



# BLACKRIDGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2024

ISSUE 77



A LOOK AT WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE COMMUNITY

*Blackridge Community Council wish you a joyous holiday season with  
peace & cheer in the New Year!*

[www.blackridge.cc](http://www.blackridge.cc)



# BLACKRIDGE

## COMMUNITY COUNCIL

The past year has been a busy and interesting time for everyone in the Village and we hope you enjoyed the various events including the Gala Day, Light Shows, Fireworks display as well as the various clubs and events held at the Craig Inn Community Centre.

### **CRAIG INN COMMUNITY CENTRE - OUR FUTURE**

The Community Centre is currently the subject of a review being carried out by West Lothian Council regarding the deficit within the Council budget. At present the future of the Craig Inn Community Centre is only secure until April 2026.

Ideas to increase and expand the use of the Community Centre are being sought, including raising awareness of the various clubs currently available to members of the community as well as exploring the demand for new clubs or indoor games at the Community Centre. The facilities unfortunately, do not offer the possibility of football or other ball games. The Community Centre can be used for all age groups including those from a few months old (Tutti Tots) through primary school to teenagers, adults and senior citizens.

The Community Centre can also be used for events such as Birthday and Anniversary celebrations, Weddings, along with those organised by the various clubs which use the Community Centre.

A questionnaire to help with the planning of the future use of Blackridge Community Centre is available by accessing the QR Code below.

Please take a few minutes to scan the code and answer the questions as well giving your ideas.

Thank you.

Craig Inn Centre, Blackridge -  
Community Support Survey





## CRAIG INN COMMUNITY CENTRE

The Craig Inn Centre in Blackridge, a cherished hub for community activities and events, faces an uncertain future due to proposed budget cuts by the local council. The council's plan to save £1.7 million from the community centres budget has put the centre at risk, with management groups being forced to consider options such as Community Asset Transfer (CAT), Full Repair and Insuring (FRI) lease agreements, or bearing the full costs themselves. These potential changes have caused significant concern among volunteers and community members who fear the disruption and financial burden it may impose. The future of the Craig Inn Centre **now hinges on the community's ability to come together** and find a sustainable solution to keep this vital local resource operational.



## WAYS TO HELP SAVE THE CENTRE

The community centre supports the growth and well-being of the community and acts as a focal point for the village where people from many walks of life can come together.

The centre is available to hire for any occasion including:

**BIRTHDAY • ANNIVERSARY • CHRISTENING • FIRST COMMUNION  
WEDDING • FUNERAL • BUSINESS MEETINGS • EXHIBITIONS  
FUNDRAISERS • CONCERTS • LESSONS • EXERCISE CLASSES  
COFFEE MORNING • GROUPS • TODDLER GROUPS**

Check out pages 8 & 9 For further information





# BLACKRIDGE PARISH CHURCH



It is time to introduce myself!

My name is Julia Wiley. I am now the Parish Minister for Blackridge Parish Church and community. In March 2024, Blackridge entered into a new linkage with Armadale Parish Church, where I have been the minister for 14 years. The Blackridge folks graciously received me as the minister then. I live in Armadale with two small dogs - one mini-sausage and one half-sausage, half-beagle.

Originally from the US state of Missouri, I lived in several south-eastern states before migrating to Scotland in 2009. I was a minister in the Presbyterian Church USA until I was inducted into the Church of Scotland formally on 1st September 2010.

It has been a privilege for me to meet several of the Blackridge Primary students in smaller groups at the church and school, as well as being with them at the all-school assemblies at the church. I look forward to working with them as well as being part of the larger community as we travel together through this part of our lives.

We will soon be into the Christmas season. On Christmas Eve, I invite you to the services we will hold. Armadale will host a Christingle Family Service at 6.30pm. Blackridge will host a Watchnight Service at 11.30pm, preceded by tea, coffee, and mince pies from 10.45pm. Please feel free to attend either or both in preparation for celebrating the birth of Jesus anew.

Peace,  
Julia



## BLACKRIDGE PARISH CHURCH

*Services Conducted by Reverend Julia Wiley MA (CE) MDiv*

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP - 9.45am  
COMMUNION SERVICES 1ST SUNDAYS IN  
MARCH, JUNE, SEPTEMBER & DECEMBER

**Christmas Eve Watchnight Service at 11.30pm**  
*Church opens at 11pm for tea, coffee, and mince pies*

A warm welcome is extended to all





# BLACKRIDGE PARISH CHURCH

Blackridge Church, together with Blackridge Primary School and the wider community, created a poppy display featuring knitted and crochet poppies from the community and two silhouettes of soldiers made by the school children.

