FREE

eyemouthliving

Your local community magazine

February 2025

https://www.eyemouth.org/magazine

welcome

Happy New Year and welcome to the February issue of *Eyemouth Living*. Hope you have had a great break – while we have enjoyed this chance to rest, we're now keen to let you know about all that you can read in this issue! It's great to hear all about the many different things going on in our community, whether it's seeing Sea the Change's trishaws out and about or the many different things that Splash support and make happen. Also while we all know that February is the home of Valentine's day there's a whole host of other interesting February facts for you to check out, but don't forget also to read the fascinating history of two local fishermen and what they brought to the local fishing scene. If you're looking for new things to do have a look at the recipe page, or come along and join one of the U3A's fascinating open meetings.

Whatever you find yourself doing, we hope you have a fabulous February and we'll see you soon!

Andy Haddow
Chair, Eyemouth Development Trust

Compiled by Jackie, Jo, Joanna, Lella and Susie.
Magazine contact: livingmagazine@eyemouth.org

Pick up points for the magazine in Eyemouth are currently: Community Centre, Mason's Hall, EU Church, The Pet Shop, Beachcomber, The First and Last, FMA, ReTweed, Waterfront Cafe, Oblo, Larder, Petrol Station, Swimming pool/Leisure Centre, Library, BAVS shop, Coop, General Store, Swan Court, Linkim Court. We also distribute to: Ayton, Reston and Coldingham village shops.

You can also view the magazine at: https://www.eyemouth.org/magazine

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This is YOUR magazine and we would love to know what you think of it! Are we getting it right? Anything else you'd like included?

Scanning the QR code will take you to a couple of questions we would like you to answer to give us an idea of what we might be doing right or wrong. Please be polite, a very small group of real people will read your comments!

If you would like to promote your commercial business by placing an advert in the magazine our rates are as follows:

Full page (portrait size)	£100.00
Half page (landscape size)	£50.00
Quarter page (portrait size)	£25.00
Eighth page (landscape size)	£10.00

Community and volunteer groups are promoted free of charge.
Please contact us at: livingmagazine@eyemouth.org

u3a

Charity No SCO 31477

The Eyemouth U3A ended 2024 on a high with an excellent and well-attended lunch at the Heathers Restaurant and a fascinating Open Meeting on 11 December. Richard Blake presented a remarkable insight into local history with his book *Sugar, Slaves and High Society*.

Sea the Change presented to our first session of 2025 with information on their work with local communities helping us to get outdoors, enjoy and protect our environment. They are involved with many projects from beach wheelchairs, volunteer rubbish collection to promoting cycling and ebike hire as well as tricycle rides for the less mobile.

Our next Open Meeting will be held on Wednesday 12 February with a presentation by Denise Walton about James Hutton ... the unsung father of modern geology.

Our free-to-all Open Meetings are held at the Eyemouth Community Centre and start at 10.30am (refreshments from 10.00).

We hope to see you there.

https://eastberwickshire.u3asite.uk

abundant borders recipe

Easy Fish Bake

This is an easy way to bake some of our wonderful local white fish, keeping it healthy by serving with a side of greens.

EASY FISH BAKE

Ingredients

- 500g white fish, (haddock, cod, whiting etc), cut into 6-8 pieces
- 1½ tablespoons olive oil
- 3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 lemon (or you can use bottled lemon juice)
- ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1 tablespoon thyme
- ½ onion, thinly sliced
- 2 leeks, thinly sliced
- 750g baby or cherry tomatoes (or you can use thinly sliced salad tomatoes)

Method

1. Preheat oven to 200C (400F) (Gas mark 6)
2. Mix oil, garlic, salt, pepper, thyme and lemon zest (if using)
3. Coat the fish and set aside
4. Place onion and leek in a lightly oiled baking dish and drizzle with lemon juice.
5. Sprinkle on salt and pepper and top with tomatoes
6. Place in oven for 30-35 minutes, giving dish a good shake halfway through
7. Place fish pieces on top and drizzle over any remaining marinade
8. Put back in the oven until fish cooked, about 7-8 minutes
9. Remove from oven. Drizzle with a little more lemon juice and scatter over thyme
10. Serve with crusty bread (or your choice of accompaniment)

Abundant Borders (SC049008)
web - abundantborders.org.uk & facebook.com/abundantborders
contact: robin@abundantborders.org.uk

sea the change

Sea the Change Rolls Out New Trishaws in Eyemouth

A new project is giving people with mobility challenges or those feeling socially isolated a fresh perspective on Eyemouth's scenic beauty.

Sea the Change is running a Cycling Without Age Scotland Chapter in Eyemouth, introducing two fantastic trishaws designed to bring joy and connection to the community.

