period of time. This, like the solvent abuse and toxic fumes, leaves you vulnerable which can lead to accidents resulting in injury, misjudging risky situations or losing self-control. If you binge drink, you are likely to lose coordination, have impaired judgement and slower reaction times. Serious health risks from binge drinking include breathing problems, seizures, and brain damage.

Some parents have even been seen dropping off their kids with alcohol at Clune Terrace, both irresponsible and illegal. Under-18s can be stopped, fined or arrested by police for drinking alcohol in public. The police also have the power to confiscate alcohol.

Scenes from GlenCraig 31/04/23. (photo credited to Lea McLelland via Benarty Matters)

A large group of youths

1. Broke into buildings,
2. Damaged property,
3. Set a fire in the middle of the road,
4. Abused people trying to protect their property
5. Fought with, and assaulted, police officers.

Many of the youths weren't from the immediate area.

Advice from Police Scotland and the Safer Communities Team regarding antisocial behaviour is to report it - never confront any perpetrator yourself. There is a report form on Fife Council's website:

<https://www.fife.gov.uk/services/form-pages/report-antisocial-behaviour>

Reports are monitored Monday - Friday 9am-5pm.

If you need to contact the police immediately you can call 101.

Or in an emergency both the police and fire service can be reached via 999.

Advice on prevention of bins being stolen is to chain them together, making it much harder to steal several bins vs. one.

Fife Council also now offer free uplifts which they hope will cutdown on illegal dumping, and, by turn, also cut down on materials lying around to set fire to.

If you spot parents dropping off kids with alcohol, this can also be reported.



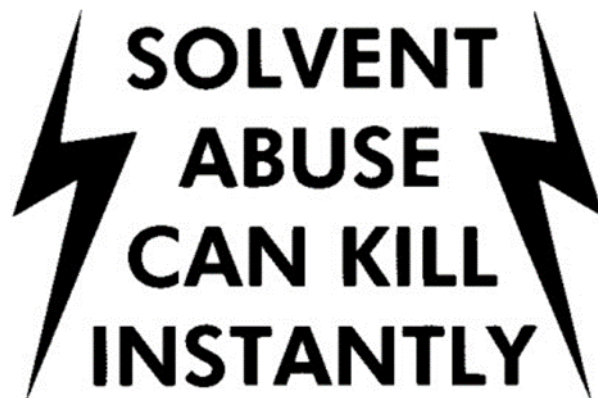
The Safer Communities Team have lists of areas they patrol nightly, and they tend to have a decent relationship with the youths and can often move them on.

A good guide for parents can be found here: https://www.re-solv.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Parent-Guide_Scotland.pdf

Both Re-Solv and Clued-up provide help and support for youths and adults, with Clued-up focusing on the under 25s.

The week commencing 22nd May, the buildings at Ore Park were taken down. There is hope that this will cease the antisocial behaviour in that area, but the fear is that it'll move elsewhere. If antisocial behaviour becomes a problem in your immediate vicinity be sure to report it. The more reports mean the higher it is flagged and the more likely action will be taken.

It is sad that it has come to this in parts of Benarty. Both the Community Police and the Safer Communities Team are run ragged trying to prevent it, and we can do our bit to help. It is hoped that this article is taken as intended - highlighting the dangers to their own and the community's health.



Summer Events at the Outdoor Education Centre, The Meedies

The team at the Outdoor Education Centre have come up with loads of exciting activities to keep children and adults busy and fit over the summer months. Their programme includes:

- * Have a Go Days
- * Multi Activity Courses
- * Sailing Courses
- * Paddle Sports

They also have a range of Cycle Sports; Mountain Sports; Day Trips and Expeditions on offer.

Adaptive equipment is also available.

Please note that prices vary depending on the activity and on the number of days involved.

Check out the details on: www.active.fife.scot/activities/activity-pages/adventure-activities



THE BELLS PROJECT

The project, which for many reasons, has taken a long time to happen is nearing its finish.

Over a decade ago parishioners from both St. Kenneth's chapel and Lochcraig church wanted to see their places of worship commemorated after the respective buildings had been taken down.

While it is unusual for the two religions to work together, this is exactly what happened. a group was formed - with permission from the heads of the places of worship - to site the bells within Benarty

Mary Nardone has been with the group since the start, and the community of Benarty has always been fully behind the project, which caused quite a buzz with the children of both Benarty and St. Kenneth's primary schools who were asked to design how they'd like the monument to look. They were inundated, with entries even put through the Nardone's letter box!

Fuelled by the community's backing, the group successfully raised funds for the project and had decided on the style of monument they'd like and had been granted use of the location where they wanted to site it, by the pulley wheel at the entrance to Lochore Meadows Country Park - which was very close to where the churches had stood. The funding was held ring-fenced in Benarty Community Council's account as the project needed to go through various design and planning stages with Fife Council, and tenders put in for the work etc. This took considerably longer than was hoped, some errors were made, costs rose, staff within the Council changed...and then the Covid pandemic hit.

The group never gave up though, and work finally started at the beginning of the year. Sadly, some of the original members of Bells group have since passed without ever seeing the project finished. The work is progressing well, and members of the group visit Bruce and his team while they work, with Margaret bringing them pies and cakes to keep their strength up as they craft the lovely monument to not only the churches but to the late parishioners who championed the project.

