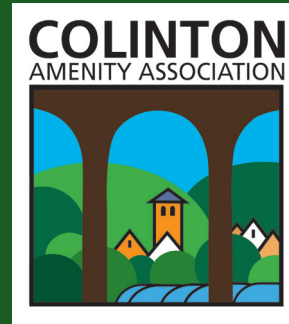


# Colinton Magazine



A Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation No. SC007466 [www.colinton-amenity.org.uk](http://www.colinton-amenity.org.uk) [caa@colinton-amenity.org.uk](mailto:caa@colinton-amenity.org.uk)

Winter 2025

Produced and distributed by volunteers to 3,600 Colinton homes and businesses

10 Years of  
BobCat Alpacas  
in Colinton  
See page 12



# Colinton Magazine

|                                                                                |    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Chairman's Report                                                              | 3  |
| Planning Convener's Report                                                     | 4  |
| CCCT – end of an era?                                                          | 4  |
| A New Major Artwork for Colinton                                               | 6  |
| A Warm Welcome to Munro Coffee                                                 | 10 |
| 10 Years of BobCat Alpacas in Colinton                                         | 12 |
| A Year with Colinton & Merchiston Community Choir                              | 16 |
| Colinton local history society                                                 | 18 |
| A Winning Poem                                                                 | 19 |
| Colinton Garden Club - A grand day out                                         | 21 |
| When a Bowling Club is not just a Bowling Club?                                | 22 |
| The Pentland Book Festival                                                     | 23 |
| A Heartfelt Thank You – Celebrating the First Pentlands Open Studios Art Trail | 24 |
| CVE's Shed Plans                                                               | 25 |
| Colinton Literary Society 2025/26 Programme                                    | 26 |
| Colinton Garden Club Programme 2025/2026                                       | 26 |
| Friends of Campbell Park Highlights of 2025                                    | 27 |
| Guess where?                                                                   | 29 |
| Can you help rehome Colinton's Edinburgh Tool Library Satellite?               | 29 |
| Twenty Years of Community Service in Colinton: A Personal Reflection           | 31 |

**Colinton Magazine is brought to you by the Colinton Amenity Association, our neighbourhood's longest-serving volunteer charity, working to keep Colinton safe, happy and welcoming.**

Colinton Magazine is changing and will become an annual publication. We will report on planning, environmental and transport issues; both resolved and pending at the time of publication. We will offer news and features on interesting things happening in Colinton or that shine a light on our local history. This will be complimented by regular updates through our social media channels.

## Reader contributions

We are always keen to hear from our readers. If you have an idea for a story or want to write one for us or send in photos, please email us at [magazine@colinton-amenity.org.uk](mailto:magazine@colinton-amenity.org.uk) or write to the CAA Secretary (address below).

## Advertise in Colinton Magazine

Our design and print costs are offset by the appreciated support of local businesses. We encourage all our readers to support local shops, services and businesses so advertising in *Colinton Magazine* is an excellent way to tell locals what is on offer, where and when. If you would like to take out an ad, get in touch. We can also throw in advertising space on our website, at a discount. And we can sort out the artwork for you and advise on photos, wording etc. Find out more at [advertising@colinton-amenity.org.uk](mailto:advertising@colinton-amenity.org.uk)

## Join Colinton Amenity Association

We would really encourage you to join the CAA to help keep Colinton rated as one of Edinburgh's (and Scotland's) best neighbourhoods and to support the continued existence of this magazine. For details go to our website at [www.colinton-amenity.org.uk](http://www.colinton-amenity.org.uk). For news and updates on local amenities and services, like us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/Colinton-Amenity-Association](https://www.facebook.com/Colinton-Amenity-Association)

## About us

Colinton Amenity Association (CAA) is a voluntary charity set up in 1927. Our main aim is to preserve and enhance Colinton's environment. Our work is organised by an executive committee elected by our members. We represent members' views to bodies such as Colinton Community Council and City of Edinburgh Councilors.

## How to contact us

Post to CAA secretary Wendy Evans, 65/1 Bonaly Road, EH13 0PB

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Front cover: BobCat Alpacas  
Bobcat Alpacas Photos: Bob Crosbie





# Chairman's Report

## Tim Lawson, Chair of Colinton Amenity Association



I find it quite surprising just how fast 2025 has sped by! I have personally enjoyed a little more free time now that my editorial role with the Colinton Magazine has come to an end, but I have witnessed the increasingly tense faces of some of my colleagues on the Executive Committee as the arrangements for this new, once-a-year format magazine have started to take shape. I applaud their efforts to keep some form of magazine going to help inform the people of Colinton of events, society programmes, historical facts and general interests. I also empathise with them about how hard it is to find the text and image material to fill the pages and to encourage advertising revenue, then stitching it all together with our magazine designer and organising printing and distribution. It is a mammoth job for which we are very grateful.

I have enjoyed walking around some of our leafy footpaths since the start of the year. It is especially nice to be able to do circular walks in the Dell now that the path closed by a small landslide in 2020 was eventually re-opened in the final two months of last year. We helped to organise a Covenanters Wood Clean-Up with the 108th Pentland Scouts in April: they provided a fine turnout and the woods were scoured of litter in no time at all. We haven't got round to doing something similar in Redford Woods this year: something for the events' diary next year!

Our main focus has been on working our way carefully through the requirements for our merger with Colinton

Community Conservation Trust (CCCT). Their funds were amalgamated with ours by the end of March, and we have itemised jobs that routinely need to be completed now that CAA has acquired their artwork assets: The Robert Louis Stevenson (RLS) statue by the Pentlands parish church, the RLS archway and self-guided walk down the Long Steps and along Dell Road, maintenance of the Phoebe Traquair Railings opposite the Redeemer Church on Bridge Road (due to be handed back to the property in November 2027), and the Colinton Timeline Railings at the top of the village. Hopefully volunteer assistance with many of these will continue 'as is' (e.g. the help of Colinton Garden Club with maintenance of The Triangle and along the Long Steps). As the magazine goes to press we are awaiting the final official dissolution of CCCT as an entity with Companies' House.

Another main project has been the Cuddies Lane Mural as part of the Colinton Gateway Artwork Project (reported separately elsewhere in this issue). It has been pointed out that, regardless of how people view the completed mural installation (and we have had only very positive comments to date), the fact that CAA arranged the repainting of the high walls of the buildings on the north west side of the lane to a more neutral shade of off-white itself has made a huge difference to the locality. We feel there are a few more things we can do to improve the environment of the mural, as rusty railings and a broken handrail support rather detract from its outlook. Some 'tote bags' were created to mark the official opening of the mural in July; featuring a close-up of part of the installation, a few still remain and can be obtained for £7 from [secretary@colinton-amenity.org.uk](mailto:secretary@colinton-amenity.org.uk) – there having been only 50 bags produced, they are "collectors' items", so don't hold back or you'll miss out!

Other items to report on? The saga of new fingerpost signs is nearly over. New signs were eventually delivered to us at the start of the year, but their weight has proved difficult to manage without a suitable contingent of sturdy helpers and sufficient equipment: the final signs should hopefully be on the fingerpost at the bottom of Bridge Road very soon. A new website for the Association is being developed; it still needs a few tweaks of content and some additional, more relevant images, but again is very near completion.

Finally, 2027 sees the 100th anniversary of the founding of Colinton Amenity Association. We are starting to plan some dedicated events, a publication and other celebratory physical fixings to mark the event. An 'open meeting' of the Association is planned for Spring 2026 where members can directly have their say and discuss these ideas face-to-face. Please consider joining CAA... at £5, it is one of the cheapest membership subscriptions around and gives you a voice... as well as helping to maintain and enhance our beautiful living environment.

 A beautiful view across Colinton from Bonalv Countrv Park. Bv Tim Lawson







## Planning Convener's Report

By Iain M Gotts

**It is a while since I reported on planning issues in Colinton, not because nothing was happening but because there was little of great significance. Mind you, house extensions and tree works, the two most frequent forms of application locally, can be of considerable concern to neighbours and therefore do attract some attention from CAA.**

One of the more controversial types of application locally has been for the construction of one-off houses, mainly in the gardens of large houses. I am sure I am not alone in wondering, as I drive around Colinton, how on earth some of these houses got planning permission. That applies to both development within and outwith the Colinton Conservation Area, although in recent months, greater regard seems to have been given to Conservation Area policy, resulting in a number of planning refusals. Personally, I am surprised that there are not more planning refusals when one considers the key policy consideration, that development proposals in conservation areas have to preserve or enhance the special character of the area. That is a pretty challenging test but until recently, it seems

to have been less rigorously applied. Hopefully the most recent trend will be maintained.

