

## Celebrating Our Walking Groups



*Our Miles and Smiles walking group enjoying the recent fine weather*

May is National Walking Month, providing the perfect opportunity to celebrate the many active walking groups that are such an important part of the Network.

Our walking groups offer members the chance to stay active, enjoy the outdoors, visit new places and spend time together. Across the Network, there are walks to suit a range of abilities, from shorter local strolls of around 2 to 3 miles to longer routes of 5 miles and more. Groups include Dawdlers, Happy Wanderers, Oot and Aboot, Miles and Smiles, Stroll Along and our new Thursday evening group, each offering its own pace, style and regular meeting pattern.

Recent walks have shown just how varied and enjoyable the programme can be. The Dawdlers enjoyed a cracking walk around Beecraigs Country Park, finishing with a well-earned coffee and cake at the Hideaway Café. They also recently walked from Muiravonside Country Park to Haining Wood, known locally as Bluebell Wood, returning by the Union Canal towpath.

The Happy Wanderers took on a 7-mile route from Partick to Glasgow Green, passing the Riverside Museum, the new Govan Bridge, the BBC buildings and the Clyde Walkway before finishing in Princes Square for refreshments.

Our recent walking day out to the East Neuk of Fife was another highlight, with 73 people taking part. Walkers enjoyed routes from Kingsbarns and Crail to Anstruther, along with an 8.5-mile circular walk from Anstruther via St Monans.

Thank you to all our walk leaders, whose planning and commitment make these outings possible. Anyone interested in joining a walking group should contact the Hub for more information. Keep an eye out too for our next walking day outing, planned for the autumn in the Callander area.

## Raising the Network's Profile

The Network continues to increase and strengthen its presence in the local community, taking part in a number of key events that brought together businesses, charities, public services and community organisations across West Lothian.

These opportunities are about much more than networking. They help us raise awareness of the Network, champion the needs and interests of people aged 50 and over, and build relationships that could lead to new activities, support, funding opportunities and partnerships for our members.

Our Chief Executive, Jamie Seery, recently attended the West Lothian Business Week Networking Event, delivered as part of a fantastic programme by Business Gateway.

Jamie also represented the Network at a West Lothian Chamber of Commerce breakfast event, hosted by Angela Moohan and the team at The Larder.

Both events provided valuable opportunities to connect with local businesses, charities and community partners, share more about our work, and explore how wider community partnerships can help support older adults across West Lothian.

Alongside this, Allan Dungavel attended the recent Supporting Healthy Ageing Together event at Strathbrock Partnership Centre in Broxburn. The event brought together organisations focused on wellbeing, connection, independence and healthy ageing, giving the Network the chance to speak directly with local people and promote our activities.



## Upcoming Day Trips & Holidays



### Scenic Scotland Day Out – Sunday 28 June

A fantastic scenic day out through some of Scotland's most beautiful locations, travelling by ferry from Gourock to Dunoon, continuing along Loch Eck to Inveraray on Loch Fyne, returning through the Arrochar Alps, and finishing with a stop at Loch Lomond Shores.

Please note this will be a longer day than usual, with the coach expected to return to Bathgate at around 7pm.

**Cost: £25 per person**

**Includes return coach travel from Bathgate and ferry.**

**On Sale: Wed 27 May, 10am** **SOLD OUT**

### Summer Trip Being Considered: St Andrews Highland Games – Sunday 26 July

A possible July trip to St Andrews Highland Games is currently being considered. The Games take place at Station Park, St Andrews, with events including Highland dancing, running, cycling, heavy weights, tug-of-war and solo piping.

Further details, including cost and booking information, will be shared once confirmed.

### Network Holiday – Weston-super-Mare, Bath & Wells 6–11 September 2026

**SOLD OUT**

5 nights at the Royal Grosvenor Hotel with visits to Bath, Cheddar Gorge, Wells and Tiverton, plus a horse drawn canal boat cruise and free time in Weston-super-Mare.

**Trips can be booked in the Hub, by phone or online.**

**For more information on any upcoming trips and events, please contact the Hub team on 01506 635510 between 10am and 2pm, Monday to Friday.**

**Please let us know if you have any accessibility needs when booking.**

## Keeping You Informed

It has been a busy month for the Network, with three events bringing together members, new members and group leaders to hear updates, ask questions and stay connected.

As the Network continues to grow, these meetings are key to keeping in touch and finding out more about what the Network can offer its members.

On 13 May, we held a New Members' Evening at the Hub in Bathgate, bringing together Member Support Officers, volunteers and recently joined members. The evening was a success, with four new members joining on the night. Check our diary dates for details of similar upcoming Discover the Network sessions in Craigshill (June) and Winchburgh (July).

At our Members' Get-Together on 16<sup>th</sup> May we were delighted to be joined by Derek Brown, Vice President of Bathgate Brass Band, who gave a very interesting talk about the planned Bathgate Music Hub and the band's work with communities across West Lothian. The plans for the Music Hub sound ambitious and exciting, with huge potential for the local area, and possibly even for some of our own activities. Members also received an overview of the Network from our Chair, Sue, highlighting what is happening across West Lothian.

