

**WEST LOTHIAN 50+ NETWORK**  
**NEWS UPDATE: MARCH 2024**

In the absence of a Members' Meeting in March, here is an update of what has happened since the last meeting in February, as well as notice of some upcoming events and activities.

**1. DAY TRIPS**

**Culross and Stirling (March Outing)**

The coach is full for this outing (49) and there is a waiting list.

**Kellie Castle and Anstruther (April Outing)**

This outing will take place on **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April**, leaving Bathgate at 9.30 a.m. from the Railway Station. We will visit NTS property Kellie Castle in Fife, then go on to Anstruther.

Access to the castle is by guided tour only with a maximum of 12 on each tour which lasts approximately one hour. Tours are every half hour starting at 11 am with the last group exiting the Castle at 1.30 pm. The coach will leave for Anstruther at 13.35 pm and return to Bathgate by 5.30 pm.

Price: £28 (includes admission to Kellie Castle and grounds with a guided tour).

£18 (NTS members only but you must bring your NTS membership card).

If you do not wish to, or are unable to do the castle tour due to mobility issues (see below), the cost will be as follows:

£22 for members not doing the tour aged 65+ (concessions)

£23 for members not doing the tour aged 64 and under

Please note: Accessibility in the Castle can be challenging as there are uneven surfaces on many of the steps which are quite worn. The tour takes place over two floors initially and it accesses the southwest tower via a spiral staircase. There are three such staircases to negotiate both up and down during the tour which are fairly steep and narrow.

This trip can be booked at the Hub from **Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March, at 10 am.**

**2. HOLIDAYS**

- **Kyle Line & North Coast 500 Holiday**

If you have booked on this holiday, please note that the coach leaves Bathgate railway station at 10:30 on Monday 8th April. Luggage labels are available from the Hub from Thursday 21st March.

- **Titanic Belfast & the Antrim Coast, Monday-Friday, 14-18 Oct 2024**

5 days/ 4 nights, Glentons Holiday, **£479.00 pp.** Staying at the Ramada Hotel, Belfast, Dinner/Bed and Breakfast included. Also included:

- all bus and ferry charges
- admission to Titanic Belfast
- admission to the Giant's Causeway
- admission, guided tour and tasting at Bushmill's Distillery
- admission to Mount Stewart House and Gardens, Down Cathedral and St Patrick's Grave

Bookings can be made with the Hub now. The deposit is £40 with the balance due by 23 August. Insurance (£27) can be booked and paid with the deposit to the Hub.

### **3. EVENTS**

#### **Daffodil Tea (16<sup>th</sup> March)**

Thanks to our Events team for organising this year's very enjoyable Daffodil Tea. Thanks also to members Constance Barclay for her beautiful floral arrangements, and to Alex Aitken and Carol Wilson for their uplifting musical entertainment.

#### **Six Legal Must Do's for Over Fifties (29<sup>th</sup> February)**

This 45-minute information session led by Martin Donnelly from Caesar & Howie covered the importance of making a Will; putting in place a Power of Attorney; Advance Directives; Care Costs; Equity Release and Legal Aid and included the opportunity for questions. Around 50 members attended what was a very interesting and informative talk.

#### **New Members Meetings**

The next two New Members' Meetings are on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March at 12:15 and Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April at 12:15 in the Hub. All new members are invited and anyone thinking of joining the Network is also welcome to attend. Why not use these opportunities to bring along a friend that you think will benefit from Network membership?

#### **First Aid Training**

The last of our three First Aid training courses takes place on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March. Congratulations to the 23 members who have been awarded their first aid qualification so far.

#### **Awareness Seminar: Spotting the early signs of dementia – led by Alzheimer Scotland, 28<sup>th</sup> March**

Alzheimer Scotland will lead this short information session on spotting the early signs of Dementia. It will take place in the Hub on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March between 6 – 7pm to allow members' family or friends to attend.

There will be the opportunity for questions and to find out where to get support.

There is no charge for attending but please pre-register with the hub as numbers will be limited.

#### **Benefits Workshop**

The Advice Shop will be coming along to help ensure that members are not missing out any benefits that they may be due. This meeting will take place in the Hub in April, date and time to be confirmed.

#### **Art Exhibition and Sale – 6<sup>th</sup> April**

The exhibition and sale of artwork from the Network's two art groups will take place in the Hub between 10 am and 2 pm on 6<sup>th</sup> April. All proceeds from the sale will go to the groups' members, with proceeds from tea and coffee sales going to the Network. The exhibition will be open to the public.