History boards documenting the rich history of both churches will also be placed at the monument. This information has also been given to the Benarty Heritage and Preservation group so that many generations to come will have access to the written accounts.

At the time of this article, there was no public information regarding the unveiling of the completed monument. However, Mary Nardone commented that the original heads of the churches should be included if possible. The group echoes this sentiment, but the community feels that the group should also be present at any ceremony held - after all if not for their persistence the project would never have happened.

The City of Dunfermline to be Twinned with the City of Douglas?

Word has reached our ears that, shortly before she stood down, the Mayor of the City of Douglas, Isle of Man (Janet Thommeny, JP), approached the Provost of Fife (Jim Leishman MBE) with a view to twinning the City of Douglas with the City of Dunfermline.

Both towns were granted City status at the same time last year; and there may be opportunities that twinning could bring, that would benefit both cities.

You may wonder why this is being reported in the Benarty Community Newsletter. It's because the Mayor, who made the approach, is an ex-Benarty woman. Janet Thommeny, JP grew up in Ballingry before moving to the Isle of Man to pursue her nursing career. Janet made the Isle of Man her home and has now served as a Councillor in Douglas for many years. She became the deputy Mayor before taking up her appointment as Mayor. She made history by becoming the first Mayor of the City of Douglas.



Cllr Janet Thommeny, JP
Mayor 2022-2023

Janet has recently stood down as Mayor, having served for a year; and has been succeeded by Councillor Nicola Byron-Teare, JP.

Negotiations between the two cities have not yet begun (at the time of going to print), and it may not happen, but wouldn't it be marvellous if it did?

Douglas is a vibrant & beautiful City; and there is much to see and do on the island generally. If you fancy a break, not too far from home, then the Isle of Man would make you welcome.

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What's On In Benarty This Quarter

Arts Club

Every Monday	1-3pm	Benarty Centre	There is a waiting list for this group. Contact: Violet Fotheringham
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Boogie Bingo Night

Saturday 15 July	7pm-Midnight	Lochore Miners' Welfare Institute	£10/ticket from the Community Shop or The Tute.
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Classic Cars (Scottish Ford Day & Classic Car Show)

Sunday 23 July	tbc	Lochore Meadows Country Park
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Community Council

First Thursday of every month 1 June	7-9pm	Benarty Centre	All members of the public are welcome & encouraged to attend. <u>Note</u> : There is no meeting in July or August.
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Companions' Club

Every Friday	11am-2pm	Benarty Centre	Aimed at older members of the community, but all are welcome to attend. Just turn up.
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Cycling

Wednesday 14 June	tbc	Fife Cycle Park, Glencraig	Road Crit
Saturday 29 July	tbc	The Meadows Country Park	The Ochil Hill Classic

Food Angels

Every Tuesday	1-2pm	Benarty Centre	No referral required.
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Foodbank

Every Monday, Wednesday & Friday	4-6pm	BRAG, Crosshill	Needs a referral from an appropriate body. Donations are always welcomed, either direct to the Foodbank at BRAG (15 mins before each session), or at the Community Shop in Ballingry.
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GALA

Sunday 25 June	11am	Parade leaves Benarty Centre. Gala begins when the Parade reaches Lochore Meadows Country Park.
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Benarty Heritage Preservation Group

Every Monday	1.30-3.30pm	Benarty Centre	Looking for new members.
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Highland Dancing

Every Wednesday	5.30-8.30pm	Benarty Centre
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Indoor Bowls

Every Wednesday	6.30-9pm	Benarty Centre	Looking for new members.
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Jobs' Club

Every Tuesday	11am	Benarty Centre
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Kids Come First

Every day before & after school.	7.30am – 6pm	Benarty Centre
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Kinship Carers' Group

Every Wednesday	10-11am	Benarty Primary School
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Ladies' Circle

Every Wednesday	2.15-4.15pm	Benarty Centre
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Messy Church

Every Thursday	6-7pm	St Serf's Church, Ballingry	Children's play group.
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Mothers & Toddlers' Group

Every Monday	10am-Noon	St Serf's Church, Ballingry
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The Pantry

Every Thursday	1-3pm	BRAG, Crosshill	There is currently a waiting list.
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Pipe Band & Highland Dancing Competition

Saturday 17 June	Noon	Lochore Meadows Country Park
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Rockore Music Festival

Saturday 19 August	11am	Gates Open Lochore Meadows Country Park	This is a ticket-only event. The event has now sold out.
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Running Club

Every Monday & Wednesday	6pm	The Boathouse, Lochore Meadows Country Park
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Running Relay (24 hour)

Friday 7 July	7pm	Lochore Meadows Country Park	5k Multi-Terrain
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Save the Cage Concert

Sunday 20 August	2pm	Lochore Miners' Welfare Institute	This is a ticket-only event.
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What's On In Benarty This Quarter (continued)

Sewing Class

Every Thursday	6.30-8.45pm	Benarty Centre
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Taekwondo

Every Tuesday	6.15-7pm	Benarty Centre	Kids 3-8 yrs
Every Monday	6.30-8pm	Benarty Centre	Kids 8yrs+ & Adults
Every Thursday	7-8pm	Benarty Centre	Kids 8yrs+ & Adults

Triathlons

Sunday 11 June	7.30am	The Meadows Country Park	Lochore Sprint Triathlon
Sunday 18 June	8.30am	The Meadows Country Park	Triathlon Scotland Super Series Aquathon

Youth Clubs

Every Monday & Tuesday	5.30-7pm	Benarty Centre	Junior
Every Tuesday	7.30-9pm	Benarty Centre	Senior

Live Entertainment

The pubs and clubs in Benarty have some cracking good guest artists at the weekends. So if you fancy getting your dancing shoes on, or just want to tap your feet from the comfort of your seat, check out their posts on Facebook to see who is on each week.