Unfortunately, outwith the conservation area i.e. most of Colinton, there are no such challenging tests and recent history would suggest that in design terms, almost anything goes. I sometimes think that the planners have insufficient confidence to take on architects, possibly because of the degree of subjectivity involved in determining what does and does not constitute 'good' design. Of course there are some good examples of contemporary design in Colinton, but sadly, these do not attract the same attention as the more controversial ones.

A couple of years ago I moved to a flat in Colinton, a very nice flat in a very nice development. I have since come to learn that trees can be a very controversial subject, generating strong and often contrary opinions. Fortunately my local trees are not subject to tree preservation orders, unlike the good people of the nearby Woodfield area, where large swathes of woodland have TPO protected status – which one local resident recently found to his expense. That particular TPO was confirmed in 1970 and it now embraces trees which had not even been seeded at that time, including trees which have since grown in private gardens. I am all for protecting Colinton's trees. They contribute so much to the character of the area, but I do wonder if blanket protection should be so easily justified if TPO designation is to maintain its high status.

## CCCT – end of an era?

By Simon Lloyd

In early October we finally moved to complete the winding up of Colinton Community Conservation Trust (CCCT). Work has been going on for some time to get us to this point. Critical steps have included the transfer of responsibility for all of the activities of CCCT to Colinton Amenity Association (CAA) on 1st April, following which the restricted and unrestricted funds of CCCT have also been transferred. All being well, by the beginning of December CCCT will be removed from the register of companies shortly after which we will notify OSCR and its charity registration will be withdrawn.

Over the last 25 years, CCCT has completed projects around the village which have enhanced the heritage and enriched where we live. From the transformation of the Triangle at the junction of Bridge Road and Woodhall Road in 2004 to the completion of the Timeline along the southerly border of the Triangle in 2021 CCCT has left a legacy for the residents of Colinton and our increasing number of visitors.

On completion of each project, with one or two exceptions, CCCT inherited responsibility for the ongoing maintenance. This ongoing maintenance is largely light touch but does require diligent regular checking, sometimes a little washing and every so often slightly more involved activity. This activity will now be undertaken by CAA and overseen by the Executive Committee; The previous Board members

of CCCT have been encouraged to join the Executive Committee of CAA to provide continuity. Members of CCCT, who were not previously members of CAA, are encouraged to join CAA at the first opportunity.

The process for CAA accepting responsibility for CCCT's legacy was diligently undertaken. CAA agreed in principle, early in the discussions, that integrating the activities of the two organisations made perfect sense. The CAA Chair did however request members of the Executive Committee to carry out some due diligence to understand the consequences of merging the activities of the two organisations. The findings of this work were shared with the Executive Committee, including details of the financial implications. It was only following the conclusion and presentation of this work that CAA Executive Committee agreed that the integration should go ahead. Since the beginning of April the activities of CCCT and CAA have been combined.

The CCCT brand has wide recognition, within in some circles, and will not wither within CAA where, as the new CAA website evolves, material from CCCT will be integrated to display and promote the impact of the two individual and combined organisations.

So, is this an end of an era? The plans created by Duncan Campbell have now largely been delivered. The projects are now part of our village and will live on through the diligent administration of CAA. Please enjoy them, respect them and look after them – and if you notice something needs to be done to repair or maintain them please send a message to [environment@colinton-amenity.org.uk](mailto:environment@colinton-amenity.org.uk).





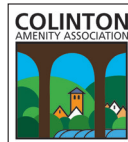


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\* The membership year is from 1st April to 31st March each year; renewals are sought on or around 1st May each year.

**Gift Aid Declaration: I confirm that I am a UK tax payer and that I would like Colinton Amenity Association to reclaim income tax on my membership subscriptions and any donations made by me now and in the future. I confirm that I have paid an amount of income tax at least equal to the amount of tax to be reclaimed.**

(Please tick box beside your name(s) above if appropriate.)







# A Major Artwork for Colinton

By Tim Lawson, Chairman of CAA

## The Context

When plans started to be made for a mural in Cuddies Lane, back in 2022, for some of us it was a revisiting of a CAA proposal some 15 years ago. Back then, the village's businesses were struggling to survive and, despite the work of Colinton Community Conservation Trust (CCCT) amongst others to create objects of interest to attract sightseers to the core of our community, these appeared to be enjoyed mainly by local residents rather than visitors to the area. The CAA Executive Committee at the time were entertained at some point by a presentation that David Bewsey and I put together, identifying 'routeways' for both vehicular traffic and pedestrians into, through and out of the CAA's area of interest. We identified both major and minor routes, and amongst them was the pedestrian routeway from the popular Water of Leith Walkway (WoLW), through Spylaw Park, up to Spylaw Street and then up Cuddies Lane to the village. We thought that if we could divert visitors from the WoLW paths to investigate things like the Phoebe Traquair railings and the Robert Louis Stevenson statue, they might spend some time (and money) in Colinton's retail establishments. However, we could not think of a way to do that beyond signage and 'word of mouth'.



Artist Chris Rutterford





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Details from the Colinton Village Mural— part of a community art project celebrating local history and culture.

In the intervening years, CCCT continued their sterling efforts at further artwork projects and Colinton Village Enterprise appeared and grew. CAA helped the development of Spylaw Park to its Green Flag status, and we all continued to bemoan the effects of increasing vehicle traffic along Bridge Road and the steady loss of true village services, concerns now also championed by the Colinton Community Council. It was the proposal by a new charitable body – the Colinton Tunnel SCIO – in 2018 to create an ambitious mural in the dingy tunnel the WoLW passed through under the spur of land beneath Pentlands (formerly Colinton) Parish church. Commissioning local artist Chris Rutterford to fill the tunnel with vivid images illustrating Stevenson's poem 'From a Railway Carriage', was an immense success. It attracted tourists from far and wide, and showed what could be achieved with a little courage and 'blue-sky thinking'. CAA members Mike Scott and Eddie Banks, part of the energetic band of people who pushed the Tunnel Mural project through, suggested that a similar installation in Cuddies Lane would potentially have the same magnetism, and attract external visitors to Colinton village to increase footfall for our local businesses.

### The Cuddies Lane Mural

The planning and design processes has been highlighted over the last couple of years in issues of *Colinton Magazine* as this CAA project got off the ground, hit obstacles, found a way round them and brought the project to full installation. Besides the creative skills of Chris Rutterford, much of the plaudits for this must be



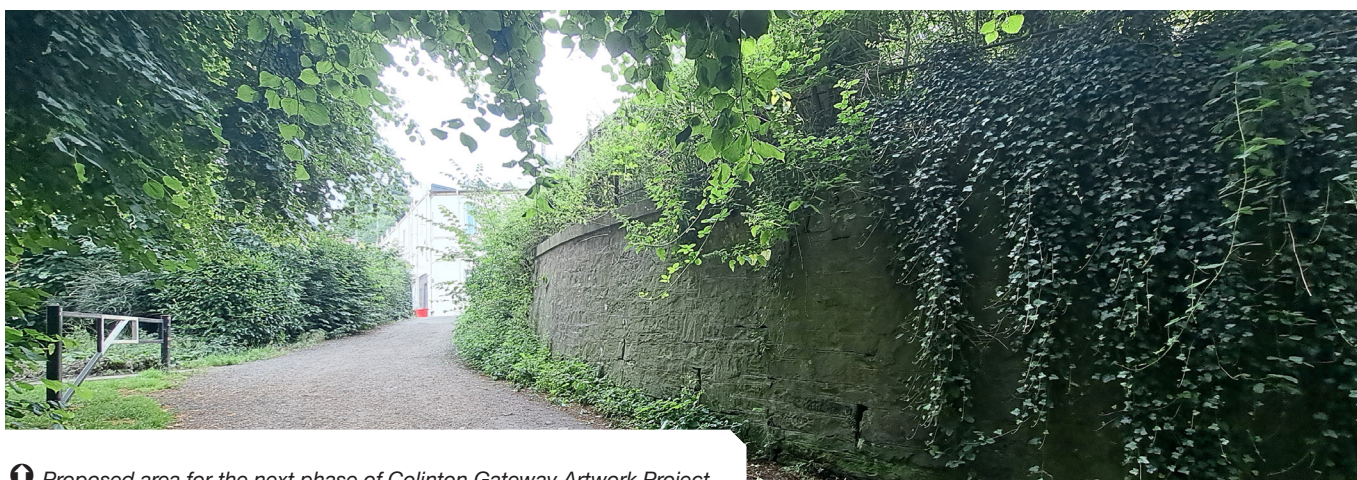
directed to the indefatigable energy of Mike and Eddie, as well as to Iain Gotts and his volunteer assistants who negotiated the maze of planning bureaucracy. For those of us with a peripheral involvement it often seemed like we were running to catch up with a runaway train, such was the momentum created by these enthusiastic few!