This tribute stood inside the church by the War Memorial in remembrance of those who gave their lives for us. Each element of the display from the handmade poppies to the children's silhouettes represented the unity and respect within our community.



With pride, **Knit Wits** is starting its sixth year! The speed at which time has gone by is remarkable. We're a welcoming group that likes to laugh and blether while knitting and crocheting.

Joining us is open to people of all ages and abilities, from inexperienced to seasoned makers. We are thrilled to add quilt making and sewing to our list of services, and we are prepared to help with this new venture thanks to a recent grant from Foundation Scotland.

As part of our ongoing commitment to helping out local charities, our group recently knitted and crocheted hundreds of poppies for a poppy display for local churches.

Additionally, we are proud to announce that two of our members recently received prizes for their knitting and quilting at a local event, showcasing the remarkable talents within our group.

Every **Thursday from 6.30 - 9.00pm** (except for Christmas & New Year).



**CRAIG INN CENTRE - THURSDAY - 6.30PM - 9.00PM**

# BLACKRIDGE COMMUNITY FUND

Since the Blackridge Community Fund began 10 years ago, it has awarded nearly **£350,000** to 29 different groups for community and charitable activity in Blackridge. 116 grants of varying sizes have made a big difference in community life – most of the groups featured in this newsletter (and the newsletter itself!) have benefited from funding over the years.

With one round still to go at the time of writing (decisions in November 2024), this year has seen twelve grants worth nearly £50,000 awarded. Both the Blackridge Social Activities and Entertainment Group and Blackridge, West Craigs, and Westrigg Gala Day groups received £15,000 each to support the annual fireworks and Gala Day respectively over the next three years. Blackridge, Westrigg, West Craigs OAP Association, Blackridge Senior Ladies Indoor Bowling Group and the Monday Club all received grants towards their annual programmes of activity, whilst four groups recently received £500 each to cover the unexpected introduction of new Craig Inn annual fees as a result of planned reductions in local authority support to the venue. The smallest grant went to cover the costs of storing and seasoning felled timber from the primary school for a bit longer whilst Beechbrae SCIO, pupils, the Community Council and other groups work out the final arrangements to transform the timber into a lasting legacy within the school, benefiting generations of children for years to come. The Blackridge Primary School Parent Council also received funding to run a food voucher scheme helping alleviate the effects of the cost of living crisis for families across Blackridge.

## Blackridge Community Fund Panel

As well as making award decisions, the Blackridge Panel and Foundation Scotland this year worked hard both to promote the Fund (hopefully you've seen the posters!) and to arrange additional support for community groups in the area. As a result, Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian (VSGWL if you like acronyms) offered to provide a session dedicated to Blackridge groups at the Craig Inn in early November. VSGWL is the "Third Sector Interface" for West Lothian, dedicated to supporting and developing volunteer community groups, charities and social enterprises in the area. They are experts at supporting groups around the issues groups highlighted during a recent survey – things like funding and fundraising; policies; safeguarding; accounts/financial practice; constitutions; banking; and volunteer policies/management. Hopefully this will help groups continue to deliver the fantastic range of activities and projects that make such a difference in Blackridge community life.

If you'd like to become a member of the Panel,  
email: [malcolm@foundationscotland.org.uk](mailto:malcolm@foundationscotland.org.uk) for more information.

## EDF Renewables

EDF Renewables (from the Burnhead Moss wind farm), Gresham House (from the Torrance wind farm) and FIM services/Netro (from the Harthill wind farm) all continue to provide annual community benefit payments into the Fund.

For more information about the Fund, what it has supported and how to apply, check out Blackridge Community Fund | Foundation Scotland.

## Burnhead Moss Education & Training (BMET) Fund

As part of community benefit arrangements from the EDF Renewables Burnhead Moss Wind Farm Fund, Blackridge residents can apply for bursary grants from the BMET scheme to help them take up education and training courses. Since launch in 2016, 106 Blackridge residents have benefited. From Hair & Make-up Artistry to Dental Nursing, Joinery apprenticeships to degrees in Social Work, Italian and Education & Teaching, a huge number of people have gained new skills, got into jobs and progressed in their careers thanks to BMET. For more information, check out EDF Renewables Burnhead Moss Education & Training (BMET) Fund | Foundation Scotland.



# Beechbrae

**Beechbrae News** - Ally Graham



Beechbrae is full of autumn colours this season. The pink footed geese have nearly finished passing overhead on their migration south for the winter. The tawny owls have now begun their conversations in the evenings. It's been a beautiful autumn at Beechbrae, and we're watching nature start to settle down ready for winter.