The Cleikumin, Ballingry; The Craigie Bar, Ballingry;
Lochore Miners' Welfare Institute;
The Masonic Hall, Glenraig; The Red Goth, Lochore

Religious Services

Benarty has three main places of worship and all three hold regular services. The chapel and church alternate their services with their counterparts in Lochgelly.

Gospel Hall, Crosshill
Ss Kenneth's & Bernard's Chapel, Ballingry
St Serf's Church, Ballingry

Note: Details on how to book **Fife Cycle Track** in Glenraig can be found at:

www.active.fife.scot/locations/cycle-park



News to B.R.A.G about...



Over the last 6 months or so at B.R.A.G Crosshill we have had an influx of 'Craft-Based' tenants coming on board which include, The Arty Farty Club, Scarlet Knitwear, Mel Sinclair who provides floral and dried flower displays and the forthcoming Rock n Roses Aromas, and if we include existing tenants such as Re-Employ and Tommy Beveridge of Pagoda the site is showing a real mix of craft-based business types now.

The Pantry@BRAG - The Pantry has seen yet another increase in people accessing our affordable food provision. The cost of living crisis continues to have an impact on our local community and the need for extra support is clearly evident. Whilst we do still have a waiting list in operation we are trying to support as many people as we possibly can, whilst ensuring that we have enough stock to keep the Pantry running at capacity. The Pantry team and volunteers continue to do an excellent job, they are a dedicated and innovative team, providing a variety of food for our local community whilst focusing on continuing to reduce food waste. The Mary Pit Stop Café is the hub of the community on a Thursday and it has fast become a vibrant social space for people to meet, have a chat, access affordable food, get energy advice and sometimes it simply provides a safe place to meet new people, reducing social isolation and anxiety. The team are always fundraising and their Bingo n Blether sessions have become a regular occurrence and are a huge hit with the local community. We are pleased to confirm that the Pantry has been nominated for an award at the Fife Voluntary Sector Awards

Pantry@BRAG Warm Spaces – the 13-week initiative which finished April 23 - The benefit has been astounding with the impact being more than what we could have imagined. It has brought the community together, many of whom did not know one another but have become friends and this has given them a safe place to come and feel welcome, socialise, and in turn reduced feelings of isolation and loneliness. It also helped people deal with rising fuel and food costs, by getting access to a warm space with free hot food and drinks, access to papers/books/new clothes and shoes and being able to watch the TV and movies. We plan to secure further funding for this project.

Some of the feedback/comments and evaluations that we have carried out captured the spirit of warm spaces:

“I had stopped leaving the house but this is the first thing that I have attended in a long time, it's the only day out of the house and I get to meet my granddaughter there.

There's some lovely people and good staff to speak to, it's a lovely atmosphere and I'll miss it but I want to come back if there is anything else.”

This elderly lady was struggling to leave the house and her family had been trying to encourage her, however, after attending the first week with her granddaughter she then came every week - one week even getting the bus on her own as her granddaughter couldn't meet her and she arrived at BRAG soaking wet but said she didn't want to miss it, the staff were amazed by her bravery, she will really miss the sessions.

“This is a safe space, people to talk to, advice if you need it and the bacon rolls and all the support is great, thank you.”

“Great to get out somewhere different, it's social and costs no money, food was lovely and staff were friendly.”

“It was nice to sit with other people while having a cuppa and something to eat, meeting other people and being somewhere that was warm.”

“To get out of the house and socialise, saving money on gas and electric. The warm welcome every week from the amazing staff and a bacon roll which was amazing.”

“It was cosy, warm, and attentive staff that actually take the time to talk to you and help.”

“I think the staff are amazing. It gives people the opportunity to get out and meet people and starts to bring some hope that other people ARE out there willing to help people in need, with showing we all care about our local friends. Keep up the great supportive work, it's nice to see some caring for a change.”

“Would love to see this continue as it helps me in so many ways with my mental health and the kids can pick up a free book and get something to eat.”

Within the period February 2023 - April 2023, the Pantry has:

- . Diverted 6,036.18KG of food from landfill and used it to feed our local community instead
- . Provided food and supported 7,668 Individuals
- . Utilised 307 local volunteer hours

Our **Food 4 Thought** project has now started - This exciting new project will allow us to further support our poverty reduction activities within the local area, adding value to our current Pantry provision. The project will include:

Food Education Programme - reducing food waste, this is designed to support individuals and families to cook and eat together, exploring healthy meal options and cooking with food available at the Pantry, cooking leftovers, cooking on a budget etc. We will deliver a programme of activities and cook-along as well as specific family cooking sessions. Changes have been made to the kitchen that allows this to go ahead.

