

Hello everyone,

We hope you've had a good year and are looking forward to the coming festivities. There are a few events happening in Blackburn over the winter, hopefully you can attend some of them. All the best for Christmas and in the New Year,
Jenny and Jackie

Fintray Kinellar Keithhall Church

Dear Friends,

I am writing to introduce myself as the new Church of Scotland minister for the Parish of Fintray, Kinellar and Keithhall. Having just been in post since the beginning of November, I am still in the process of getting to know the local area. My impression so far is very positive. It is a lovely part of the country, the folk I have met (to date!) are very friendly and there is a strong sense of the community.

Whilst it will take some time to settle in I look forward to getting involved and supporting the local community. The only negative experience to date was when somebody recognised me from the time I visited Dyce Primary School many years ago. Thinking they would have been a young parent or trainee teacher, I discovered they were in fact one of the pupils. As a consequence, just as I am recovering from the stress of house moving I am now embroiled in a mid-life crisis!

I have a number of interests, which include running, a love of the outdoors, driving a twenty six year old Land Rover and walking my two large but friendly, Golden Retriever Dogs, Wesley and Calvin. As the new parish minister, I will be working hard to ensure that the rich heritage of faith, that stretches back many centuries within the local area, will continue in a way that is relevant to twenty first century life. Finally, if I can be of any help or support in any faith or pastoral matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best wishes,
Rev Sean Swindells
Parish of Fintray, Kinellar & Keithhall
01224 790493

Festive Food Frenzy!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Oh, tis the season to be jolly and go consumer mad! The shops, they close bit for a day! So must buy many things to throw away
Gaitherins o' a' kinds, wi folk fae afar, we must buy, buy, buy
Nae plannin, nae thinkin aheid, jist panic. Tae cater for the masses is the thocht gan roon ma heid.
Ah, bit stop and think. Wid you turn up empty handed, for that once a year
clan gaitherin? Or wid ye take along a selection o' things, jist incase? Yes, I hear you cry. So this is what we get. We all go mad buying for those events when everyone we have ever known turns up and wants something to eat, be it buffet or fine dining.

2nd Jan it does loom, when all festivities are deen doon. Noo fit tae eat? We're a' fair scunnered o' a' things festive, so 'at chunk o ham, cheeseboard and fancy chilli jam that lurks in darkened depths o' the fridge, gan past their best before dates, get ta'en tae the fore and chucked in the bin, tae adorn the dinner table no more
So keep it simple, let's think before we buy. Waste Services don't want a selection of your avoidable food waste come the first week in January. Think ahead, plan your menus, consider the waste you've had in the past, and let's make this a Waste Aware – Love Food HATE Waste Festive season

<http://scotland.lovefoodhatewaste.com/>

Item by Norman Wright, Community Waste Officer –
Garioch

Wasteline 03456 08 12 07

We hope that you will be able to join us at any of our Christmas services which are spread across the Parish:

24th December CHRISTMAS EVE

- 6.00pm Family-friendly Service at Kinellar Community Hall. Children welcome.
- 7.30pm Family Carol Service at Keithhall Church
- 11.15pm Watchnight Service at Fintray Church

25th December CHRISTMAS DAY

- 10.00am Family Service at Fintray Church

At these Christmas services there will be a retiring collection in aid of the Trussell Trust Food Bank in Inverurie or you may wish to donate non-perishable food items.

All other services in December will be held in Fintray Church each Sunday at 11.00am.

1st Kinellar Scout Group

Beaver Scouts have achieved their Experiment and Cyclist activity badges and completed their Skills Challenge this term. They held a Ninja Turtle sleepover at the end of October, enjoyed their annual Halloween party, took part in Blackburn Night Walk and are looking forward to the Panto in December with the Cubs and Scouts.

Cubs are out and about visiting Halfords, Tesco and Pets at Home this term as well as taking part in a Million Hands project. They held a joint Halloween party (picture attached) with the Scouts and are holding a Promise Party in December

Scouts took part in a movie camp at Kintore, and are looking forward to a Santa camp in December. This term they are also playing golf, holding a Bring a Friend Night and joining with Cubs for a Haggis Hunt.