We had a great time with woodland activities in the summer. We had 2 family woodland sessions and 4 Summer sessions for P5 and up in partnership with NatureScot. We had a lot of fun playing and learning together, thanks for all who joined in.

This winter we're busy with our Branching Out, Woodland Wellbeing and Wellbeing Conversation Groups, wrapping up and getting outside to help look after our wellbeing.

For regular updates and information, follow our social pages or website

 @beechbrae

[www.beechbrae.com](http://www.beechbrae.com)

beechbrae 







# CRAIG INN COMMUNITY CENTRE



Craig Inn centre is all about bringing the community together and is used for events, meetings and classes. Our current timetable is listed below, why not come along and join one of our classes:

## MONDAY

Library	9.00am - 3.30pm
Craft Class	9.30am - 12.30pm
Xcite Exercise	10.30am - 11.15am
Monday Club	1.00pm - 3.30pm
Tutti Music - Toots and Taps (fortnightly)	5.40pm - 7.00pm
L.L.O.L (1st of the Month)	7.00pm - 9.00pm
Women's Rural Institute (2nd of the month)	7.00pm - 9.00pm
Management Committee Meeting (3rd of the month)	7.00pm - 9.00pm

## TUESDAY

Library (Centre Staff)	5.00pm - 9.00pm
Cllr Kenna (monthly, check poster)	5.15pm - 6.15pm
Time Out Art Class	6.00pm - 9.00pm
Community Council (3rd of the month)	7.00pm - 9.00pm

## WEDNESDAY

Tutti Music - Tutti Tots	10.30am - 11.30am
Railway Club	6.30pm - 9.30pm
Camera Club	7.00pm - 9.45pm

## THURSDAY

Senior Ladies Indoor Bowling	1.30pm - 3.30pm
Knit Wits (Knitting Group)	6.30pm - 9.00pm
L.L.O.L (3rd of the Month)	7.00pm - 9.30pm

## FRIDAY

Tutti Music - Tutti Tots	10.30am - 11.30am
Bathgate Orchestra	7.00pm - 9.45pm

## SUNDAY

Flutes 4 Fun (Fortnightly)	6.00pm - 8.00pm
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## LOOK OUT FOR MORE EVENTS IN 2025

Keep up to date with forthcoming events by checking out  
<https://blackridge.cc/craig-inn-centre>

**Craig Inn Centre**  
**Main Street**  
**Blackridge • EH48 3SP**  
**Tel: 0151 752360**

**Facilities Available:**

Accessible Toilet  
Toilets  
Baby Changing  
Free Wi-Fi  
Various rooms for hire  
Library  
Museum

**ROOM HIRE PRICES**

Main Hall	£15 per hour
Glass Room	£12 per hour
Meeting Room 1	£12 per hour
Meeting Room 3	£6 per hour

*Commercial prices may differ*

**SPORTS FACILITY PRICES**

Kick Pitch & Shower Rooms	£10 per hour
Hall	£12 per hour

*Visitor fees are payable by all non-members using the Centres, excluding those attending Community Education Groups or associated organisations*

## ARMADALE & BLACKRIDGE CAMERA CLUB

All photography enthusiasts in West Lothian and the surrounding areas are welcome to join the Armadale & Blackridge Camera Club. **Meeting every Wednesday from 7.00pm to 9.30pm at the Craig Inn Community Centre.**

Combining a variety of organised field trips, social gatherings, contests, guest speakers, instruction, and hands-on photo sessions.

You will be warmly welcomed with a brew and a biscuit if you are interested in photography, regardless of your level of experience or favoured genre. Come learn more.



# BLACKRIDGE PRIMARY AND EARLY LEARNING CENTRE



It is hard to believe that we are almost half way through the school year but 2024-25 has so far been hugely successful for everyone at Blackridge Primary & ELC.

In September, we welcomed our Education Officer and a team of Head Teachers from across the authority for our Validated Self Evaluation (VSE). Over the three days, the team visited classes and the ELC, spoke to staff, learners, parents and partners and looked at evidence of our improvement journey. We were delighted with the positive feedback from the team which highlighted the wonderful children we have within our school community, the commitment from staff to continually improve and most importantly, the positive relationships which underpin all that we do at Blackridge.

This term, our children have been working hard, with our youngest learners learning about the changes in seasons and light and dark, P2-4 learning about forces and movement and how these are so important in our world, especially when designing toys. Our P5-7 children had a chance to put their learning on the Rainforest into action with their recent trip to Amazonia, where learners got the chance to experience a wide range of tropical habitats.