Energy Efficiency Support - support more individuals and families to deal with fuel poverty, fuel debt and energy efficiency within their homes, providing support through drop-ins offering education to help build resilience as well as support packages.

Health & Wellbeing Programme - we will provide a variety of activities to support mental health & well-being, such as yoga, and mindfulness (providing suitable clothing and footwear where necessary to ensure participation can be affordable).

We will also have our **Brunch@BRAG** including a rolling programme of activities such as Arts & Crafts, Flower Arranging, Line Dancing and Cake Decoration which people can join weekly or attend as and when they wish to. We will also include our Cycling Programme 'Get Moving' over the summer months.

The project also aims to tackle the issue of climate change by making small changes and taking steps to increase awareness of and support people to tackle the climate emergency at a local level. This could be through reducing food waste, energy efficiency and reducing emissions. We will run practical workshops and events for the community and focus on some family fun events.



INTERVIEW WITH COUNCILLOR LEA MCLELLAND

How long have you been a Cllr? Since 2017, for Ward 8 as a member of the SNP party.

What made you decide to get into politics? I've always been interested in politics. I was brought up around politics.

Why did you choose the SNP as the party you wanted to join? I strongly believe the only way Scotland can be better is by securing its independence.

In your time as a Cllr, what are the things you've enjoyed most? Interacting with people of all ages and helping when people have been in situations where they've seen no road out. And when things come to fruition, for example the Bells project which I championed from the start and pushed for it to happen. Pushing to have the buildings at the old football pitch in GlenCraig pulled down.

During your time as a Cllr, how has your ward benefited from having you as Cllr? I'm approachable and understanding, tenacious on projects, and fighting to be the voice for the people I represent.

What are/is the downside(s) to being a Cllr? Time - it takes up a lot of it, such as the antisocial behaviour in GlenCraig. Also, things that are outwith my control.

What would you say are the biggest misconceptions the public has about what you and your fellow councillors do? That we only have meetings. We deal with a lot of day-to-day stuff for the constituents, often meeting people at short notice to provide help. I work on top of being a Cllr, but I organise my shifts to suit my role as a councillor.

What changes would you like to see occurring for your ward in the near future? Potholes filled! It was stated 5% increase in council tax was for that but we've yet to see that happen.

Same again, this time what changes would you like to see occurring for your ward longer term? Completion of new council houses and the housing needs met for the constituency. Changes in the misuse of drink and drugs, especially among youths. Better education provided about the effects of drugs and alcohol misuse.

What changes would you like to see for the country in the near future?
Independence.

Same again, this time what changes would you like to see occurring for the country longer term? For Scotland to flourish to full capacity, which it more than has the ability to do.

What ways can councillors help the community that the community might not be aware of? Licensing and regulation boards – I sit on a board that ensures people are safe in taxis, going in depth into their history and we decide if they're suitable to receive licensing. We also deal with window cleaner licenses, multi-dwelling houses, and if you want to run a business from your house you need a license to do so.

However, we cannot tell an officer how to do their job; we can only raise concerns.

What advice would you give to any readers who are interested in a career in politics? If you are passionate enough and are prepared to give up enough of your own time, then do it. It is very rewarding when things are done right - an example of this is the new builds at the Ballingry bus stance being called Miners Rise. It is an important nod to the community's past that had to be observed.

If you have time and enthusiasm, and feel you can make a difference, then go for it – but do not think it's a part time job.

Congratulations Lennon!



Local lad, Lennon Docherty has recently taken his first Podium in this, his rookie year at the British Superbikes Championships at Donnington Race Circuit.

You may recall that Lennon is our current Benarty Young Citizen of the Year and was also awarded a microgrant from the Community Council to contribute to the cost of a new helmet.

Lennon will be racing at Knockhill Racing Circuit in the next few weeks if you want to go along and cheer him on.

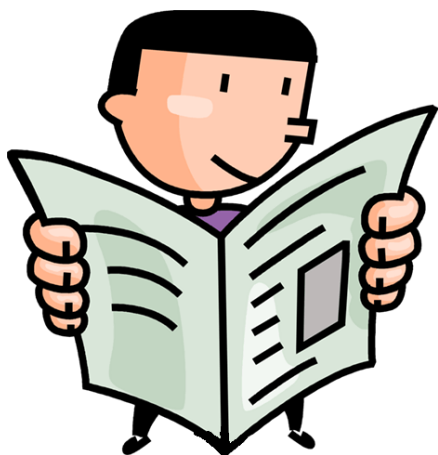
On behalf of the whole Benarty community – Congratulations Lennon! We know you'll go from strength to strength and we couldn't be more proud of you. Well done!

PETS CORNER



What a cute photo!

The beautiful dog belongs to Frankie & Jackie Hodge, with its best pal, their grandchild, enjoying cartoons



I found him.....

FIND THE GIANT!!

Can you find the Benarty Giant reading our newsletter?

Cut this out, put where you found him, and your name and contact information in an envelope & hand it into the Benarty Centre, addressed to Debbie, Benarty Community Council. You could win the draw for a £20 gift card!*

Name:

Age:

Phone/email:

Address:

* 1 entry per person.

The winner will be drawn by an independent person on 31 July.