The reported design brief changed several times during the planning stages. With the replacement of the depressing 'rusty-red' colouring of the walls on the buildings with a magnolia-based cream paint more in keeping with Colinton's Conservation Area status, the planners wanted the mural to be scaled down in height.

**Continued overleaf** ➞







 Proposed area for the next phase of Colinton Gateway Artwork Project

What was originally envisaged as a rural scene with many animals on their way to market in pre-industrial Colinton was changed when the “drovers’ route” concept was challenged. The mural now shows a lively scene of Victorian life in Colinton against the backdrop of buildings we can see today in Spylaw Street. At the top of the lane, on the wall of Colinton Pharmacy, a scene of the old blacksmith’s forge which occupied the site many years ago has been brought to life in a tasteful pastel palette. Many local residents are depicted in various parts of the mural, adding to interest. The full mural will not be completed until December – it will continue around the corner and up Spylaw Street along the wall of the Redeemer Church. At the official opening of the mural on 25 July, Scott Arthur MP and Sue Webber MSP addressed a large audience gathered on the steps by the pharmacy and right down Cuddies Lane, paying tribute to the foresight and efforts of all who had been involved in bringing about the transformation of the lane. They paid tribute to the late Cllr. Val Walker, then the Convenor of the Culture & Communities Committee on the Council, who was a strong advocate for the project: Val has been included in the group scene.

### The future

The Cuddies Lane Mural is just a part of the overall concept – now titled the Colinton Gateway Artwork Project – to lead people off the WoLW, through Spylaw Park (and the community information hub that CVE are bringing to fruition at The Shed, the former coach-house of James Gillespie’s Spylaw House) up into the village proper as part of a circular walk visiting our other artwork installations. Planning of a detailed proposal will be starting soon, looking at the area below the arches of the Gillespie Road bridge, up the road access and past the Scout Hut to Spylaw Street. We want Colinton residents to come forward with creative ideas: currently we have ideas about ways to celebrate the industrial use of the Water of Leith and its mills, the life and legacy of James Gillespie, potential woodland art (wood sculptures and a ‘fairy village’ around trees, connected by pathways), other sculptures and artwork installations in niches along the road, and at least one community-led mural on the wall of the Scout Hut celebrating youth work and community. Please send ideas to Wendy Evans, CAA Secretary ([secretary@colinton-amenity.org.uk](mailto:secretary@colinton-amenity.org.uk)) for inclusion in our list for discussion in the next few months.



 Sections of Cuddle Line Mural, Colinton Village, Edinburgh.

We also want to reach out to other local artists, in a range of art media, to contact us if they would like to be directly involved.

### The future looks bright and interesting...



Local people have been very kindly donating to the project, any further donations, large or small, will be greatly appreciated. Donations can be made by scanning the QR







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At Munro, coffee is at the heart of everything we do. We're proud to work with Mutual Coffee, an Edinburgh-based independent roaster whose beans are roasted with care and sourced responsibly. Their ethos is that coffee is about connection, honouring the work of farmers, and highlighting each coffee's unique story.

But Munro is about more than coffee. Alongside our hot and cold drinks, we serve pastries and sweet treats, soups, fresh bread available to preorder and homemade sandwiches prepared daily on sourdough bread.

We're delighted to work with Company Bakery and other local suppliers. Supporting quality, local produce is very important to us.

One of the most rewarding parts of opening Munro has been connecting with people locally. A recent addition is our Munro Run Club, which takes place most Sundays

at 8am (see our Instagram or Strava for updates). It's a social 5km run open to all levels, starting and finishing at the shop, and followed by a refreshing juice on us. It's a brilliant way to meet new people, stay active, and enjoy a well-earned post-run coffee and pastry.

Whether you're popping in on your way to work, meeting a friend for a catch-up, or stopping by during a walk around the local area, we hope we can be a welcome part of your day.

Although Munro is still in its early days, our vision is long term. We want to keep listening, growing, and adapting to what our community needs — whether that's new menu ideas, events, or ways to support local causes.

Most of all, we look forward to welcoming you through our doors, sharing good coffee, and hopefully becoming part of your everyday life here in Colinton.

So, whether you're a coffee lover, hot chocolate drinker, or foodie, come and say hello. We can't wait to meet you.

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# 10 Years of BobCat Alpacas in Colinton

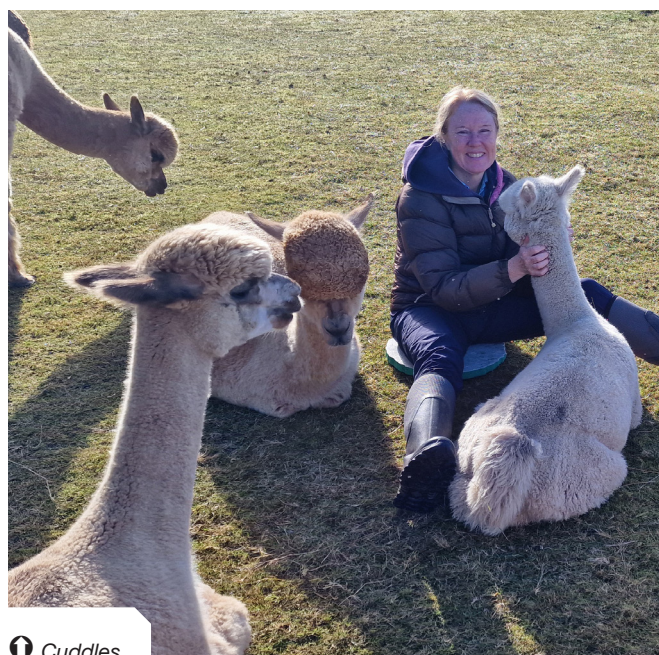
Last month, on a chilly Autumn afternoon, Wendy Evans went to visit Bob Crosbie in Bonaly to discover how the business has fared over his ten years.

## How did it start?

In June 2015 Bob and Cath bought the land from McTaggart & Mickel Homes. Several fields came up for sale after changes in building regulations on greenbelt land. The sloping land was self-draining and, having been previously occupied by horses, relatively weed free, but to provide the best nutrition for alpacas, the acidity had to be neutralised. The flat area inside the gate, however, was marshland and required to be drained before it could be used. This done, fencing was built for the paddocks and a water tank with pump placed up the hill as, despite the vicinity of several reservoirs, no Scottish Water pipes could supply the property. Next came the best bit – the purchase of fifteen fit and healthy alpacas with an excellent pedigree.

## Has business expansion happened as anticipated?

With a herd of sixty-seven this year, Bob is allowing the alpaca numbers to plateau. Alpacas can be kept in a fairly small area, but Bob prefers his animals to experience the freedom to roam widely within their paddocks, having



Cuddles

more of the freedom they would have enjoyed in their native Andes. Initially intending to care for and breed alpacas, with their annual sheering providing fleece to be spun into yarn for sale, business has expanded. The Alpaca Experience (an organised alpaca-led walk in the Pentland Hills with the male alpacas, followed by the opportunity to meet and feed females and cria), visitor numbers have grown beyond all expectations, especially in summer months. Without advertising, but with social

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🕒 *Waiting for a walk*

media mentions, *BobCat's Alpaca Experience* stands today on *Tripadvisor* at position 8 of 319 *Sights and Landmarks in Edinburgh*. As well as locals, visitors come from all over the world to meet the alpacas. Some, who may have been gifted the experience, start the experience apprehensive and afraid, but Bob reports that those are the visitors who have had so much fun that they don't want to leave at the end of the day. Walks can be booked for Friday through Monday.

It is necessary to have separate paddocks for different alpacas. Breeding males, when left to their own devices, can be domineering so are kept separate from the other males, yet during the Alpaca Experience walks they are happily all friends. Mothers and cria are paddocked together but, as they grow older, cria are moved to mature with caring aunties who have no cria of their own.