As part of our strategy to extend our activities more widely across the county, our Group Leaders Meeting on Tour was held at Whitburn Community Centre on 20 May. Jamie, our CEO, shared updates on the Network's growth, group support, governance, communication, safeguarding and future planning.

Together, these meetings reflect our commitment to keeping members informed, supporting our group leaders, and helping everyone feel connected to the wider West Lothian 50+ Network community.



*Getting to know you at our new members get-together*

## Activity Groups Update

### Women's Walking Football Taster Sessions

We're excited to launch Women's Walking Football taster sessions in partnership with Bathgate Thistle Community Football Club. No experience is needed and all abilities are welcome. Session dates: Monday 15 June at 10:00am or Wednesday 24 June at 8:00pm, meet at the entrance to Bathgate Sports Centre.

### Monthly Meditation Sound Bath Sessions

Our Monthly Meditation Sound Bath Sessions take place on the first Thursday of each month, 6:15pm – 7:15pm at Whitburn Community Centre.

Each session costs £6 and includes gentle breathwork, guided meditation and immersive sound to help you relax, reset and restore balance.

For more information or to book your place, please get in touch with the Hub.



Pool Group enjoying their weekly session at Deer Park



Dawdlers' walk this month to the Bluebell Woods



Alison gave a fantastic cookery demonstration at our Saturday Night Club

## Dates For Your Diary

### Summer Quiz

 17 Saturday 20 June, 2:00pm – 4:00pm


 WL50+ Members Hub, 14 George Street, Bathgate

 £5

Join us for a Summer General Knowledge Quiz. Hawaiian or summer wear encouraged. Bring your own summer drink. Book at the WL50+ Members Hub or call 01506 635510.

### Discover the Network Session

 17 Wednesday 24 June, 12:00pm – 2:00pm

 Craigsfarm Community Hub, Maree Walk, Livingston EH54 5BP

For anyone interested in finding out more about what the Network has to offer. Come along, meet us, and learn more about our groups, activities and member support.

### Tesco Bucket Collection

 17 Sunday 5 July

 Tesco Bathgate

The Network has been allocated a Tesco Bathgate bucket collection date. Volunteer support will be needed to help cover the collection. Please contact the Hub if you can help.

### Discover the Network Session

 17 Wednesday 15 July, 12:00pm – 2:00pm

 Winchburgh Community Hall

## Network Singers Spring Concert



The Network Singers Spring Concert took place on Tuesday 12 May at Connect Community Church in Whitburn.

It was a fantastic evening, with members, family, friends, and members of the public coming along to enjoy the performance. Over 100 tickets were sold, helping to raise important funds for the Network.

Well done to Vanda, choir master Scott, and the Network Singers Committee for organising such a successful event. As always, the concert was about much more than fundraising. It brought the community together and showcased the wonderful singing talent within the Network.

## Volunteer Spotlight



Patsy is joint leader of our wonderful Events Team and a huge part of the energy and creativity behind so much of what we do. Always smiling and ready to help, she brings warmth, enthusiasm and fun to every event.

From helping to organise new events like our Country Music afternoon, to decorating for our Music Quiz and fully getting into the spirit by dressing to match the theme, Patsy is always right at the heart of the action.

Whether she's collecting donations, joining in with her groups or helping make events feel welcoming, her enthusiasm is infectious.

Kind, creative and full of fun, we're very lucky to have Patsy on the team.

## Big Fundraising Week - How to Get Involved

There is already a real sense of excitement around Big Fundraising Week, which returns from 15–21 June for its second year.

After such a strong response last year, we are looking forward to seeing what members, groups, supporters and local businesses come up with this time. Getting involved does not need to be complicated.

Groups might choose to hold a small raffle, bring-and-buy table, tea and cake sale, quiz, donation box or themed activity during their usual meeting. Members and supporters may wish to make a donation, help with an event, encourage friends or family to take part.

Every contribution, large or small, helps strengthen the Network and supports the activities, groups and services that make such a difference to older people across West Lothian.

## Creativity and Community at the Hub

Our Bathgate Members' Hub was full of colour and great artwork on Saturday 23 May as our art group held its Summer Art Exhibition.

Members of our art groups proudly displayed a wide range of work, celebrating creativity, confidence and talent across the Network. Visitors enjoyed viewing the artwork, chatting with members, and sharing tea and biscuits in a welcoming atmosphere.

We were grateful to Tesco Bathgate for kindly donating a raffle prize for the event, with thanks to Community Champion Abbie Mann for her support.

To join in with the fun of the Bathgate Procession & Community Festival on the same day, the Network hosted a craft stall outside the Hub as part of the Street Fair, Mile of Pennies and The Big Bathgate Busk.

Thank you to everyone who visited, helped, donated, supported the stall, or shared their artwork. It was a lovely celebration of creativity and community in the heart of Bathgate.



Cat and Carolann with our craft stall at Bathgate's Street Fair

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