Credit Unions are not-for-profit financial co-operatives, which provide accessible savings and low-cost loans to help members to manage their money by saving and borrowing responsibly.

They are owned by the people who use their services, not by external shareholders or investors, so they emphasise providing the best service to members, not maximising profits.

The Benarty and Lochgelly Credit Union was first opened on 1st October 1989 and its founding member was the late Councillor Willie Clarke. It currently has 1,389 adult members and 603 juvenile members, managed by two part-time members of staff and eight volunteers. There is also a Board, which oversees the Credit Union, with seven members – who are also counted within the number of volunteers.

The co-operative system is based on a Common Bond, that is, that members need to live or work in the area (Benarty or Lochgelly) to become members. This means that the Credit Union is owned locally and controlled by individual members and volunteers. Our Credit Union, like all credit unions, has a clear commitment to mutuality, community and social goals. The Common Bond means that local money is retained and recycled within our local economy and can therefore contribute to community regeneration.

The Credit Union offers savings accounts and low-cost loans – well below the maximum prevailing interest rate of High Street banks. Interest is charged on a reducing balance basis, which helps to keep repayments down for members; and there are no hidden charges or fees on any transactions; and no early settlement fees for paying a loan back early.

Deposits in the savings accounts are protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (exactly the same as High Street banks); and the Credit Union itself is regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. This ensures that members' money is protected every bit as much as in a High Street bank.

Our Credit Union has a maximum limit on the amount that can be held in savings accounts. It was previously £10,000 but was reduced in March this year to £5,000. This was a requirement of the financial regulatory authority. Financial regulations were changed following the volatility in the banking sector over recent years. In essence, every bank needs to be able to respond to a worst-case scenario of everyone withdrawing their money at the same time. Banks and credit unions need to have enough money coming in, through, for example, loan repayments, to be able to pay out if people want to withdraw their savings.

In effect, it gives another layer of protection for members with savings accounts.

Our Credit Union is planning to extend the services it offers. For example, members have to go into the branch to check their account balance etc. There needs to be a system upgrade, which is estimated to cost around £50,000, but the plan is to enable members to have online access. It should also be possible to do electronic transfers to members' High Street bank accounts to receive loan amounts; and enable the Credit Union to accept standing orders from High Street bank accounts to receive loan repayments. These will be welcome additions to the services.

Christmas Club

The Credit Union also offers a Christmas Savings Club for its members, where you can save up to a maximum of £600. This can be a major help at a very expensive time of the year.

Want to Help?

The Credit Union is looking for volunteers to help out. You will be given training on general office work, such as handling paperwork, filing and answering the telephone. You will also be trained as a Teller, on how to handle money and customer service. All these skills are readily transferrable to other, paid employment.

Volunteers must be 16 years old or over and will also have to sign a confidentiality pledge – which remains in force even after a volunteer leaves, (a bit like the Official Secrets Act for Civil Servants).

If you are interested, please call into the Credit Union and ask for details on how to apply.

Want to Become a Member?

The Credit Union is a resource for our whole community, so why not consider becoming a member, and keeping more money within our local area. Given that the Credit Union is a not-for-profit organisation, all profits it makes through its business transactions, ie after all running costs are deducted, go back to the members.

Just pop into the branch and ask to open a savings account. The volunteers are friendly, very helpful and will talk you through the process.



Jane Mulligan and Sharon Mackie

The address is:

Benarty & Lochgelly Credit Union
11 Benarty Square
Ballingry. KY5-8NR
Tel: 01592 868800

The Opening Hours are:

Monday	9.15am to 12.45pm
Tuesday	9.15am to 11.45am
Thursday	6.15pm to 8pm
Friday	4.15pm to 6.45pm

Our Credit Union also operates from the Lochgelly Centre on a Monday morning from 9.30am to 10.20am

Summer running...



Have a blast with the Meedies Running Club 24-hour Relay!

Back this July 7/8, the popular charity event is bigger and better than ever. For the first time, participants can enter as teams, and all abilities are welcome!

The multi-terrain 5k route is a lap around the water of the scenic Lochore Meadows Country Park. Starting at 7 p.m. on Friday 7th of July, the relay - as given away by the title - lasts for twenty-four hours, finishing up at 7 p.m. on Saturday. Throughout the twenty-four hours, there will always be someone making their way around the course to reach the end and log more miles on the counter. As always, the club hopes to beat the previous year's total.

Entrants can set their own pace around the course but also new this year is a little bit of friendly competition - the male, female and teams who clock up the most miles will win prizes. However, every entry who finishes will win a medal and a goody bag. And, as always, there will be refreshments supplied throughout, courtesy of The Meedies Running Club.

If you want to walk, jog or run in the relay, head over to Entry Central and sign up. Entries are £10 or you can pay on the day if you prefer.

The funds, as well as food and toiletries collected throughout the event, are donated to local causes. So stop by and say hello, and give any donations to the club.

www.entrycentral.com/MeediesRC-24Hr-Relay

In other club news, the most recent batch of Couch25k runners have graduated with a lap at Parkrun, and were given their medal and certificate, and a high number have stuck with it and are attending the club sessions. Club regulars are racing here, there and everywhere; a roundup is provided each week on their Facebook page. The Club's championship sees members of the club compete for the Runner(s) of the Year, The Scott Robinson Memorial trophy and others throughout the year. Prizes are awarded in December.