Kemnay Movie Nights

Kemnay Village Hall

Wednesday 28th December, film suitable for all

Fridays 27th January and 24th February 2017

7 for 7.30 pm, £4 per person

Saturdays 28th January and 25th February

Free family film 9 for 9.15 am

Blackburn Football Boys Club

is a well- established club already managing teams for 2004, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 age groups with over 80 players. We are planning to establish a new 2011 team in spring 2017. If you have a child, who was born in 2011, interested in joining the club please contact the club secretary (Sarah) by emailing

blackburnfc2011@hotmail.co.uk

with your child's full name

Sarah

Girlguiding

All Girlguiding groups will be continuing as normal after the school closure. Both Rainbow groups will be run from Kinellar Community Hall and the Brownie group will be at Westhill Academy, all on their usual days and times. A new Brownie group has been set up in Hatton of Fintray. If you would like to express an interest in helping out at any of the groups or want to put your daughter on the waiting list please register your details at www.girlguiding.org.uk/interested.

What's Happening at Kintore Library

If you or your group are holding an event, why not drop a poster off at the library for us to display free of charge

Dad Creche: For a trial three months over the winter. The idea is that dads can bring their children to the library on a Saturday from 10.30 – 11.30 when hopefully there will be other dads to meet and chat with, and maybe even have a cuppa. Dads, and everyone else, are of course welcome at all times.

Kintore: Centre of the Universe, a free talk from Alison McCall. The date is yet to be fixed, but likely to be a Monday or Thursday in February, please contact the Library for details

Library Direct A fantastic free service for anyone who cannot get to the Library themselves – even for a short time. The RVS can deliver books including large print, audio books, CDs and DVDs, just contact the library for more details

Bra Bank We can take your new and gently worn bras, and new adults and children's pants. These are forwarded to charities which support adults and children in Africa. This is, for instance, a great way to help with the education of girls to ensure that they do not miss days at school.

Museum Cabinet Victorians

Bookbug Stories and Rhymes for babies to 5 year olds These take place on the 2nd Friday and 4th Tuesday of the month from 2 – 2.30pm at the Library, there is no charge and no need to book, big brothers and sisters are more than welcome in the holidays. Stay behind afterwards for a chat with the other mums and carers and enjoy a cuppa.

Kinellar School Parent Council

The School opened its doors on Saturday November 5th for the community to reminisce and share both teaching and learning memories of Kinellar Primary School. The staff enjoyed the morning sharing many stories about their school and would like to thank all those who attended. The Parent Council was grateful to be part of the morning. Kinellar Primary School temporarily moves to the new Midmill School in Kintore until 2018 and the children and teachers are very much looking forward to the new facilities. The Parent Council will be running their calendar of events at Midmill for the duration and we look forward to your incredible support as usual. You can keep up to date on the move on the School's Twitter page and our own Facebook page but for those without access we are very pleased to now have a section on the Kinellar School website and you can find updates from us here <http://kinellar.aberdeenshire.sch.uk/parent-council/>

Regards,
Alastair Fleming
Chairperson
Kinellar School Parent Council

Kinellar Kuppa – Every Wednesday 9.30-11.30 in Kinellar Community Hall

Everyone is welcome and there are toys available to keep little ones occupied. Our friendly group of volunteers enjoy meeting and serving you with a home bake and a cuppa. Why not come along to meet your friends or make new friends. Be assured of a warm welcome and be happy in the knowledge that your £2.50 payment for some delicious refreshments is donated to your local community hall and church.

Your Councillor's Report

My colleague Cllr Paul Johnston and I have been pressing Aberdeenshire Council for many years to introduce meaningful public consultation on the Council's annual revenue budget. This is the budget set each February that allocates the funding to pay the running costs of the various Council services (except housing) during the following financial year. This year's (2016/17) revenue budget totals just over £530 million. Traditionally, the various political groups on the Council devised their own revenue budget proposals and then revealed these on the day the budget was set. A vote was taken between the different budget proposals and the proposal that got the most support (typically that from the largest political group) was adopted. Thus there was no opportunity for public consultation or for negotiation or compromise between the different political parties. Cllr Johnston and I have long argued this was a poor system so, when the opportunity came last year, we secured the Council's agreement to a different approach. Now, the different political groups on the Council are asked to produce draft budget proposals for publication in November. There is then over two months before the actual budget is set in February during which there can be public consultation on budget options and dialogue between the political groups to see if cross-party agreement can be reached on some provisions. We believe this more open, deliberative approach can ultimately lead to better decisions on allocating funding amongst the different services provided by the Council.