We have a full calendar of family learning events underway, with PPP sessions happening in the ELC and Family Club taking place in the school. We look forward to welcoming our school community to our Nativity in December too.

On behalf of everyone at Blackridge Primary & ELC, we would like to wish everyone a lovely Christmas and best wishes for 2025.

**Claire McGoldrick**  
**Head Teacher**

#TeamBlackridge



*Drawing by Freya Sinnet, P6*



# Get crafty!

What began as a card class has expanded to include other crafts as a result of the attendees' growing talents.

Please come and join our welcoming class on **Monday mornings from 9.30am - 12.30pm**, regardless of your level of crafting experience. The class currently **only costs 50p** to cover your tea, and we have adequate supplies for card making and other activities.



**CRAIG INN CENTRE - MONDAY - 9.30AM - 12.30PM**

For those interested in model railroads as a pastime, there is a local club called Blackridge Model Railway Club. Our club's activities include creating and modelling scenery, as well as operating model trains for both novice and seasoned train enthusiasts.



We are a welcoming social community that supports and educates one another. Throughout the year, members frequently go to model train exhibitions and shows.

The club members are now working on a layout that includes a variety of aspects, such as a farm, brewery, village, container depot, and locomotive workshops.

If you have skills that you can contribute to the club or are eager to learn new ones, come meet the members and have a look.

**Join us on Wednesday evenings, in the Craig Inn Community Centre from 6.30pm to 9.30pm.**

Blackridge Model Railway Club is supported by Foundation Scotland & West Lothian Councillor's Disbursement Fund

**CRAIG INN CENTRE - WEDNESDAY - 6.30PM - 9.30PM**





This summer has been fantastic for the **Senior Ladies Indoor Bowling Club** once again. This year's weather has been terrible, so we're glad we play indoors.

Thanks to the generosity of Foundation Scotland, we were able to treat our ladies throughout the year to delightful dinners both at Harrington's in Harthill and Hopetoun Bistro in Bathgate.

In the coming months, our ladies' bowling club have several trips planned that wouldn't have been possible without the generous support of community funding.

We have seen a slight rise in members during the summer, which has been fantastic. We would be delighted to have you join us if you are interested in taking up carpet bowls. You don't need any previous experience or your own bowls as they are provided.

We play every **Thursday from 1.30pm - 3.30pm** in the Craig Inn Community Centre and guarantee you will receive a warm and friendly welcome with a chat over a cup of tea or coffee and a biscuit. (We charge £1 per week for the refreshments). We don't take life too seriously and we have a lot of fun and a laugh when we play.

Once again many thanks to Foundation Scotland for the support supplied to our group and to the wider community.

**CRAIG INN CENTRE - THURSDAY - 1.30PM - 3.30PM**

**BLACKRIDGE, WESTRIGG & WESTCRAIGS  
OLD FOLKS COMMITTEE**

would like to wish all our forever youthful  
Old & New Village Members

**A very Merry Christmas and  
Best Wishes for a Happy & Healthy 2025**

See you on 23rd December for the Christmas Treat



The Time Out Art Group started in 2000 at the Craig Inn Community Centre and is still going strong today.

Whether experienced or a total novice, you'll be made welcome.

**CRAIG INN CENTRE**  
**TUESDAY**  
**6.00PM - 9.00PM**



WE ARE  
MACMILLAN  
CANCER SUPPORT

**THANK  
YOU**

A big thank you to all who helped in any way at this year's coffee morning for MacMillan Cancer Support. The weather was kind making it a very busy event.

**The amount raised for the year was once again over £4,000** making our total over the years **£49,825.**

**Here's to next year's event.**



Registered with  
**FUNDRAISING  
REGULATOR**

Registered charity Scotland (SC039907)

## **Mincemeat Cup Cakes**

*This mixture makes  
24 muffin size cakes.*

225gms butter  
225gms sugar  
4 eggs  
250gms mincemeat  
210gms self raising flour  
25gms cornflour  
1 teaspoon baking powder

Cream butter and sugar, add eggs one at a time.  
Fold in mincemeat and stir well.  
Fold in the flour, cornflour and baking powder.  
Bake for 20 to 30 minutes at 160 degrees Celsius.