The trishaws provide a unique opportunity for those who may find it difficult to get out and about, offering rides through some of Eyemouth's most picturesque spots. Sea the Change is already bringing smiles to residents of Saltgreens Residential Care Home with regular Tuesday morning outings, and the service is open to all locals in the surrounding area.

Eyemouth's project joins a network of 53 chapters across Scotland and is supported by a dedicated team of eight trained volunteer 'pilots.' These pilots, who guide the trishaws and their passengers, are at the heart of the initiative. To ensure more people can join the effort, Sea the Change is hosting regular training sessions for new volunteers.

sea the change

Alice Fisher, Executive Officer of Sea the Change, shared her excitement about the initiative: "These trishaw rides bring so much joy – not just to the passengers and their families, but also to our volunteer pilots. Families are sharing this experience – bringing grandparents out on a ride together – providing meaningful connections for people facing mobility challenges or social isolation. The response from the community has been incredible, and we're thrilled to see the project thriving."

If you'd like to volunteer or learn more about the project, contact Dixie Scott at dixie@seathechange.org.uk or visit the Cycle Shack at Manse Road, Eyemouth, TD14 5JE during opening hours: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, 10.00am – 1.00pm.

For more information: https://www.seathechange.org.uk/cycleforchange.

"If you go down in the woods today, you're sure of a big surprise"
Jimmy Kennedy

With the winter season bringing its mixture of stormy weather, frosty mornings and dreich days, spotting any sort of wildlife is difficult. But if you look hard enough, there's always the chance of finding something a 'little different' going on amongst the leaf litter around our oak trees.

Our region is home to a native of Scotland, the Sessile Oak and the also the invader, the English oak or *Pedunculate*. During the Autumn, these trees are full of acorns, the seeds of the tree, and on closer inspection some of these may even be home to Gall wasps (*Cynipidae*). With a bit of nature detecting, you may come across acorns in the leaf litter with a strange 'alien' growth on them. With a burgeoning desire to know more, I delved into the world of the Knopper Gall Wasp (*Andrious quercuscalicis*).

Galls appear on Oaks in many forms, with up to 70 different ones being commonly found on some of the largest trees. They are created by Gall wasps (about the size of a mosquito) who cause a growth to form on the tree once the eggs have been injected into the base of fertilised flowers in Spring. In this case, the Knopper Gall Wasp would inject the eggs with its ovipositor (a tube-like organ). This causes a genetic change to occur, and the acorn grows with a 'helmet' … a gall, inside which the larvae feed on the tissues of the tree. At this stage, they can be a range of colours and during the summer, they will harden and turn brown and woody. Some acorns can have two or more galls and completely enclose the fruit.

Knopper Galls on Acorns

Into Autumn, the tree will start shedding its acorns and the gall falls to the ground alongside its host. But that's not the end for our friend, the Knopper Gall Wasp. During the winter, it will stay inside the gall and with the returning Spring, it will break out of its enclosure in the form of an adult. This 9-month relationship with the oak is a fascinating story, one in which it forces the tree to become its host and then feeds on it as it grows. And there is a happy ending … the tree doesn't suffer any ill effect from the chemical-induced distortion apart from the loss of some of its fruit. So, the next time you are kicking through a pile of leaves below an oak tree, look out for the galls on acorns and remember our new friend … the Knopper Gall Wasp.

wildlife notes

There are still plenty of other things to see on your wanderings in the early part of the year. Fungi are still evident in our woodlands so see how many different ones you can find, especially brackets such as the Velvet Shank (*left*). These fungi provide valuable food sources for invertebrates during the colder months.

And if you are near any water sources, Dippers (*right*) become increasing active as they look for nesting sites during the run up to Spring. Look for fast flowing streams with rocky ledges just above the water line.

David Lewis, NTS Ranger Team,
St. Abb's Head NNR

Further Reading

Britain's Plant Galls, Michael Chinery, Wild Guides 2011

The British Plant Gall Society – www.britishplantgallsociety.org

All Photo Credits David Lewis

Rats in the Garden

Biodiversity in the garden is a wonderful thing but it can bring some problems. Encouraging a larger range of plants and animals into your garden means that some of them may not be the ones you want to see more of. Most people would love to have a hedgehog wandering through their shrubs or to watch squirrels balancing on their fence.

But rats are a different matter. They can cause a lot of damage both inside and outside of your property. This wet autumn and winter have meant that rats are seeking places to stay and are targeting gardens and homes. The longer they are left to their own devices, the more damage they will cause. A female rat gives birth to an average of six litters a year, each with as many as 12 rat pups. Rats reach sexual maturity after around a month so two rats can produce over a 1,000 offspring in one year. They are mostly nocturnal so you may not see them running around but there are plenty of signs to be aware of such as droppings and places where they have been chewing. They dig extensive burrows in the garden (*see above*) and in particular under sheds and decking.