If all of that has you keen to lace up your training shoes, then head to the Boathouse at Lochore Meadows Country Park, Mondays, and Wednesdays - 6 p.m. for a 6:15 start.

All abilities are always welcome.



Microgrants Awarded

Over the past three months, the following microgrant applications were approved by the Benarty Community Council.

Group	Reason	Amount Awarded
Benarty Primary School	Contribution to the cost of 2 floor curling kits, to build on the interest shown by children in learning the sport of curling.	£ 250
Arty Farty Pants Craft Club	Contribution to the cost of sensory equipment for classes for baby groups.	250
Benarty Events Group	Contribution to the cost of a Fujitsu Scansnap ix1600 to enable the group to input financial documents directly to their accounting system.	250
Lochgelly High School	Contribution to the cost of buying personalised hoodies for young adults, from the Benarty area, leaving school at the end of term.	250

Anyone, or Group, can apply for a microgrant provided that they live in Benarty and/or the grant will fund a project in Benarty. The maximum microgrant amount is £250.



The funds for these grants come from the Wind Farm Panel; are administered by Foundation Scotland; with decisions taken by the Benarty Community Council.



Application forms are available from the Benarty Centre or from the Benarty Community Council website. www.benartycc.org.uk There is no deadline for applications. The Community Council consider applications at each of their normal monthly meetings throughout the year.





Lochore Meadows

Country Park

Elsewhere in the newsletter there are pages dedicated to the various events being held at 'the Meedies' during the summer months. With all the events it is sometimes easy to forget that it is first and foremost a country park.

A wee trip down there, especially on a nice day, soon reminds you that it is very much a green space. The area was verdant and full of life, all areas were busy on the Monday afternoon I visited during school term. The footfall that day being only a percentage of the people the park attracts during weekends and the school holidays.

Work had been done cutting back the brush to extend the green space central to the park where events such as the Gala and the Ford car shows would be held. The top area up by the Pit Head has been successfully dried out, turning the area from a marshy bog (at times) into a usable grass area. The only thing missing was our beloved pit pug (train) which is still undergoing its makeover.

At the time of this newsletter going to press, work should have been done on the Pit Road, filling the potholes, and making the road more user-friendly.

Throughout the Park the team have been busy preparing it for the summer months, with three new members of staff being employed to help keep things running smoothly in many areas across the park, a huge task and one we are very thankful to them for doing.

Balancing the many events within the park and respecting its environmental status is no easy feat.

Bird nesting is in full flow and most days the birds provide a chorus of song for visitors to enjoy.

However, there are still problems with littering - especially people hanging used poo bags on trees and bushes. Come on folks, there are lots of bins around the Park!

Let's keep our park beautiful and a pleasure to enjoy for locals and visitors alike.



Benarty Community Council

Our Community Council held its Annual General Meeting on 4th May, where reports were taken on the Community Council's performance over the past year, including its financial performance.

The following Office Bearers were also re-elected.

Chairperson	Debbie Doyle
Secretary	John Purdie
Treasurer	Stewart Colquhoun

The election of Community Councillors is handled by Fife Council and these elections are not due to take place until later in the year (28 September 2023).

What's the Difference Between Local Councillors and Community Councillors?

Local Councillors represent different political parties and have a seat on Fife Council and its various committees. Benarty has 4 Local Councillors (Linda Erskine, Rosemary Liewald, Mary Lockhart and Lea McLelland). Two are SNP members (Rosemary and Lea) and two are members of the Labour Party (Linda and Mary). Their job is to represent the people of their Ward. Benarty is part of Ward 8, which includes Cardenden, Lochgelly & Lumphinnans. Local Councillors will also deal with personal cases where individuals cannot seem to make headway themselves with Fife Council. All of our Local Councillors also have a seat on the Cowdenbeath Area Committee and are jointly responsible for funding decisions in the Area. They have a wide range of other responsibilities, but essentially, they are our elected, political representatives on Fife Council.

The Community Council is, you may be surprised to learn, a non-political body, whose job it is to represent the views of the Benarty Community to Fife Council. All four of the Local Councillors are also invited to attend meetings to hear what's going on and to report matters of interest to Benarty on issues that they are dealing with, but the elected Local Councillors have no voting rights on the Community Council.

The Community Councillors do not stand on a "party" ticket. They are all volunteers from the Benarty community, must be 16 years old or over and live in Benarty. They receive no payment, expenses or honorarium for the job.

Nevertheless, Community Councillors are still subject to an election process, or can be co-opted onto the Community Council and have to sign-up to Standards of Conduct. They also have to declare any personal interest in subjects or issues that are discussed at meetings.

To ensure openness, all papers for the Community Council are published on the Community Council's website or are available on request. Meetings are also open to members of the public to attend, and we do encourage people to attend.

So What Has The Community Council Done For Me This Year?

New Format

One of the first actions of the new Community Council last year was to make meetings more welcoming and friendly for the public to attend. Any member of the public can speak on any item on the agenda and there is an open forum at the end for any other items that members of

the public wish to raise that have not already been covered by the agenda. Tea, coffee and biscuits are also provided.