Setting the revenue budget is usually a difficult job because generally the increase in total funding available to the Council (if any) does not keep up with the increase in the 'need to spend' on services due to increased demand (for example, rising numbers of school pupils) and increased costs (inflation, wage increases etc.). So savings have to be found to balance the budget for the following year (for example, increased efficiency or reductions in some services), or some additional income.

Generally, within the overall revenue budget, a variety of approaches to savings have to be adopted to achieve a balanced budget. This year coming, for the first time in nine years, one option available to the Council is to increase income by putting up the Council Tax.

Aberdeenshire Council is expected to have to make significant savings in its revenue budget for 2017/18 and in subsequent years. At this stage, before the Scottish Government grant settlement is known, there is considerable uncertainty about the amount the Council will have to save to balance its budget for next year. However, based on reasonable assumptions, additional spending cuts or other savings totalling over £10 million are expected to be required, over and above the savings already identified in the draft 2017/18 revenue budget published last February.

Clearly, if possible, savings should be found firstly by making efficiency improvements. There may also be some 'painless' savings – for example, due to lower than expected interest rates resulting in lower loan charges. However, I'm sorry to say, I don't think it will be possible to balance next year's revenue budget without making some cuts to services, even with an increase in the Council Tax. My approach to the budget will be to strive to minimise the impact of the savings required on the most important services, while looking for some targeted redirection of funding towards priorities such as measures to reduce speeding and increase road safety.

At the time of writing this report, the new temporary home for Kinellar School, Midmill School, had just been completed. I've visited the brand new building and I was seriously impressed, especially by the bright, colourful interior and decorative artwork. Planning permission has now been granted for the replacement Kinellar School building, also permission for the demolition of the existing school. These are essential steps towards getting the new Kinellar School built.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to wish everyone a Happy Christmas.

Cllr Martin Ford

(790052, maf.cairnie@gmail.com)

Gardening Matters.

Firstly: Apologies for missing the autumn issue of the 'Banter'. Fortunately, all was not lost because the display in the planters and flower beds around the village spoke for themselves. The volunteers who did the spade work and organised the watering to make it all happen are deserving of our thanks and comments of appreciation.

In the fine days of late August, September into October the plants responded with a blissful, extended display of health, colour and beauty which was just the reward we hoped for after all our efforts.

Currently work is on-going in preparation for what we can expect in the early spring days.

I was pleased with the response to my request for donations of surplus perennial bedding plants to brighten up the hall grounds. They have been planted out but will take time to become established and make an impact. There is room for more so I repeat my donation request.

Like elsewhere, autumn pruning is continuing, the grounds are being given a bit of a tidy up and in the coming weeks, before frost sets in, an attempt will be made to plant up a quantity of bulbs that have come to hand.

Gardening Matters, like a lot of what goes on around the village making it a pleasant location in which to live, depends on the contribution made by volunteers, people taking an interest and doing a little bit to help make things happen! Volunteering is not that onerous, in fact it is quite pleasant and fulfilling. Think about it. And the next time you are passing one of us, stop and have a chat.

Thanks to all involved.
John McGregor 01224 790468

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A few Christmas cracker jokes:

What's the best Christmas present in the world?

A broken drum, you just can't beat it.

What did the shoe say to the hat?
You go on a head and I'll go on foot.

What do you call a train loaded with toffee?
A chew chew train.

Acknowledging some of our regular volunteers – Keeping Blackburn bonny

As we near the end of 2016 and look forward to the changes that are coming in and around Blackburn we thought, on behalf of you the residents of Blackburn, that we would take the opportunity of acknowledging a few of the people who have over the past year helped to make our Village more attractive for us to live in.