**You introduce each of your alpaca to visitors by name and character?**

Indeed, Bob can stand at the far end of the paddock and identify each of his alpaca from, not just it's appearance, but by behaviours. He knows instinctively when Alberto wants a chest rub or Bianca an ear tickle. With the expansion of the business, *BobCat Alpacas*, being of a calming nature, participate in therapy sessions, attend weddings and have photo bombed business conference calls. With Bob's knowledge he is able allocate the appropriate alpaca to each task.

*Continued on page 15*

# ABUS

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 Ukulele band at the gala day



 Annual gala day



 Show time

### Obviously, it's not all fun so what else happens at BobCat Alpacas?

For breeding purposes, without interbreeding and to keep the herd in top class condition, the animals are mated with other breeding herds. Suitable animals can be sourced as far as Yorkshire for a good match but at present, bluetongue disease, a viral non-contagious disease affecting ruminants, is present in England so restrictions are in place.

Alpaca farming is no longer a niche industry. New businesses are being launched and, with alpacas not requiring a big acreage, hobbyists are looking to purchase a few animals, although seldom for breeding purposes. If approached, Bob would consider selling animals but the buyer would have to meet his strict criteria of care.

There is never a shortage of manure on the farm. Many hours a week are spent on the tractor and on foot, under the intense scrutiny of the alpacas, in cleaning the paddocks and barns. Bob is happy, on receipt of a donation to *Marie Curie Hospice*, to give it to allotment holders and gardeners, as long as they have the ability to take it away from Bonaly themselves.

### BobCat Alpacas Gala Day?

2025 saw the sixth annual Gala Day, the proceeds of which go to *Marie Curie Hospice*. In the first year Bob

was delighted to raise £1,000, but that figure increased each year and the proceeds this year are over £10,000. Bob and Cath chose this charity as it is close to their hearts. Bob saw a close fellow musician, and Cath her Mum, being looked after under *Marie Curie Hospice's* amazing care and hold them in huge respect.

The Gala Day has grown exponentially. Local crafters, yoga teachers, tombola and societies erect stands on the flat area of the field. This year, the *Edinburgh Guild of Spinners, Weavers and Dyers* and a local wool felter worked their magic on the *BobCat Alpacas'* recently sheared wool. In the first year, the entertainment was Bob and his bandmates entertaining the visitors between alpaca duties. This year saw several musical genres entertaining the crowds. Even the alpacas enjoy the day as visitors are encouraged to offer them a handful of food. Bob and Cath have every hope that this event will continue to grow in the future along with their business.



This is where you  
can learn more about  
*BobCat Alpacas*





# A Year with Colinton & Merchiston Community Choir



**We** are very pleased to say that the *Colinton & Merchiston Community Choir* has had a very good year and that we now have over 80 members. We are very fortunate to have the enthusiastic and talented Timothy Coleman as our Director of Music, and the excellent and well-known Morley Whitehead as our Accompanist. We learn a lot but also have great fun at our weekly rehearsals with them.

Our Spring Concert at the end of March, when we sang Parts 2 and 3 of Handel's *Messiah*, was a great success. We followed this up with eight very enjoyable Singing in the Summer Sessions at St Cuthbert's Episcopal Church. This was the second year we had run these sessions, when we sang a variety of different types of music and provided tea, coffee and biscuits. We also recruited new members as a result.

Please join us in the **Memorial Hall at Merchiston Castle School on Monday the 8th of December at 7 for 7.30 pm for our Christmas Concert**. We will be singing some beautiful Christmas Music including: Vaughan Williams "*Fantasia on Christmas Carols*", Cornelius "*Three Kings from Persian Lands Afar*",

Telemann "*Der jüngste Tag wird bald sein Ziel*" and a lovely selection of carols.

Tickets are £10 or £5 for under 18s available from choir members or at the main door of the Memorial Hall, which opens at 7 pm.

We are a very welcoming, non-auditioning community choir with a mixed range of ages and singing and sight-reading abilities. If you would like to experience what it would be like to sing with us, please join us in the Memorial Hall for an Open Rehearsal on Monday 5th January 2026 at 7 pm. There will be no commitment or pressure to join. Our rehearsals usually begin at 7.15 pm and end at 9 pm.

We are grateful, as always, to Merchiston Castle School for the use of the Memorial Hall and the school's music library.

For more information about our choir, please consult our website: [www.colintonchoir.org](http://www.colintonchoir.org) or visit our Facebook page.



 Rehearsal time





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# Colinton Local History Society

**O**ur winter session of meetings and talks is now underway, but although we do not meet regularly in the summer our work still goes on. We had a private visit to Broomhall House near Culross, the home of the Earl of Elgin, and were given a splendid two hour tour by his son Lord Bruce. As well as just coming along to our talks some of our members enjoy researching various topics and this summer has been no exception. This facility of using our archives is available to all members if they wish to carry out any research. We would welcome your interest.

First off was Robert Henderson who lives in Bonaly and has always been interested in finding out more about the Bonaly area. He enjoyed his research and the things that he was finding out covering the last 300 years so much that he decided to write a book, "Bonaly Three Centuries of Rural Life in an Edinburgh Suburb". This has now been published by the Society and can be purchased in the Deli and Post shop on Bridge Road or direct from the Society at enquiries@colintonhistory.org.uk

Apart from Lynne Gladstone-Millar's excellent "The Colinton Story", published in 2012, very little has been written about the history of the village. Several members decided to research the history of all of the business premises in the village from when the first shop opened. ... Some interesting facts were revealed:

- That the tenement down from the Colinton Inn is Janefield, built by a very entrepreneurial lady, Jane Johnston, who lived in and owned a grocer's business which is now the Colinton Inn. She also had many other buildings in Bridge Road built.
- The house on the left at the bottom of the Long Steps was the Police Station and Registrar's.
- Our first Telephone Exchange was in a house at the top of Spylaw Street.

All of these things and much, much more can be found in our book "The Story of Colinton's Shops" which will be published in November .... just in time for Christmas presents! It will also be available in the Deli and Post and online.

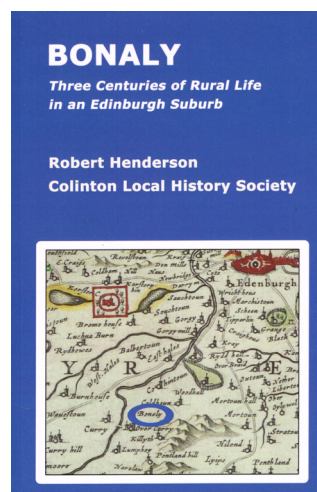
Remember, if you would like to join the Society or attend as a guest just come along to one of our meetings, which start at 8pm on the first and third Monday of the month in Dreghorn Loan Hall, Dreghorn Loan.

Should you wish any further information about our Society, please get in touch via enquiries@colintonhistory.org.uk or telephone me directly at 0131 441 3335

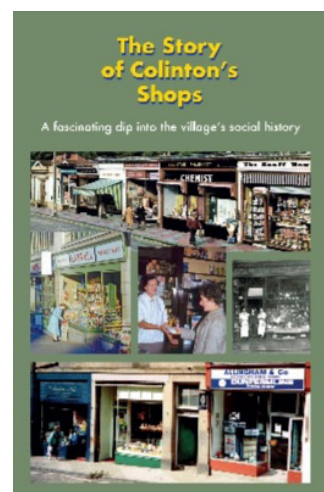
We look forward to seeing you.  
**Derek Douglas – Archivist**



**Police Station and Registrar's**



**The Bonaly book and The Story of Colinton's Shops book**



Many of our readers will have known Duncan Campbell who passed away in 2023. **Ian Boyter** has written the poem below as a tribute (Photo: Ian Boyter).



## One of a kind

**He's here, he's there, he's everywhere.  
The Drover's Steps, Triangle too,  
The Timeline Railings, yes, he's there,  
The Poetry Trail, the fine Statue.**

**He was always busy in this place,  
Spent his time making it better.  
We all knew his friendly face.  
He edited the Colinton Newsletter.**

**A memorial plaque, a fitting token.  
But look around and what do you find?  
The village speaks, and what is spoken?  
Duncan Campbell was one of a kind.**

*We hope to have the plaque installed very soon.*



# A Winning Poem

## from Tricia Ronaldson

**A**s part of the Edinburgh 900\* celebrations, The City of Edinburgh Library Service invited residents with an EH postcode to share their creativity and love for Edinburgh through the writing of original poems. The poems were to celebrate the city's rich history, culture, and community spirit. The six winning entries are featured on exclusive bookmarks distributed throughout the capital's libraries.