## **Ecclefechan Tart**

Line patty tins with shortcrust pastry or line a Swiss Roll tin with Shortcrust pastry

### **Filling**

110gms butter  
110gms soft brown sugar  
2 eggs  
300gms raisins  
100gms walnuts  
zest of a lemon  
1 tablespoon lemon juice  
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

Mix all ingredients together and fit either the patty tins or the Swiss roll tin.  
Bake in a moderate oven till set.  
If using the Swiss roll tin cut into fingers when cool.





Since our last update in the Summer 2024 Newsletter we have continued to go from strength to strength and we are happy to report that our membership has seen a substantial increase.

Thanks to the generosity of Foundation Scotland we have enjoyed a trip to the Riverside Museum, Glasgow followed by a delicious Fish Tea at the Alhambra Cafe, Bellshill. We also enjoyed Afternoon Tea at Klondyke Garden Centre, Polmont where we were treated like royalty.

Talented local musicians entertained us over the summer with Alison Pinkerton playing the flute, Rona McLeod on the accordion and Greg McCarra singing and playing the guitar.

Our guest speakers were Ally, who gave us an update on what is happening at Beechbrae. Lynda Kenna spoke to us about MOOD and Lindsey Dickson from WLC Waste Education and Engagement provided advice on recycling and an interesting insight to what happens to our waste after it is picked up from the kerbside. New Armadale and Blackridge Councillor, Susan Manion popped in to introduce herself and have a chat.

In August we were treated to a karate demonstration from 8th Dan, Charles Lindsay, 7th Dan, Grant Bonar and 1st Dan Reece Bonar of WKC Karate. Everyone thought it was great with some of our ladies even trying some moves afterwards.

In our “spare time” we played our board games of course and Alex Kennedy kindly hosted a Beetle Drive and buffet in July which was great fun. In October we had our Halloween buffet and even dooked for apples.

Upcoming events include Robert Andrew’s Clothes paying us a visit where we can hopefully purchase a wee “off the shoulder number” for the Christmas party season as well as our Christmas Dinner.

**A warm and friendly welcome is extended to anyone over 60** to join us every **Monday from 1.00pm to 3.00pm** for some fun, a cup of tea or coffee and a biscuit.

# CHRISTMAS LIGHT SHOWS



For Autism friendly nights, updated dates/times and charity info, please check facebook “Westrigg Electrical Light Shows” or scan QR code for more information.

**STRICTLY NO PARKING ON STREET**

## NEW COUNCILLOR

Following the sad passing of Stuart Barrowman I was elected as a the new Councillor for Armadale and Blackridge Ward in August. Since then I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the local area. I have met many people through my Surgeries at the Craig Inn Centre and in working with the Community Council. I have been struck by the enthusiasm many people have for getting involved and helping others. This is a very special community. I hope you all have a peaceful festive season and all best wishes for 2025.

Cllr Susan Manion

Councillor Susan Manion - Armadale and Blackridge Ward

Email: [susan.manion@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:susan.manion@westlothian.gov.uk) • Telephone: 01506 281702

# IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

## POLICE/FIRE

Police HQ Livingston	01506 431200
Police (Non-Emergency)	101
Fire (Emergency)	999

## HOSPITALS

St. John's Hospital, Livingston	01506 523000
University Hospital Monklands, Airdrie	01236 748748
Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh	0131 536 1000
Western General Hospital, Edinburgh	0131 537 1000
University Hospital Wishaw	01698 361 100

## HEALTH

Blackridge Health Centre	01501 751238
Harthill Health Centre	01501 751795
Armadale Health Centre	01501 730432
District Nurses / Midwife /Physio	01501 730339
Blackridge Pharmacy	01501 751175
NHS24 (Out of Hours Service)	111

## SCHOOLS

Blackridge Primary	01501 751223
Armadale Academy	01506 282145
St. Anthony's Primary, Armadale	01501 731668
St. Kentigern's, Blackburn	01506 656404

## UTILITIES EMERGENCIES

Scottish Gas	0800 111 999
SP Energy Networks (Electricity)	105
Scottish Water	0800 077 8778

## TRAVEL

Rail Service Enquiries	0845 7484950
West Lothian Traveline	01506 775288

## WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL

01506 280000

## LOCAL COUNCILLORS

Andrew McGuire <a href="mailto:andrew.mcguire@westlothian.gov.uk">andrew.mcguire@westlothian.gov.uk</a>	01506 281717
Lynda Kenna <a href="mailto:lynda.kenna@westlothian.gov.uk">lynda.kenna@westlothian.gov.uk</a>	01506 281724
Susan Manion <a href="mailto:susan.manion@westlothian.gov.uk">susan.manion@westlothian.gov.uk</a>	01506 281702