Not only do they do damage including chewing electrical cables and causing structural damage but they are a serious health risk. They transmit many diseases such as *Leptospirosis* (Weil's Disease), which can cause kidney and liver failure. People and their pets can be infected through direct contact with rat droppings, scratches or bites as well as by inhalation of dust particles contaminated with rat urine.

Discourage rats by removing the three things they need; food, shelter and nesting sites:

Remove any food such as pet food, spilt bird food or fallen fruit

Use hanging bird feeders, place a baffle on the bird table to prevent them climbing up and keep them away from bushes or shrubs

gardening notes

Add peppery products to your bird food. The birds can't taste it but rodents don't like it!

Keep your food compost bin securely closed and place all rubbish including used food containers in the Wheelie Bin.

Turn your garden refuse regularly and water it – rats don't like a wet bed!

Move garden pots and ornaments around since rats dislike changes.

Peppermint oil is good for deterring rats as they hate the smell. Pour some oil onto scraps of fabric and place around your garden especially near sheds and compost bins.

If these actions prove ineffective you can buy sprung rat traps to kill them or contact a local pest controller.

Watch out for mice too (*right*) which can also be a real problem...

Meanwhile there are plenty of other useful jobs to carry out in the garden whilst the plants are still dormant.

Prune late-summer clematis, winter jasmine and mahonia and cut back wisteria to three buds from the base to encourage lots of flowers (*right*). Elder and Buddleia can be cut back right to the base.

Herbaceous perennials and ornamental grasses should be divided now.

Once the snowdrops and aconites have finished flowering they can be divided and re-planted.

Prepare vegetable seed beds, removing any remaining plants, digging them over and adding compost or manure.

Don't forget to start chitting your early seed potatoes.

Caroline Lathe (Ayton Gardening Society)

The Projects run by Splash for the Eyemouth Community

Eyemouth Larder and community Fridge based at the Parish Church welcomed just under 2,300 visitors in 2024 and together we saved TEN TONNES of food from going to landfill. The larder is open to all. Bring a £1 donation and choose up to ten items. The larder is stocked with food surplus from local supermarkets and from the Fare Share organisation to which we subscribe to receive a weekly delivery of additional surplus foods.

Splash Brunch Hub. Held in the Community Centre every Thursday serving breakfast rolls from 10.30 and lunch from 11.30. In 2024 Alison and her hub volunteers served over 2,000 visitors more than 3,000 meals. A warm welcome awaits you for breakfast, lunch or hot drinks and home baking.

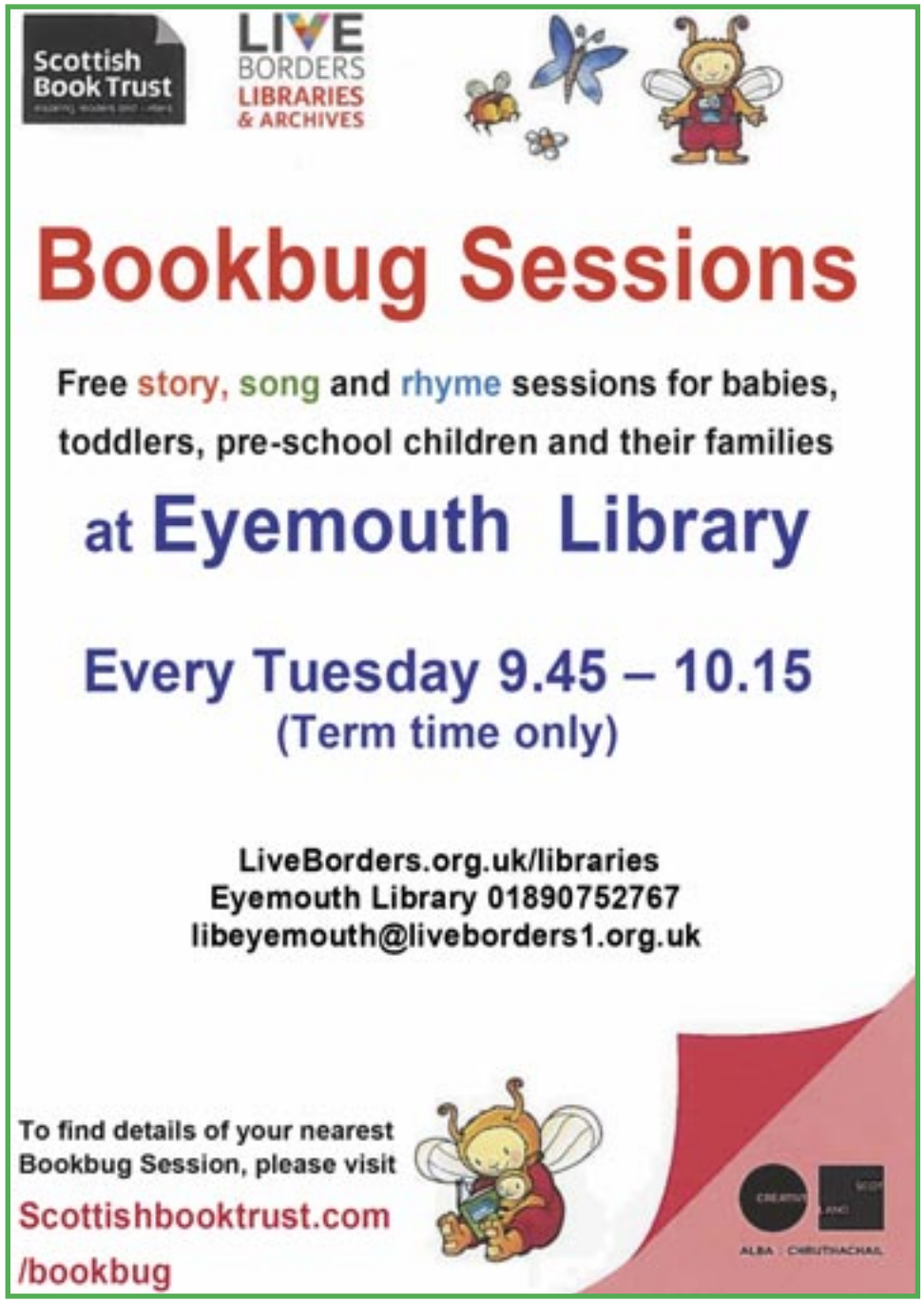
Eyemouth Women's Group. Held in the Masons Hall every Tuesday, the women's group offers a weekly session from 1 to 3pm with a diverse range of new skills, crafts, talks and discussion with snacks and hot and cold drinks provided.