We are delighted to share with you, a winning poem, entitled *The Fringe*, written by local resident Tricia Ronaldson. Tricia learned of the competition while attending a writing group in Currie Library and thought it would be an interesting challenge to enter the competition, despite never having done so before. Having for many years been a regular attendee of the Edinburgh Fringe, to use that as a subject matter met the competition's criteria. Tricia was astonished to be one of the six winning entries and later enjoyed a celebratory evening with the Lord Provost and her fellow poets. A copy of each of the six bookmarks will be placed in a time capsule which is being placed in the newly refurbished North bridge. The winning poems were printed onto coloured bookmarks and distributed through Edinburgh City Libraries.

\*Over 2024/25 Edinburgh celebrated its 900th anniversary, marking the establishment of the city as a royal burgh, with a rich program of events and activities running through to August 2025.

 Tricia Ronaldson



Tricia can be seen reading her amazing winning entry on YouTube

### *The Fringe*

Love it or hate it, some will binge on it some will cringe about it.

Crowded streets, everything five star, some performers from afar.

It's not the Fringe without a bad show or fliers with photos taken years ago.

No blink of an eye as a gorilla walks by.

Is that someone famous? Is his name Seamus?

Tattoo, fireworks, tourists on phones.

Rushing from venue 204 to 205 with groans.  
Why are they not near each other in numerical order?

It's just too confusing with all this disorder?

Theatres, church halls, pubs, porta cabins, tents, there's entertainment in all.

Comedians, actors, some serious events. Poets, dancers all having a ball. Street performers who keep you waiting for their "big" finale. If you've got time then yes do dally.

Indulging in treats of street food and beer, chatting with strangers who've just arrived here

I'm a lover. I get such a buzz. So proud of my city, Edinburgh's Fringe is a must.

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website: [www.colinton.org](http://www.colinton.org)  
email: [info@colinton.org](mailto:info@colinton.org)









# Colinton Garden Club - A grand day out

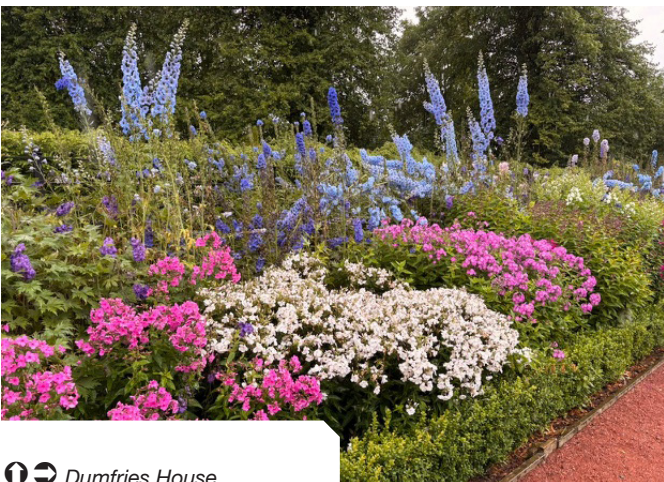
**Many of you will be familiar with Colinton Garden Club which meets throughout the less productive gardening months of September to April in Dreghorn Loan Hall on the fourth Monday of the month to talk about all things garden related.**

But did you know that the Club also organises lots of other events and outings, including a grand Summer outing by coach to other gardens of note?

This year's outing was to Dumfries House in Cumnock, a daunting two hour drive from Edinburgh. Dumfries House is noted for being part of The King's Foundation and is set in an incredible 2,000 acres with absolutely stunning gardens, an arboretum with over 500 trees, woodland walks and bonny bridges. The grounds are free to enter and many locals make use of them for leisurely strolls. Should you happen to fall into conversation with one of the locals they are eager to tell you of the time they came across the King in the shrubbery!

The principal feature is the fabulous walled garden which has the most beautiful and harmonious array of flowers as well as some topiary and lots and lots of organically grown vegetables which are, of course, used in the cafe and restaurant. It is all most beautifully maintained but not overwhelmingly groomed, allowing for nature to do its "thing".

 Dumfries House



 Dumfries House

In fact, some of the estate grounds are left to naturalise so more resembling the wilder side of nature.

There are charmingly restored garden structures, with some nods to the oriental influence on gardens, including a rather fabulous Chinese Bridge. The buildings can be used by a variety of community groups and they have several Health and Wellbeing courses there. You can even stay in the Lodges which we all agreed looked gorgeous. Dumfries House is keen to emphasise the training and employment opportunities they offer, especially with apprenticeships in traditional crafts and skills, and the development of the house and gardens has brought employment to an area greatly affected by the demise of the coalmining industry. We were served coffee and shortbread on our arrival and, when I remarked to one of the young men serving us how smartly they were dressed, he told me you had to be smart when you worked for the King. I did smile to think of His Majesty behind the tea urn.

Some of the Garden Club members also chose to visit the House itself, perhaps a wise choice given the downpour we experienced on that day, in the hottest and driest summer on record. Still, it wouldn't be a Scottish summer outing without rain at some point. It's what keeps our country beautiful.

If you have not yet tried out Colinton Garden Club but like the sound of an adventure, why not come along to one of our meetings in Dreghorn Loan Hall at 8.00pm. Remember the 4th Monday every month. We have a great website [www.colintongardens.org.uk](http://www.colintongardens.org.uk) with lots of information and photographs as well as our club newsletter and details of coming events.

## Gordon Macdonald MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament  
for Edinburgh Pentlands Constituency



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba



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|                          |                                       |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
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| Carrickvale Comm. Centre | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday of month, 10am |
| Currie Library           | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday of month, 10am |
| Oxgangs Library          | 4 <sup>th</sup> Friday of month, 10am |
| Ratho Community Centre   | 5 <sup>th</sup> Friday of month, 10am |

NB: NO SURGERIES DURING PUBLIC AND BANK HOLIDAYS

### Contact Details

|            |                                                                                                |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| By email   | <a href="mailto:gordon.macdonald.msp@parliament.scot">gordon.macdonald.msp@parliament.scot</a> |
| Home visit | Available for those who cannot travel                                                          |
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# The Pentland Book Festival

**F**illing in the dark and dreary month of November we have the marvellous local event the Pentland Book Festival. Now in its 11<sup>th</sup> successful year we look forward to welcoming you at our events.

This year we are introducing some new features to Pentland Book Festival.

Our first event recalls the first Pentland Open Studios Art Trail, which we hope will repeat in years to come.

Rachel Huggins of Dragon Song Productions, Elspeth MacGregor, and Sana Faqir will appeal to the very youngest (parents can come too), while Richard Wiseman will entertain and baffle all ages.

Rebecca Lawrence will discuss more serious mind matters but also how one can flourish even in the most difficult circumstances. Gavin Francis, in a welcome return, discusses how bridges – metaphorical and literal help support us and build our communities.

For crime lovers, we have Caro Ramsay, Denise Mina, Stuart Johnstone, Tony Black, Craig Robertson and Alexandra Sokoloff. And if you want to test your own crime-solving abilities, you should join our own Stef Lyons for an evening of sleuthing.

Less gritty but still a mystery is Janis Mackay's first adult novel, with the same Selkie folklore that made her Young Adult novels so popular.

And if you're just an old geezer/geezerette then Gordon Lawrie is the event for you, while visits to the Edinburgh Museums Collection Centre and the Museum of Musical Instruments will bring back memories.

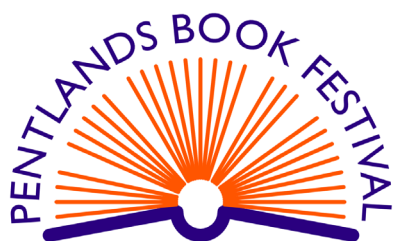
Also looking back to our past is Fiona Valpy, with her descriptions of the challenges her female characters faced in WWII.

Very different from all of the above, we are proud to welcome an impassioned voice for the conscience of Scotland, Hannah Lavery, distinguished poet and playwright.

If this all makes you want to write, you should come and chat to our newest local authors for inspiration and sign up to Sandra Ireland's workshop for the practical learning.

Further information about dates and times are available on our website <https://pentlandsbookfestival.org/>. Tickets for all events will be available from 1 October via our website and the local libraries. There is no charge for events, except for the writing workshop.

So do come along and join in whatever event takes your fancy. You will be made very welcome.



 Elspeth MacGregor



 Tony Black. credit Ian Atkinson





# When a Bowling Club is not just a Bowling Club?

**C**olinton Bowling Club has been in existence since 1938. It is a bowling club that offers, not just it's club members, but members of our community, a place to learn a new skill, meet and make new friends and join in a variety of activities.