#### **Ceilidh 3<sup>rd</sup> May**

Following the success of the last Ceilidh in November, the Events Group are organising another one on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> May from 7.30 to 9.30 pm. As before, the band will be Cockleroy. Tickets (£10) are currently on sale from the Hub. Friends and family are welcome, but over 18s only please.

#### **Seniors Cinema Sessions**

You may have seen in the local news that the Bathgate Cinema has sadly closed its doors so there will be no further senior cinema sessions. We wish to thank the staff at the cinema for welcoming members and putting on an excellent range of newly released films.

#### 4. GROUPS

- **Butterfly Yoga Group**

Expressions of interest are sought for a new yoga/pranayama/meditation/Chi Gong group. The cost will be £5 per week payable in advance in blocks to the Hub.

The date and time of the sessions are still to be decided. Register your interest with the Hub.

- **Uphall Coffee Group**

A new Coffee group is to start in Uphall Community Education Centre (UCEC). Anyone who joins this group will have to pay a £5 annual membership fee to UCEC and 20p to UCEC each time they attend a meeting. (These are standard charges and are set by UCEC.) The annual fee for UCEC membership only needs to be paid once, no matter how many organisations' meetings you attend. The date or time of the new coffee group is still to be decided. Expressions of interest should be registered with the Hub.

- **Calligraphy Group**

Note of interest can still be registered with the Hub. If you are already familiar with the techniques of Calligraphy, would you be willing to help other members learn? If so, please let the Hub know.

- **Wednesday Bowling Group**

Our outdoors bowling group starts back up on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May at 10 am. at Glenmavis Bowling Club. Please register your interest for this group at the Hub.

#### 5. OTHER BUSINESS

- Well done to our Men's Darts and Dominoes Group who raised money for two local charities - Macmillan Cancer Support Scotland and SOYA (Special Offerings for Young Adults) which, through Strathbrock Parish Church, donates food and toiletries to vulnerable young adults between the ages of 16 and 21 who are unable to look after themselves. The money was raised from tea and coffee donations at their weekly meetings.
- We are pleased that our application to be recognised as a Living Wage Employer has been accepted by the Living Wage Foundation. By paying the Real Living Wage, like other employers the Network is voluntarily taking a stand to ensure that our employees can earn a wage which is enough to live on.
- The West Lothian 50+ Network takes the safeguarding of its members' personal information seriously. To help demonstrate our commitment to data protection, we have recently voluntarily registered the Network with the ICO (Information Commissioners Office).
- We were advised in the first week of March that the Walker Shoolbraid Charitable Trust have awarded £2,000 to the Network as a contribution towards staff salaries.
- Would any members like to help out with some of the set-up for our various meetings and events? No-one is excluded but as this can involve lifting tables, chairs and carrying and transporting boxes, it may be more suited to the men. Please let the Hub know if you are able to put your name down on a rota to help.
- It costs £0.69 to post copies of communications such as this, not to mention the cost of paper, photocopying and envelopes. Where possible we try to avoid posting mail to reduce costs and protect the environment. Please let us know if you can receive communications from the Hub by email rather than post.
- Please note that your subscription of £24 for 2024/25 is due from 1<sup>st</sup> April. You can pay this now at the Hub. If you pay by standing order or bank transfer, please amend your bank instructions, if necessary, as the old bank account is now closed. The **new bank details** for the West Lothian 50+ Network (SCIO) are sort code 80-22-60, account number 24654562. Please remember to include your name as the reference if paying by BACS.

## 6. REMINDERS

- Can group leaders using the Hub ensure that it is left clean and tidy? The Hub Health and Safety Notice covers the responsibilities of Hub users regarding food safety and hygiene etc. A copy of this is displayed in the Hub.
- We welcome your photos of all the lovely events you are attending, but can you please ensure that you announce at the start of any event that you are taking photos which may appear on social media, and do not include photos of anyone who is not comfortable with this.
- Please note that the Hub will be open over Easter on Good Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March and Easter Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April. Groups will meet as usual if they wish to.
- Our next Members Meeting is on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> April in St Mary's Hall, Bathgate at 10.30 am. Our speaker is one of our members, Linda Sanders, who is speaking on behalf of the charity, Quilts for Care Leavers.
- If you have any concerns about the Network that you wish to raise with Trustees, please contact the Secretary, Allan Dungavel at [Secretary@westlothian50plusnetwork.co.uk](mailto:Secretary@westlothian50plusnetwork.co.uk) or by letter addressed to him c/o the Hub.