Eyemouth Living Magazine. This magazine is produced by a small editorial group and welcomes content from the wider public who have skills and knowledge to share.

Kirk Square Fair. Re-established by Splash in 2024 the Fair will return on June 7th with live music, food and craft stalls and local organisations and businesses all taking part.

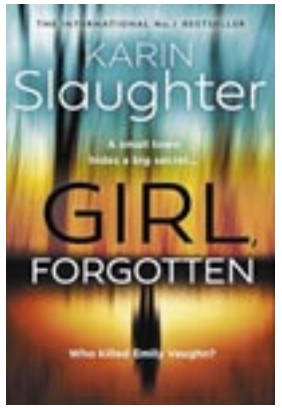
Splash also delivers cooking sessions in local Primary schools, a Christmas project that delivers over 100 hampers to families and single person households in need, activities for younger people and it also works in collaboration with over a dozen other local organisations and agencies. The work we do is only possible due to the amazing group of volunteers that give up their time every week to deliver the projects for the community.

splash



book news

Library opening times:
Monday 10am–1pm, 2–5pm, Thursday 10am–1pm, Friday 10am–1pm, 2–5pm.



Girl Forgotten by Karin Slaughter

Karin Slaughter is one of the best authors in American crime fiction. Her characters Sara Linton and Will Trent feature in many books and now we have a new one: Andrea Oliver.

As a newly qualified US Marshal Andrea has been an official Marshal for no more than a few minutes when she's sent on a secret mission by a US Senator. Under the guise of an official assignment, she is sent to Longbill Beach, Delaware to investigate the forty-year-old murder of teenager Emily Vaughn in 1982. The case has never been solved but suspicions as to who brutally attacked and killed Emily run high. And finding proof that the one person in Emily's life at that time who was capable of murder did, in fact, commit the crime would make many high-powered people very happy indeed. Will Andrea be able to discover who killed Emily all those years ago, or will the killer silence Andrea first?

The book is an intriguing suspense thriller which keeps you guessing till the end. It covers the two timelines of Emily's life and subsequent death in the 1980s and Andrea's investigation in the present day.

I read this book recently and really enjoyed it. However, I was not aware it was a sequel and I've not had time to read the first Andrea Oliver book since. If you like this suggestion you might want to read *Pieces of Her* first! That book will give you Andrea's back story but it's not necessary for the enjoyment of *Girl Forgotten*. Both books are available from Live Borders Libraries.

Joany Cook

Library News for November

Bookbug has changed it's time to 9.45am, still on Tuesdays. Please note there will be no session on 18th February.
Hearing Aid Clinic 21st February, 10–12.
Lego Drop In Fridays 14th and 28th 2–4pm.
Walking Bookgroup on Tuesday 11th February at 2pm.