**BOWLING** : CBC (Colinton Bowling-Club) has a lively and enthusiastic approach to bowling. We have a Ladies' Section, Gentlemens' Section, Seniors' Section and a Juniors' Section. We offer FREE coaching for all new beginners from as young as eight. The coaching sessions are available every Saturday from 10.30 to 12pm throughout the bowling season. We offer one month free trial that includes coaching and use of bowls. We have two well-maintained greens and, of course, a bar to refresh your thirst after a game. Everyone is welcome to come along and have a go. CBC is associated with *Bowls Scotland* and we are proud to announce that two of our Juniors have been selected, and indeed played, for Scotland and represented Scotland at International level. Our coaches are dedicated to helping all bowlers, whatever their age, to reach their full potential. CBC has also hosted the World Deaf Bowling Association Finals and Disability Scotland Finals.

Outwith bowling, CBC has a large function hall that caters for many activities, such as:

**CABARETS** – monthly

**LINEDANCING** – Wednesday, weekly throughout the winter months October - April 6.30-9.00pm

**QUIZ NIGHT** - Monthly throughout the winter months. 1st Monday each month 7.30-10pm

**BINGO** - every Sunday evening 7-9pm

Our airy **function hall** has hosted every type of celebration; examples being birthdays, wedding receptions, baby showers, special anniversaries, PTA quiz nights and funeral teas. The hall holds 120 guests and a stage to accommodate a band or disco. Please contact our secretary if you are interested in renting our function hall.

CBC plays a big part in our community's wellbeing. We host a **Stroke Club** every Thursday, offering a morning and an afternoon session. The club has full disability access and provides activities to help with mobility and cognitive issues. These sessions are a lifeline to those who attend along with their carers, providing friendships and social inclusion with tea and coffee facilities.

CBC also hosts a **New Friends Group**. This group was set up to combat loneliness and isolation within our community. Throughout the winter months the group meets weekly on a Tuesday and fortnightly on a Thursday from 2-4.30pm. They play board games, cards or watch a movie whilst forging friendships and building confidence.



You can find us at  
49A Redford Rd,  
Edinburgh EH13 0AB ·



If you would like to know more about what Colinton Bowling Club can offer you please email us at [secretary@colintonbowlingclub.org.uk](mailto:secretary@colintonbowlingclub.org.uk) or ring Alice Greig on 07910 958985.

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# A Heartfelt Thank You – Celebrating the First Pentlands Open Studios Art Trail

By John Elliott, POST founder

**In late August, the very first Pentlands Open Studios (POST) Art Trail opened its doors – and what a weekend it was! From bustling studios and lively conversations to rickshaw rides and coffee in Spylaw Park, the event brought together artists, visitors, and the wider community in a true celebration of creativity.**

This wouldn't have been possible without the help of many people. Special thanks go to Colinton Village Enterprise for hosting the Pit Stop Café and information centre in Spylaw Park, along with the volunteers who staffed it. South West Edinburgh 20 Minute Neighbourhoods and Lewis Elliott delighted visitors with rickshaw rides. We were welcomed by wonderful venues including National Trust for Scotland's Malleny Garden, *Hub@531* in Juniper Green, and Pam Millan's *Craw's Nest* studio in Currie. Our local libraries also pitched in by hosting displays and distributing flyers. Most of all, thank you to you – our visitors – for showing up, exploring, and supporting us.

## What You Thought

The feedback has been fantastic. From the 61 responses so far, visitors rated the Art Trail 4.45 stars out of 5. We estimate around 550 people took part across the weekend, with studios averaging 170 visitors per day. Roughly 60% were local, meaning over 200 new faces joined the fun.

Visitors were keen to engage: 15% entered the prize draw, nearly 40% bought artwork ranging from cards and prints to larger pieces, and on average each person visited six

studios. Twenty dedicated trail-goers completed all ten stops and entered fully stamped cards into the draw. Local businesses also felt the benefit, with some opening on Sunday for the extra footfall.

## What's Next

We've learned a lot for next year – clearer maps and better signage will help make the trail even smoother. But we're not waiting until then! Our next event is a *PechaKucha* night on 6th November at *Baberton Golf Club*, part of the *Pentlands Book Festival*. Founding artists will share quick-fire talks about their work and the trail experience. Entry is free, but tickets (available in early October) are essential.

The inaugural *POST Art Trail* showed the power of community, creativity, and connection. Thank you for walking this path with us – we can't wait to welcome you back next year.

The *Pentlands Open Studios* team is already preparing for the future, and there are lots of ways to get involved.

- Calling all artists: Keep an eye out for our Open Call for professional artists to take part in the 2026 POST Art Trail.
- Host a studio: If you have a house or space that could be used by an exhibiting artist in 2026, we'd love to hear from you.
- Volunteer with us: To keep everything running smoothly, we're also looking for volunteers – especially a Treasurer and a Secretary. Perhaps you're a retired accountant or lawyer with an interest in the arts and community life? This could be a wonderful way to get involved.

If you'd like to take part, or know someone who might, please reach out through our website.

With gratitude,  
The POST Art Trail Team



More pictures of the artists and venues





# CVE's Shed Plans

**By the time you read this you will no doubt have come across the beginning of the end as we start the construction phase of Colinton Village Enterprise (CVE)'s Community Heritage Hub project in Spylaw Park. Our excitement knows no bounds to have reached this stage of the brilliant transformation envisaged by local architect, David Moore, of MDA Studio.**

For an idea that began almost ten years ago it may seem a long time coming, but the work involved at every stage has been an essential piece of the jigsaw. It began in earnest with the purchase of the building through the Scottish Government's Community Asset Transfer Scheme. With help from generous volunteers, CVE created a kitchen, a storage loft, and space for the very popular Tool Library (set up in conjunction with local group, SW20). We've since been able to host seasonal neighbourhood events at our Pit Stop Café, and run larger events like Art in the Park and Christmas on the Corner. It's been a real neighbourhood effort!

## Funding the Project

Throughout this time we have been intent on raising the funds needed to transform our building, The Shed, into a multi-purpose community asset. We were particularly blessed by the legacy left to us by our first Charity secretary, Angela Miller, whose flat we sold last year, and whose beautiful furniture and jewellery raised even more for us at auction. This year we had a nerve-wracking time during July waiting to hear if our community council-led application for capital investment, from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), match-funding would be successful. We were fortunate to be selected, particularly since it is the fourth and final year of UKSPF. UKSPF was brought in by the UK Government in place of European Structural Funds, and we are no longer eligible, due to Brexit.

**Contract signing at The Spylaw with David (MDA Studios), Sean (Rollo Developments), Lorraine and Kim from CVE.**



Following confirmation of this financial year's UKSPF allocation to the City of Edinburgh Council, councillors agreed that in order to make effective use of the budget within the short 12-month window for spend, the majority of the money should be combined with funds from Place Based Investment Programme (PBIP) to support applications that had come through the latter process, to which CVE applied. This Scottish Government fund provides support and co-ordination for regeneration that is shaped by the needs and aspirations of local communities. PBIP aims to promote economic recovery and tackle inequality, objectives which complement the overarching aims of UKSPF.

The City of Edinburgh Council had an application process in place for the final year of PBIP through which local community organisations were invited to apply via their local Community Council. When UKSPF capital funds were confirmed for 2025/6, applications for PBIP had already been assessed and scored and the PBIP was oversubscribed. Therefore, priority projects were approached with the offer of UKSPF funding in lieu of PBIP funding. As a result, 16 projects, including ours, received UKSPF capital funds allowing us to swiftly move ahead with the main phase of building works.

## Preparing for Construction

Since this news, it's been all stations go! We now have building warrants in place and a license agreed for use of the adjacent Council car park and the area in front of the shed to start the build. David Moore led a thorough tendering process that included four potential contractors. We're delighted to appoint Rollo Developments Ltd, who, amazingly, could begin the work "the now"! The 9th of October marked the signing of contracts so we've been busy clearing the shed ready for construction to begin. This has involved a couple of "shed clearance" days, where local people have made generous donations for some of our equipment, books, crockery and decorations that we've amassed over the years. A number of kind volunteers have helped with these efforts, particularly with the job of moving items we plan to keep into storage. Grateful thanks to our neighbours at the Redeemer Church on Bridge Road who found space for our gazebos, tables and benches among other things for the next few months.