Issues

Some of the issues dealt with by the Community Council over the past year were:

- Drainage Issues and Flooding
- Street Naming
- Bus Service Consultation
- Children's Panel Looking for Volunteers
- Invitation to "Debate Night"
- Tree Planting
- Workshops for Firework Zones
- Various Training Opportunities Offered to the Community
- Street Cleaning in Crosshill
- Consultation on Developments Within the Meadows Country Park
- The Bells Project
- Planning Applications

Contributions Paid to Fife Council from Developers Building New Houses in Ballingry. The contributions were agreed at £45,794 to help fund affordable housing, transport, amenity and play improvements in the area.

Some of the above are on-going issues for our community, but we keep pushing on. Some have been a good success, such as writing direct to the Chair of the Cowdenbeath Area Committee to finally get things moving with the Bells project, on behalf of the group from the churches involved, and transferring funds to Fife Council to contribute to the cost of the project. The project is now well underway.

Committees and Panels

The Community Council also represent Benarty on various committees and panels that affect our area. Such as:

The Ventient Energy Westfield Wind Farm Community Fund (Benarty), which allocates grants of up to £2,000 to projects in our community.

- The Fife Environmental Energy Park, Westfield. This is two-pronged; we are included in discussions on the development of the energy park, which allows us to make representations on, for example, air quality sampling and monitoring traffic volumes, as well as keeping tabs on the development itself and the number of jobs that will hopefully be created for locals. The developers have also started a Community Fund to allocate up to £2,000 for projects in Benarty and our representative has a say in those decisions.

Benarty Centre Management Committee. As a regular user of the Benarty Centre, we are included in meetings about the Centre's management, together with other local groups who regularly use the premises.

Presentations

We also have presentations from various groups and individuals at our monthly meetings. Some are to keep us informed of new projects etc that are being launched in Benarty, and some are looking for support from the Community Council. Over the past year we had presentations from:

- Fife Environmental Energy Park, Westfield (to provide information on the development and showing the site layout)
- Community Social Work Team (based in Kirkcaldy but looking to establish a community hub in Benarty)
- Fife Youth Sports Academy (looking for a letter of support for their development)
- Benarty Community Education Worker (to introduce herself and share some of her early plans for Benarty)
- BRAG Enterprises (to provide information on their Community Growing Project and seeking a letter of support for the project)
- Architecture Scotland & Coalfields Regeneration Trust (to provide information on Local Place Plans & Climate Action Towns and to seek Benarty's involvement in creating both for our community)

Regular Reports

The Community Council get regular reports from:

- The Police (giving, for example, crime statistics for Benarty; conviction rates and any special projects that they are undertaking)
- Benarty Primary School
- St Kenneth's Primary School
- Secretary (on, for example, correspondence that's been received; or requests for action)

All reports are intended to keep us up to speed with what's going on in these areas, and also so that we can pick up where the Community Council need to take action.

Support to Local Groups and Individuals

Over the past year, financial contributions were given to the following:

<u>Group/Individual</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Amount</u> £
<u>Donations</u>		
Armistice Service 2002	To cover the cost of a Wreath, Bugler, Organist & Catering	233.30
Benarty Events Group	Pipe Band/Highland Dancing Competitions	300
Benarty Events Group	Gala	300
Litter Busters	Litter Picking Project with Both Primary Schools	200
Newsletter Sub-Group	Start-Up & Printing Costs	570

Adverts

Benarty Heritage Preservation Group	100
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<u>Group/Individual</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Amount</u>
<u>Microgrants</u>		
Benarty Primary School	Curling Equipment	250
Lennon Docherty	Safety Helmet	250
Fairy Wood Group	Materials for New Exhibits	250
Litter Busters	Equipment & Awards	250
Lochore Miners' Welfare Institute	Laptop & WIFI Extenders	250
Meedies Running Club	Scottish Athletic Jog Leader Training	250
Newsletter Sub-Group	Printing Costs	250
Santa Benarty	Running Costs of Santa Sleigh	250
St Serf's Toddlers' Group	New Toys, Batteries, Snacks	250

Citizen and Young Citizen of the Year

The Community Council administer and decide on the annual awards to Citizen and Young Citizen of the Year. Nominations are invited from members of the public and the Community Council consider all nominations, decide who the winners will be, then organise the trophies and pay for a small ceremony to present the awards.

It is important that we recognise and reward those individuals and groups who go above and beyond to help our community, even if they themselves shy away from such limelight.

Benarty is blessed with people who regularly help out and volunteer for various events or have achieved great things on a personal basis. Therefore from 2024, the Community Council will be extending its recognition, on behalf of the whole Benarty community, to these kind-hearted souls.

Get Involved

Now you know what the Community Council has done over the past year. Would you like to help?

We would love to see some new faces around the table, and we would love to see some younger people getting involved. You don't need to have any specialist knowledge. All that is required is that you are 16 years or older, live in Benarty, have an interest in your community and want to see Benarty continue to flourish.

If you're interested, please contact John Purdie, our Secretary on 07564 039873.

If you're not quite sure if it's for you, how about just coming along to one of the meetings. They're open to the public and you don't have to say anything if you don't want to. Just see for yourself what goes on.