As you know from the regular Gardening Matters articles we have a band of gardeners who work all year round to brighten up our surroundings. Two of them, Mr Alan Middler and Mr Douglas Cummings, also promote the area to visitors.

The Christmas Tree has been ordered from the Forestry Commission and will be collected by Adam and Keith Craigmile.

The Christmas Street lights have all been repaired and checked by Mr Jim Ogg, ready for the Blackburn & District Rotary Club Rotarians to erect. We thank MTM Construction, who have once again lent us their cherry picker and driver for this project. The Santa Claus light fittings are showing signs of wear and tear so we have managed to find a company who will design and make replacement ones for next year. Thanks to Anneke Milne and her team of ladies who do the door to door collection for the Christmas Lights we will be in a position to order five new fittings for next year.

We hope that those of you who were able to join us on 27th November for the switching on of the Christmas Tree lights enjoyed the mulled wine, mince pies and carol singing led by the Inverurie Rotary Glee Club.

Thanks to all of you.
Betty Craigmile and Dorothy Lamb

Kinellar Community Hall

The car park has finally been repaired. We are still fundraising to recoup the cost so please continue to support everyone's efforts to help us.

Thanks to all groups involved for their fundraising efforts so far and the events planned. Also all who attended the gala this year, thank you for helping us to make this happen.

New to the hall!

- Kids Gymnastics on Thursday afternoons! P1-3 3.45pm-4.45pm (this class is currently full but we are running a waiting list) P4-7 4.45pm-5.45pm - still a couple of spaces left. New block will be starting Thursday 12th January.
- Pre-School Gymnastics which, at the moment, runs 12.15pm - 1pm Thursdays for children aged 3 (or turning 3 this year) and we still currently have spaces.

We will also be looking to start a second class on a Tuesday from 10am-10.45am. Please contact reception for more information.

- Yoga has now started on Mondays & Thursdays 7pm - 8pm. For more information on this please Contact Rianna at yogawithrianna12@gmail.com

Fundraising events - Dates for your Diary in 2017

- The Bloody Marys are back! Saturday 18th February. 7.30pm Tickets £15 and are available from hall reception.
- Breakneck Comedy night - Saturday 22nd April 2017
- Kinellar Gala - May - Date to be Confirmed.
- Brian McAdams (Brian Adams Tribute) Saturday 10th June 2017

SUMMER SASS BEAUTY IS COMING TO KINELLAR HALL IN DECEMBER!!

If you fancy some pampering in December Summer Sass Beauty with Marie will be based at Kinellar Hall on Thursday 1st, 8th, 15th & 22nd from 4pm-8pm. Marie will be offering St Tropez tans & Skinny Tans, Gelica Nails, Lash Lift & Body Waxing. Find Summer Sass Beauty on Facebook for more info!

Please keep an eye on the Community Noticeboards for information about events nearer the time and also on Kinellar Hall's Facebook page for up to date information on events, classes and all other hall info!

Blackburn Bowling Club

Our season is well under way, with one competition completed and another under way.

As mentioned in the Summer Banter, we have started an initiative to raise funds towards the costs for repair of the Hall car park. A dance (Scottish Old Time) has been arranged for next June in the Hall, it is also planned to organise a Quiz Night. Please look out for further details of these events.

We would very much appreciate the involvement of other groups and organisations within the village in whatever way they can, whether it's through helping at these events, organising their own events or making donations. We are indebted to Kinellar Scouts for their generous donation, and the Kinellar Women's Institute (formerly the W. R. I.) who organised an extremely successful concert, starring the Inverurie Rotary Glee Club. The car park is an essential part of the Hall's facilities, and it is important that it should be a safe area of access.

If your group can help with this initiative in any way please contact the Bowling Club through the Secretary (myself) or through the Hall Reception.

Steve Wright
Tel: 01224 790464



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Season's Greetings ★

and

★ All the very best in 2017 ★

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You can contact me by phone, email barrywilliams9288@btinternet.com or on my Facebook page: [Barry Williams Driving Instructor](#).

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