The building also had to have an archaeological sweep, which is standard practice for an eighteenth century building. No doubt you'll have noticed lots of activity in the park by the time you're reading this, and we are grateful for your patience as these works are carried out. While the construction takes place over the next 12 months, we'll be busy working on the final funding push needed to complete the job! While we are in the extremely fortunate position of having access to 75% of the full tender cost, we need your help. Please give generously if you can but we are very grateful to all sums received, big or small.



Head over to our website for details on how to donate and more information





# Colinton Literary Society 2025/26 Programme

## 15/10/2025 | The Antonine Wall, Scotland's Roman Frontier

**David Breeze** talks about the short life of this frontier, which is a World Heritage Site

## 22/10/2025 | Scots in Russia

**Kath Hay** explores the historical connections between Scotland's architects, artists, and creative characters who became key contributors to life in Russia

## 29/10/2025 | The disappearance of the Ninth Legion

**John Reid** revisits what we think we know about the mysterious movements of the Ninth Hispana

## 05/11/2025 | Humanoids: no longer just Sci-Fi

**Stewart Miller**, CEO of The National Robotarium, outlines the latest advances in humanoid robots

## 12/11/2025 | Lenin

**Ian Gardiner** will tell the story of this towering, yet sinister, revolutionary figure

## 19/11/2025 | Geopoetics in Colinton

**Patrick Corbett** will show the connections between geology and poetry in the Colinton area

## 26/11/2025 | The Vikings in Greenland

**Andrew Dugmore** discusses why Greenland's Vikings vanished

## 03/12/2025 | Buffet supper

**Buffet supper** with musical entertainment from the Glencairn ensemble

## 14/01/2026 | Winter worlds

**Donald Smith** explains why fairy tales still work their magic and lighten the darkness

## 21/01/2026 | Thomas Hardy in context

**David Dow and the Dovecot Singers** explore the world in which Thomas Hardy lived and wrote

## 28/01/2026 | Holyrood Elections 2026

**Sir Paul Grice** looks ahead. What could the possible outcomes be if the Reform party send MSPs to Holyrood for the first time?

## 04/02/2026 | The Queen's funeral

**Tim Purves** tells the story of the most important British funeral this century

## 11/02/2026 | The Burrell Collection

**Duncan Dornan** describes the riches to be found within Glasgow's Burrell Collection

## 18/02/2026 | French royalty and Scotland

**Odile Hughson** talks about French royal connections with Scotland

## 25/02/2026 | The vanishing earth

**Jamie Crawford** discusses the content of his latest book

## 04/03/2026 | AGM

**AGM followed by a talk by Prof Christopher Whatley** on Harvie's Dyke - the people, their liberty and the banks of the Clyde

## Colinton Garden Club Programme 2025/2026



- **September 22nd Dr Alley Jordan : "Early Modern/ Baroque Gardens"**
- **October 11th Plant Sale**
- **October 27th Alison Downie: "Common Garden Injuries"**
- **November 24th CGC Gardeners Question Time**
- **December 16th Christmas Party**
- **January 26th Janice Edwards "The Art of Growing Bonsai Trees"**

- **February 23rd Members Evening**
- **March 23rd John Marshall "Tattie Talks"**
- **April 27th AGM and Crafts Competition**

Website: [www.colintongardens.org.uk](http://www.colintongardens.org.uk)

Meetings in the Upper Hall, Dreghorn Loan at 8.00pm. New members are always welcome.





# Friends of Campbell Park Highlights of 2025

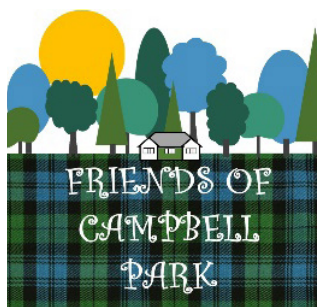
By Chairperson, Shona Harrower

**2025** has been another great year for the Friends of Campbell Park. First, some boring but important stuff: This has been the first year we have had a fully functioning committee, thanks to a major committee recruitment drive in mid-2024. We now have 12 committee members including a full-time representative from the Edinburgh United Football Club and a part-time representative from the Edinburgh Cricket Club. Committee roles include a Treasurer, Secretary, Events and Volunteer Coordinators, a Biodiversity Officer, a Lead Orchard Carer and a Sha-woman who shares the folklore of the ancient Celtic festival calendar with our WhatsApp group members. We recently added a Fundraiser to the committee and have vacancies for Social Media and IT roles. If anyone reading this could help, please come and introduce yourself at our Christmas Crafts event in the pavilion in Campbell Park Pavilion on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> November 12-3pm.

Now for the good stuff. The year started well with young Ewan McAdam's campaign to bring basketball to Campbell Park going all the way to the City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) Cultures & Communities Committee in February. The Council approved the ballcourt in principle and offered to work with the FCP to help make it happen. They appointed

a Project Development Officer to explore possible solutions. A single hoop above a goal area, without any side fencing or barriers, was found to be the preferred solution. We shared potential locations of the new basketball hoop during our Big Lunch event on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2025 as part of a broader community consultation. There was wide support for the new hoop and a favoured location near the playpark was identified. Just over £400 was raised in cash donations for the basketball hoop on the day, despite extremely challenging weather conditions which kept most visitors away. Even so, the local Scouts groups who staffed our registration desks, issued 177 Big Lunch stickers to the hardy visitors who braved 40mph wind gusts and rain to help make the afternoon both fun and memorable.

One VIP visitor also happened to be an Assessor from the Keep Scotland Beautiful "It's Your Neighbourhood" scheme. Some weeks later, we were thrilled to receive their report and certificate for 'outstanding' achievement. The report offered helpful feedback and included a recommendation to consider providing bird and bat boxes, bug hotels and more wildflower areas to help attract more pollinators. Therefore, we're inviting members of the public to help us build up to 40 bird boxes during our Christmas Crafts event between 12-3pm on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> November. All materials and training will be provided. Everyone who comes along on the day will also be able to make themselves a Christmas wreath using natural materials from around Campbell Park to decorate their home (free while stocks last, so best to arrive early). We have no current plans for bug hotels or bat boxes but welcome suggestions or donations.



 Proposed poly tunnel



 Polycrub



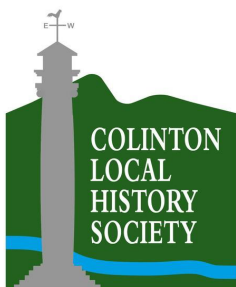
 Proposed basketball court

As far as expanding the wildflower areas goes, thanks to some seed funding through Joe Williams from The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) we have already made plans to develop two new areas. Our Biodiversity Officer, Jonathan Davey and Volunteer Coordinator, Julia Roberts have been working with Kaimes School Duke of Edinburgh volunteers to sow yellow rattle seeds in the long grass in front of the orchard. We've also invited members of Colinton Garden Club to receive free yellow rattle seeds for germinating at home this winter. Jonathan's 'guided flower walks' during the summer months help us to monitor how the number of plant species is changing over time. 19 new species were added to our plant database during 2025, which represents an 8% increase on the 142 species identified during the first Summer 2024 Bioblitz.

We're hoping for another big biodiversity boost in 2026 if the new Wetland Area recommended by ecologists from the Botanical Society of Scotland goes ahead. The Council's local Park Manager has already secured £7.5k funding from a Nature Restoration Fund and we have partnered with the EGLT Edinburgh & Lothian Greenspace Trust to apply for two further grants of £5K from LNER London Northeast Rail and the CEC Community Grants Fund. If successful we could be starting the works as soon as December 2025 with a completion date of May 2026.

In February, May, August and September this year we enjoyed visits from the very hard-working P4, P5 & P6 pupils of Bonaly Primary School, supported by our NatWest Community involvement team. We look forward to welcoming them all back in 2026 for more tree planting, path creations, and food growing.





The Colinton Local History Society encourages and advances the education of the public in the knowledge of local history, particularly regarding Colinton and its historical parish.