Abi and Kathy Discuss Valentines, the Weather and Stuff

The weather has turned nice, Eyemouth seemed to have missed the worst of it. Lough's has reopened and Abi and Kathy are on their favourite bench on the Bantry.

Abi: It's nice that the weather has turned again to something better than what we had over Christmas and New Year. I wonder if we are going to get more bad weather? Hope not, hate the snow and ice.

Kathy: I really don't like the snow and ice either. Hate going out when it's like it as I don't want to fall again. Mind you it's been a bit difficult on the Bantry with all the sand and rocks thrown up by the sea. I'm really glad the street team guys have cleared a path now.

Abi: I popped into Berwick the other day and saw Easter Eggs out. It's getting crazy. It's Valentines Day next **then** Easter.

Kathy: You are showing that you are getting older. Even the Police look younger now do they?

Abi: Stop it, I'm not that old! ... But actually they do look younger.
You know you told me about Christmas in Scotland the other week. Are there any scottish traditions for Valentines Day?

Kathy: Not where I grew up but my granny told me of a Scottish tradition where young unwed men and women wrote their names on bits of paper. They put

them in a hat and each drew one of them out. If one name was read out three times, it meant a marriage would take place. I'm not sure who they were to marry though and not sure if they put their names in more than once.

Abi: That sounds like fun. I wonder how many did get married? Do you think that was the start of these dating apps? I am looking forward to seeing what everyone is doing for Valentine's Day meals. It's nice we have a new choice in Eyemouth with that new business opened in the Auld Bank.

Kathy: Aye it's nice when there is a buzz about the town. Maybe if the weather turns again we can try there for a coffee and add it to our list of places to visit.

With thoughts of meals, coffee, old traditions and young Polis officers we leave them on their bench.

Mr Robert Dougal

I remember, as a child, being taken to the harbour to wave goodbye to my granddad, George Collin, as his fishing boat left Eyemouth for Yarmouth. His boat, along with many others, was heading south, following the herring as the shoals moved down the east coast. The fishermen were hoping to land big catches at a good price to help them through the rigours of a Scottish winter. This had been a regular occurrence in the town each October. The practice died out in the 1950s because of over-fishing, but it started around 1855.

That year the first Scottish fisherman to sail his boat to Yarmouth at the beginning of the autumn herring season was Eyemouth pioneer, Robert Dougal, and he landed there by mistake! In his open boat, *Children's Friend*, he and his crew were heading for North Foreland, Kent, to try the fishing there but a storm blew up and he had to take shelter in Yarmouth harbour. Some of the Yarmouth fishermen persuaded him to fish alongside their boats. It was then that Dougal discovered the English herring nets were far superior to his own, and could catch many more fish.

Dougal was able to identify the differences (*see diagram, above*): the English nets were bigger, had rows of corks between the floats to help the nets hang straight in the sea, and a heavy rope (a 'messenger') tied along the bottom of the nets to keep them taut. With the meshes of the nets kept open, more herrings could be caught in them. New nets were expensive and so the following year when Dougal arrived in Yarmouth he hired English nets! He was very successful.

More boats and crews from Eyemouth, and harbours along the North Sea coast, followed Dougal's example and, by the mid 1930s, almost 1,000 Scottish fishing boats were following the herring to Yarmouth. The boats were followed by Scottish fish curers, fisher lasses and coopers. There were good years and bad years when some boats came home in debt, but the Yarmouth fishing generally boosted Eyemouth's economy.

Mr Hugh Swanston

Hugh Swanston had the true pioneering spirit: he was always first to seize upon a new idea, always ready to take a risk in the interests of improvement. Motorised fishing boats were first built in Scotland in 1906 but in 1901 Swanston had his sailing boat, *Maggie Janes*, converted to a motor boat making it less dependent on wind and fine weather. She was easier to manoeuvre, could cope with poorer weather and reduced the work of the crew who had no heavy sails to hoist and lower. *Maggie Janes* needed only a mizzen sail in the stern of the boat to help her stay in line with the wind. Engines were expensive to install but gradually more boat owners followed his example.

In 1919 Swanston decided to try ring-net fishing, (*see diagram, right of page*) a method used successfully on the west coast of Scotland in the long, sheltered sea lochs. This North Sea coast proved too exposed and rocky for a single boat with a ring-net, but years later, the method was used successfully with two boats working together. Herring caught by ring-nets were no good for curing and curing was Eyemouth's staple industry.

Swanston's next innovation in 1926 was trying 'anchor type' seine-net fishing. (*see diagram, on left of page*) The Danes had perfected this method and had been using it around the northern coasts of Scotland since 1921. Swanston was pleased with his results but the method became more widely used after a winch was developed to haul in the net quickly and prevent fish from escaping.

Hugh Swanston may not have made his fortune at the fishing, but he was an innovator, ahead of his time.