The Community Council plays an essential role in Benarty and we would hate to see it flounder because of lack of members.



Save the Cage / Save the Date

The Save the Cage Group are having a concert on **Sunday 20th August, from 2pm to 6pm** in Lochore Miners' Welfare Institute, to raise funds for their project to have major mining artefacts relocated from the National Mining Museum of Scotland to Lochore Meadows Country Park.

The concert will be a ticket-only event and we will be entertained by several bands.

The group has been obtaining quotes from local businesses to build plinths, transport equipment and design & manufacture story boards about the equipment. The aim is to have the display open around the Mary Pithead Frame by the summer of 2024. The proceeds from the concert will go towards the costs of making that happen.

Please watch out for announcements on the Save the Cage Facebook page, and other social media sites, on the cost of tickets and where you can buy them.

This is a massive, important and exciting project and the group would love to have the whole community involved.

Grants from the Benarty Forum

The Benarty Forum are offering small grants to individuals and groups within the Benarty Community to support projects within the local area.

There are no set criteria for the grants, so if you have a project that you're trying to get off the ground, or one that is currently running that could do with some funding, this may be a good source for you and your group.

The grants available are up to £250, but more may be considered if there is a strong enough case.

All you have to do is write to: Michelle Scally, Secretary, Benarty Forum, Benarty Centre, Flockhouse Avenue, Ballingry. KY5-8JH with your request. Your letter should include details of the project (or what you need the funding for); how much you are requesting; the total cost of the project; and your contact details.

There is no set deadline for grant applications. The Forum will consider them as and when they are submitted at their regular monthly meetings.



UNISON Fife represents employees of the council and workers in voluntary organisations in and around Fife.

We negotiate for better pay and conditions, help individuals in trouble and campaign for a safer, fairer society.

**To join UNISON go to
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<https://www.Unisonfife.org.uk>**

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Funding Boost for Newsletter



We are delighted to say that we will be able to continue publishing the Newsletter for the next year, thanks to a grant from the Ventient Energy Westfield Wind Farm Community Fund (Benarty), which is administered by Foundation Scotland.

The Panel were persuaded by our argument that the Newsletter provides a much-needed community service and recognised the excellent feedback we've received from the people of Benarty.

We are grateful to the Panel members for their support, and thank them whole-heartedly for their grant of £2,000.

If you have any comments on the Newsletter; have any burning issues that you'd like us to cover; or if you'd like to share a story, poem, photo or announcement, we would love to hear from you. Contact details are on the back page of this issue.

Also, if you fancy yourself as a budding reporter, enjoy talking to people and like to know in advance about what's going on in our your community, or would like to contribute to the publication of the Newsletter in some way, please contact Charlotte or Debbie. Contact details are on the back page of this Newsletter. We're nice people (so we've been told) and would welcome your help.

BENARTY NOW AND THEN...

South Glencraig



Before the Cycle Track was built



Pictures courtesy of the Benarty Heritage Preservation Group

Have Your Say

If you have any opinions, that you'd like to share on this Newsletter, or if there are any announcements, articles or photos you'd like to contribute, please email them to: charlotte.howe@benartycc.org.uk; or you can hand them in, or post them to, Charlotte Howe, Benarty Community Council, Benarty Centre, Flockhouse Avenue, Ballingry. KY5-8JH.

Benarty Community Council

The Benarty Community Council meets on the first Thursday of every month at 7pm in the Benarty Centre, Ballingry. All residents of Benarty are welcome to attend these meetings and ask questions on any item on the agenda. Residents can also raise other issues, that haven't been covered by the agenda, towards the end of each meeting. Alternatively, you can write to the Secretary of the Community Council, Benarty Centre, Flockhouse Avenue, Ballingry. KY5-8JH; or email the Secretary at: john.purdie@benartycc.org.uk. The papers for meetings are also available online at: www.benartycc.org.uk and in the local library in Benarty Centre.

Local Councillors Contact Details

Benarty is part of Ward 8, within Fife Council's boundaries, which also includes Cardenden, Lochgelly & Lumphinnans. There are 4 Local Councillors who cover the Ward, so each of the four represent Benarty as part of their remit. If you have any issues, about areas for which Fife Council is responsible, you can contact any of the Local Councillors direct. The details are shown below.

Name	Party	Telephone Number	Email Address
Linda Erskine	Labour	Mobile: 07930 607403 Fife House: 03451 555555 Ext 442455	cldr.linda.erskine@fife.gov.uk
Rosemary Liewald	SNP	Mobile: 07725 223776 Fife House: 03451 555555 Ext 442320	cldr.rosemary.liewald@fife.gov.uk
Mary Lockhart	Labour	Mobile: 07515 289982 Fife House: 03451 555555 Ext 442320	cldr.mary.lockhart@fife.gov.uk
Lea McLelland	SNP	Mobile: 07596 727308 Fife House: 03451 555555 Ext 442320	cldr.lea.mcllland@fife.gov.uk

You can also write to any of the four Local Councillors at: c/o Members Services, Fife House, Glenrothes, Fife. KY7-5LT

Advertising

If you'd like to advertise your business in this Newsletter, please contact Debbie Doyle at debbie.doyle@benartycc.org.uk; or leave a note with your contact details at the Benarty Centre and Debbie will contact you.