**Website:** [Colintonhistory.org.uk](http://Colintonhistory.org.uk)  
**email:** [enquiries@colintonhistory.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@colintonhistory.org.uk)



## Speaker Programme

**Autumn 2025  
– Spring 2026**

All meetings at 8pm in the  
Upper Loan Hall,  
Dreghorn Loan EH13 0DE

**Visitors Welcome !**

**6th October – David Maule:** The Mystery of the Stone of Destiny

**20th October – Simon Fuller:** The History and Future of Edinburgh's water supply

**3rd November – Fraser Hunter:** Roman Arm Armour – A Reconstruction

**17th November – Adam Cumming:** Edinburgh's Medieval Churches

**8th December –** Christmas Social Event

**5th January – Roger Jeffrey:** PC Carrie KPM- WW1 Soldier to WW2 Police Hero

**19th January – Jim Tildesley:** Rum, Sodomy and the Lash

**2nd February – Gerard McEwan:** Policing During World War II

**16th February – Mike Lewis:** 80 Years of the Edinburgh Festival

**2nd March – Ilaria Casini:** The story of Edinburgh Printmakers

**16th March – Alan McLean KC:** The tumbling Lassie

**30th March – Annual General Meeting**

## Cuddies Lane Lamppost

**I**t was great to see the Colinton Gateway Mural be unveiled and the subsequent press coverage, but did you notice the sorry state of the railings and lamppost at the top of the steps at Cuddies Lane?

CAA is looking to paint the railings and restore the lamppost to its former glory (or a modern take on its former glory). We are waiting to hear who owns the railings and whether or not we have permission to paint them. As for the lamppost, with the addition of a traditional looking lamp with modern solar power and some TLC, this eyesore could be turned into attractive start to viewing the mural.

There is another matching lamppost languishing in a local shed and depending on its condition it could perhaps be sited (subject to planning permission) opposite the one already in place, framing Cuddies Lane.

This project would also present an opportunity for a bit of weeding and tidying of the steps. If you're interested in helping, please get in touch.

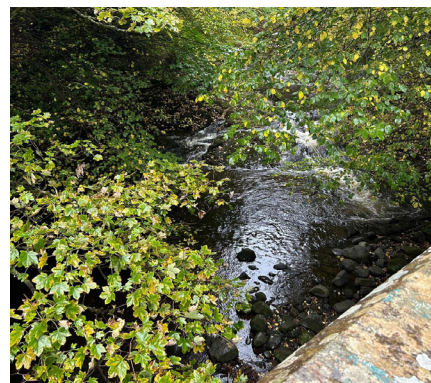






## Guess where?

Here are six photos taken in Colinton, can you work out where?



## Can you help rehome Colinton's Edinburgh Tool Library Satellite?

SW20 has been an organisation based in the south west of the city for a number of years, with several of its committee residing in Colinton. Alongside the hundreds of hires of its free-to-rent cargo bike, rickshaw and step-through e-bike, it was also the organisation that supported bringing the Edinburgh Tool Library to Colinton, based in space generously provided by Colinton Village Enterprise (CVE) in the SpylawPark Shed.

Since then, the volunteer crew of this small but mighty tool library have completed 2,304 loans, saving members £44,000 by borrowing instead of buying and reducing their carbon footprint by 9.9 tonnes. Much to celebrate, and you can take part for a £30 annual membership, available at <https://edinburghtoollibrary.org.uk/>

The exciting news that CVE was starting the renovations of the Shed has meant that the Tool Library is looking desperately for a new home in Colinton. We'd love to hear from anyone with ideas. We need a space that is publicly accessible twice a week, Friday and Monday, with room for racks of tools and ideally some charging space for our batteries, and to operate the laptop during opening hours.

Please reach out to [sw20.etl@gmail.com](mailto:sw20.etl@gmail.com) if you have any ideas about where we could live.

Another recent initiative driven by SW20 has been the launch of the first local official Junior Parkrun based from Hailes Quarry Park on Sundays at 9:30. This marshalled event allows children aged 4-14 to complete a 2km timed circuit and record their results.

Six parkruns have been completed so far with huge turnouts. 219 children have run their 2 km, and 64 volunteers have worked to ensure that this event can take place. Seven of the local primary schools have signed up to be Parkrun Primaries encouraging their kids to take part in daily sport.

It's a fantastic way to spend a Sunday morning as either a runner, supporter, or volunteer. <https://www.parkrun.org.uk/hailesquarry-juniors/>

If you think you can help out with the Tool Library, the parkrun or any other of SW20's activities please do not hesitate to reach out to:

Tool Library and  
parkrun and general  
SW20 enquiries:  
[sw20.etl@gmail.com](mailto:sw20.etl@gmail.com)

Junior parkrun:  
[hailesquarryjuniors@parkrun.com](mailto:hailesquarryjuniors@parkrun.com)







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# Twenty Years of Community Service in Colinton: A Personal Reflection

by Councillor Jason Rust



**A**s a local councillor representing Colinton since 2004, I have witnessed the evolution of our community over two decades. This reflection chronicles key moments and campaigns that have shaped our ward.

Colinton made electoral history in October 2004 by being the subject of a pilot all-postal ballot, commencing my association with the village. This marked the beginning of my journey as a local representative, prior to the ward expanding in 2007 to encompass the former Firrhill and Fairmilehead Wards.

During the 2004 by-election, main areas of contention included the proposed Bonaly traffic calming scheme, protection of the Polo Fields, and the condition of roads and pavements. The traffic scheme proceeded with adjustments, the development went ahead (we now deal with roads adoption issues), and roads and pavements remain a serious concern across the ward, not least the Spylaw Street junction. The main change is that concerns are now communicated almost universally by email, rather than handwritten letter.

The Saturday after my 2004 election, I walked the Polo Fields with Duncan Campbell and another resident, beginning ongoing community dialogue about local issues and aspirations. While meeting Judy Murray at Colinton Lawn Tennis Club's new mini-courts opening in 2010 was delightful, and meeting Joanna Lumley in the ward was absolutely fabulous, ultimately public service and representative democracy is about local residents and ensuring our community's voice is heard and its interests protected.

Our greatest success came in 2016 when we defeated controversial boundary changes that would have removed the Parish Church, Cemetery and War Memorial from Colinton, dividing us in two. Colinton Amenity Association argued that Colinton had been an identifiable community for 900 years and warned that ties to all manner of community functions would be broken if changes were approved. Thankfully our views were vindicated and the Boundaries Commission revised its proposal, retaining the Hailes and Spylaw areas and demonstrating that people matter as well as numbers.

Keeping community links also drove the campaign to repair and re-open Colinton Dell footpath. When a section at Dell Road collapsed in 2020, it took a Council motion, community support and petitioning to ensure the path reopened in late 2024 following rebuilding and new drainage, re-establishing access to Colinton Dell and the Water of Leith Walkway.

A steadfast commitment has been the annual Remembrance Day service, where I give a reading and lay a wreath at Colinton War Memorial, recognising those to whom Colinton owes so much. It has been an honour to represent the city twice at Contalmaison on the Western Front, encountering Colinton residents, reinforcing the enduring connections

between our community and its history. In that vein, a highlight was unveiling the commemorative information board at Spylaw Park in 2011 for the park's centenary.

The preservation of community facilities has been recurring theme. In 2021, we successfully fought closure of the village's public toilets. These had only opened in 2009 after delay due to a Council - private company dispute that delighted journalists writing about the "stink" and council getting "bogged down." When closure threatened again in 2021, community groups rallied, we petitioned, and I questioned officers extensively. It was incomprehensible that one of the most modern, accessible facilities with step-free access, in good condition with no anti-social behaviour problems and centrally located for village and park users, faced closure. We were victorious again.

While community groups thrive in Colinton, I remain conscious of engaging young people. I obtained cross-party support in 2021 for Council discussions exploring opportunities for young people missing residential camps due to Covid-19 restrictions. This resulted in an excellent programme for P7s across the city at Bonaly Scout Centre, allowing them to bond with future secondary school peers while developing outdoor skills and environmental appreciation. A cause of concern though is that over 20 years the parents at Bonaly Primary School have become younger as I have aged!

Looking back over twenty years representing Colinton, what strikes me most is the consistency of community spirit and engagement, as exemplified by the RLS Heritage Trail, Tunnel project and Spylaw Park hub. Whether preserving identity through boundary reviews, maintaining facilities like toilets and footpaths, or adapting to new challenges like the pandemic's impact on young people, the response has always featured active citizen participation and determination to preserve what makes our area special.

The evolution from handwritten letters to email may represent technological progress, but residents' underlying concerns—good roads, safe environments, preserved green spaces, maintained facilities—remain constant. This continuity, combined with the community's willingness to organise, petition and advocate, gives me confidence that Colinton will continue thriving as a distinctive, engaged community for generations to come.

## Guess Where answers

6 Stone structure at the foot of Fernielaw Avenue  
5 Gate post at Bonaly Tower  
4 Millstone at Bonaly Primary  
3 Water of Leith walkway between the West Mill bridges  
2 Gate at Merchiston Castle school  
1 Mile marker on Woodhall Road opposite number 39





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