Fay Waddell

splash


Splash
EYEMOUTH LARDER AND COMMUNITY FRIDGE
OPENING HOURS
Monday 9 - 11
Tuesday 3 - 5
Wednesday 9 - 11
Thursday Closed
Friday 9 - 11
PARISH CHURCH, EYEMOUTH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Purple for Polio

Some of our readers will be old enough to remember *Poliomyelitis* or Infantile Paralysis or simply Polio, which was a devastating disease that affected, in the main, children under 5 years of age and was endemic across the world. There is to this day no cure for polio: prevention, by immunisation has been the route to reducing its impact across the world.

The last major epidemics in the UK were in the 1950's where some 8,000 children per year could be affected causing up to 750 deaths, with many more permanently incapacitated. The last outbreak of Polio was in the late 70s with the last case in the UK in the 1990s.

Whilst no cure, prevention is easy. The American Virologist Dr Jonas Salk, perfected a vaccine in 1955 that when administered prevented the virus achieving its aims. Jonas Salk could have made his fortune from the vaccine but chose the philanthropic humanitarian route and gave his vaccine to the world. Over the years the vaccine has improved and the method of delivery was simplified to an oral dose which children across the world still take.

In the late 1980's, Rotary International began their largest campaign to date, with the specific aim of eradicating the Polio virus from the world. This can only be achieved by mass immunisation programmes across the world. Funds were raised (and continue to be so) and in partnership with the WHO a worldwide programme involving many hundreds of volunteers

began to administer the vaccine. In 2007, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation became involved in the project, pledging that for every $1 raised they would add $2. So every $1 donated to the End Polio Charity now becomes $3, this has had a marked effect on the speed with which the programme can deliver results. To the point where the Polio virus in the wild is now only endemic in two countries worldwide, Afghanistan and Pakistan. From a high of 350,000 cases worldwide in 1988 the number of cases reported worldwide in 2022 was 13.

As a part of the programme in the early days, recording the fact that children had been immunised was done in a physical manner. They had one of their little fingers dipped into a purple dye. This colour has now become synonymous with the End Polio Campaign and is best illustrated in Eyemouth on two occasions per year. In the spring if weather conditions are as we would hope, two Rotary Logos appear on the banking by Gilsland and the toll crossroads. This is the display of purple crocuses that was planted by Eyemouth Rotarians and a number of volunteer pupils from Eyemouth High School.

The second and most recent occasion was when the team at the NnG Maintenance depot, bathed their building in purple from Tuesday 24th October, 'World Polio Day', until the end of the week. Rotary Eyemouth are very grateful for the enthusiastic support of the team at NnG this year and hope that this demonstration will become an annual display to celebrate the work of Jonas Salk, Rotary International, The World Health Organisation and The Rotary International End Polio Now campaign.

Should you wish to contribute to the campaign contact Rotary Eyemouth through our Facebook page For further information on all things Eyemouth Rotary check out our Facebook page or visit our Eyemouth & District Rotary website.

EYEMOUTH BRUNCH HUB

Splash Menu

PAYMENT BY DONATION. WE SUGGEST A DONATION OF £2.50 PER PERSON TO COVER THE COSTS OF RUNNING THE CAFE.

Breakfast 10.30 - 11.30

BREAKFAST ROLL
With Bacon, Sausage or egg

Today's Specials

YOUR SERVER WILL LET YOU KNOW WHAT TODAY'S SPECIALS ARE

Lunch 11.30 - 1.30

BAKED POTATOES

FILLINGS:
Cheese, tuna, coleslaw, beans, ham, salad

FRESHLY PREPARED SANDWICHES OR FILLED ROLLS

FILLINGS:
Cheese, tuna, coleslaw, ham, salad

Drinks

TEA

COFFEE

ORANGE OR BLACKCURRANT SQUASH

Home baking

SCONES,
cheese or fruit served with butter and jam

Loaves, ask server for flavours

Muffins, ask server for flavours

Brunch Hub

Welcome

A donation of £2.50 will help us to cover the costs of running this café

2025

Splash Brunch Hub is open again from 16th January. Every Thursday from 10.30am to 1.30pm. Eyemouth Community Centre

The Brunch Hub was established in 2022. All our lovely cooks, bakers, kitchen assistants, servers and support staff are community volunteers. Please be respectful and be aware that new members of our team take time to learn all the daily tasks that are required in their roles.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

At Eyemouth High School, we are proud to be working towards creating a healthy, inclusive, and respectful environment for every student, guided by the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). These internationally recognised rights are now included in Scottish law and aim to ensure every child is valued, protected and heard, paving the way for their well-being and success.

The UNCRC promotes key principles such as the right to education, to be heard, and to a safe environment. By embedding these principles into our school ethos, we empower students to understand their rights and responsibilities. This framework will create a positive and supportive school culture and prepare young people to become engaged and compassionate members of their communities.

We are making good progress towards achieving silver level of UNICEF's Rights Respecting School Award. A variety of rights have been built into units of work to help our young people become more aware of the world around them. Pupils have been developing their knowledge about government support to improve living conditions in terms of facilities and safety using Article 26 (social security), which states that "every child has the right to benefit from social security, including financial support and other benefits". Article 27 (adequate standard of living) was also used to show that "every child has the right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and social needs, supporting their development". We reflected on how effectively our government is meeting these rights and what could be improved.

The benefits of becoming a Rights Respecting School reach out beyond our classrooms. Evidence shows that such schools experience improved behaviour, stronger relationships, and higher levels of student engagement. At Eyemouth High School, we have already seen positive changes, with students demonstrating greater empathy towards one another and understanding how other people in society live. Our aim is to ensure that the principles of the UNCRC will take a place at the heart of everything we do, helping every pupil to feel safe, happy, and included in our school.

Stuart MacKenzie

the month of february

Fun Facts about February

The Roman month **Februarius** was named after the Latin term *februum*, which means 'purification', via the purification ritual *Februa* held on February 15 (full moon) in the old lunar Roman calendar.

The **zodiac signs** of February are Aquarius (until February 18) and Pisces (February 19 onward).

Its **birth flowers** are the violet (*Viola*), the common primrose (*Primula vulgaris*), and the Iris. Its **birthstone** is the amethyst, which symbolizes piety, humility, spiritual wisdom, and sincerity.

Imbolc was the second of the four great fire festivals. At Imbolc, Brighid, the daughter of Daga, was pregnant with the seed of the Sun. She was ripe with the promise of new life, as the seeds of the earth deep within its soil begin to awaken at this time, thus signaling the return of spring.

Imbolc, which literally means 'in milk', traditionally has marked the lactation period of ewes and cows. Ewes are unable to produce milk until after they bear their young, which occurs at this time. Since milk was very important to the basic survival of the tribes, this was a time of great joy. It meant that the end of a long winter was in sight, and green pastures were only a few months away.

During the Imbolc ritual it was customary to pour milk (or cream) onto the earth.

Brigid's cross is typically woven on 1 February, her feast day, as well as the festival of Imbolc in pre-Christian Ireland. Hanging a Brigid's cross from the rafters of one's house was believed to bring the blessing and protection of the saint for the remainder of the year.

the month of february

Close to midnight on 14th February fishermen gather on the banks of the River Tweed where the vicar of nearby Norham blesses the **nets and boats**. The fishermen then set out to make their first catch of the season.

The Saxons called February ***'Sol-monath'*** which means 'cake month', because they would offer cakes to the gods during February.

February is the only month where it's possible to go the entire time without having a **full moon**.

Originally a pagan priest in third century Rome, **St Valentine** became a Christian convert. Despite being noted for his chastity, he became the patron saint of lovers. It became an old country custom to choose sweethearts on his feast day. The earliest Valentine cards written on parchment appeared in the fourteenth century.

Pancake Races. Some of the races can be dated back to as early as 1445. Legend recounts a housewife who was cooking when she heard the church bells calling the faithful to prayer. Afraid of being late, she ran to the church still clutching the frying pan in which the pancake was still cooking.

The Welsh call February ***'y mis bach'*** which means 'little month'.

The odds of being born on **February 29th** are about 1 in 1,461. Those born on a leap day can be called a 'leaper' or 'leapling'.

Unless it's a leap year, February, March, and November **start on the same day of the week** as each other.

February is one of the most **misspelled** words in the English language. [No pressure then, ed].

Environmental Perceptions Community Survey

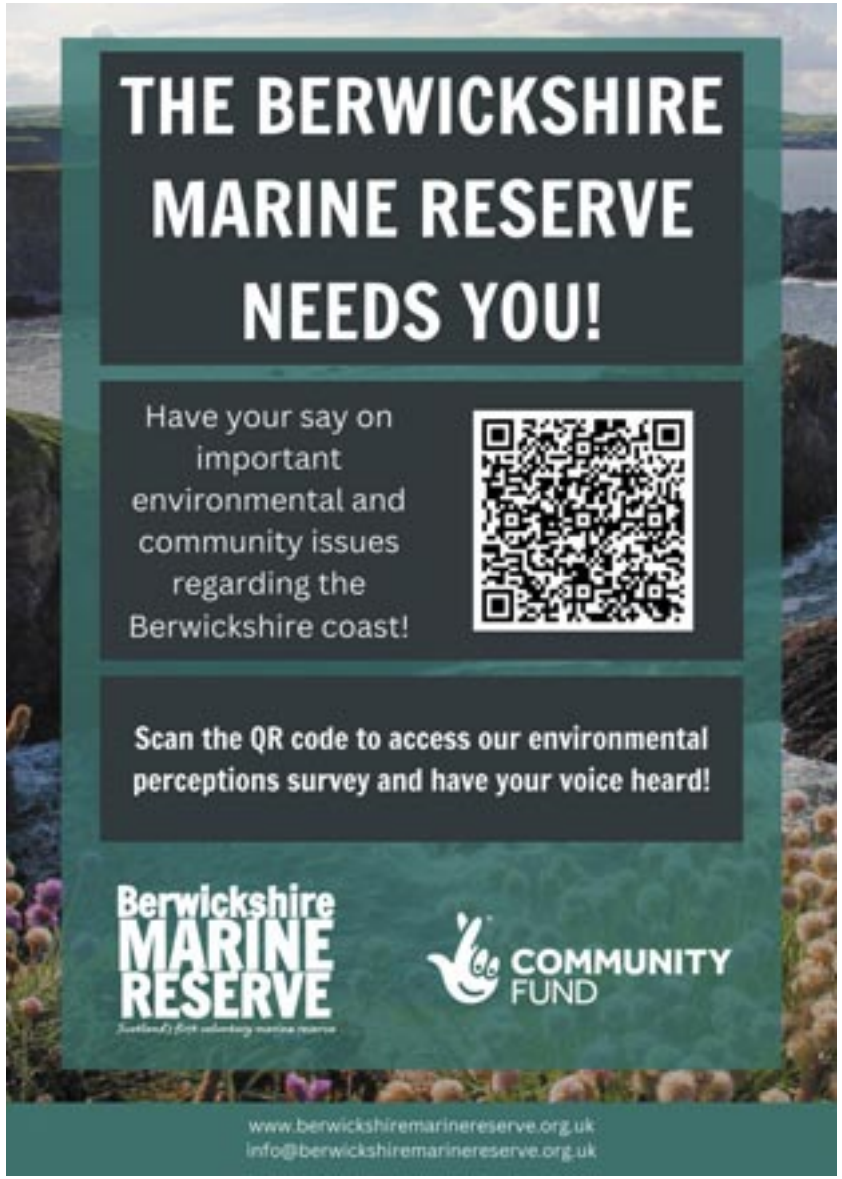
Berwickshire Marine Reserve is pleased to publish a survey regarding community environmental perceptions and thoughts on blue spaces near you. We would love your input and hear your issues or concerns regarding the Berwickshire Marine Reserve and the Berwickshire coast. We would love input from everyone, so don't worry if you don't live near us, your feedback would still be instrumental.

This survey concerns a larger community and public engagement project, the Community Led Environmental Action for the Berwickshire Coast project. All information you give will help greatly towards the larger goal of conserving and improving our coastal marine ecosystems in the UK.

Please scan the QR code or visit our website to complete the survey.

www.berwickshiremarinereserve.org.uk/environmental-perceptions-survey

berwickshire marine reserve



Winter Wellbeing calendar

30 things to give you hope

Be Kind, Enjoy and Learn, Nurture, Be Active, Belong, Be Aware

1 Wrap up, go outside and take notice of what's around you	2 Call, text or arrange to meet with a friend	3 Have some digital downtime today and switch off your device
4 Read a book	5 Connect with nature	6 Do a random act of kindness
7 Take part in a gentle exercise video online – try mindful stretching	8 Download a mindfulness App – Calm or Headspace	9 Do something to relax like having a bath
10 Learn some breathing exercises, they can help you to cope with stress	11 Find out about activities and groups in your local area and go along to one	12 Take control of your finances with the Money Worries App
13 Watch a film or dance and sing to your favourite songs	14 Do a puzzle or crossword to keep your mind active	15 Go somewhere that makes you feel good
16 Try to eat and drink more healthily today	17 Remember to be kind to yourself today	18 Tidy up outdoors or pick some litter
19 Ask a friend how they are and start a conversation about mental health	20 Write a list of things you can do or you hope to achieve	21 Learn some coping skills for managing stress today
22 Allow your mind to wander, daydream and hope	23 Give someone a compliment or smile at someone today	24 Take a small step towards a goal today
25 Check out the mental wellbeing courses at Togetherall today	26 Prioritise your sleep today - these video tips could help	27 Take some time out, watch one of Health in Mind's wellbeing videos
28 Go for a walk outside	29 Volunteer your time	30 Do something creative

The underlined text are links to web pages including the Wellbeing College bitesize videos on YouTube. Find out more: www.wellbeingcollege.org.uk/courses/bitesize_videos/d238/

For information about support visit www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/wellbeingpoint
Breathing Space on 0800 83 85 87 or NHS24 Mental Health Hub on 111 for urgent support

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