



Blackhall magazine

Promoting local organisations and informing residents

Oct 2025



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October 2025



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PLAYGROUND AND TRAMS

As I sat on September's City Council Education Committee I was delighted to talk to a Deputation from Blackhall Primary School Parent Council. Delighted because I love to see people engaging to improve their community, but not so happy to see the sorry condition of the school's playground. Take a look at Page 7 and you might get an idea of how bad it is.

Not long after this I went along to the Blackhall Community Council meetings. Usually I wait for the Secretary to email minutes of the last meeting and then summarise them in the magazine (see page 24/25) but I decided first hand experience would be much better. And I am glad I did. Though I suggested to them I would wait for the official Minutes to be available before I published I did get a much better sense of the energy of the Community Council and, again, loved the engagement of so many people into improving their community. Much discussion

was had about the City Council's consultation on a proposed tram extension from Granton to Little France and the Community Council strongly encourages all residents to engage with it, no matter what your views (see Page 7 for more info).

The most interesting part of the meeting were answers from the 3 City Councillors when asked for their political party's position. The Conservative, Max Mitchell, was emphatically against a tram extension. The Liberal Democrat left room for doubt, and the SNP want to wait for the Consultation results before committing.

If you want to join in the local energy, get along to their next meeting (info on Page 24).

Christopher Cowdy (Editor)
Transparency reminder - I am a Conservative Councillor

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CHRISTOPHER COWDY



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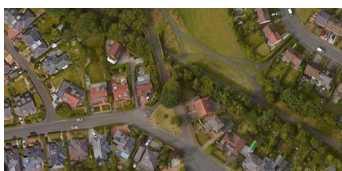
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Here is a summary of some of the main articles reported by a range of media outlets online and that relate to our local area for Blackhall, Silverknowes, Craigeith, Ravelston & Orchard Brae. I have added a bit of my own.



Communities across the capital reported issues of anti-social behaviour with gangs of **young people riding around on off road bikes, including Clermiston, Juniper Green, Lanark Road, Broomhouse and Sighthill.** - **EdinburghLive**



An Edinburgh cyclist was subjected to a serious assault by a dirt bike rider along **Blackhall Cycle Path.** — **Edinburgh Reporter & EdinburghLive**

Craigeith Retail Park looks



like any other out-of-town shopping centre in the UK - but it's actually built on top of one of the most historically important quarries in Scotland writes - **EdinburghLive**

The Scotsman listed their



“Edinburgh's 10 most popular postcodes for new movers in 2025” . The top spot was taken jointly by West End, East Craigs and Corstorphine but in 4th place was **Barnton, Cramond and Ravelston** described as “a high number of people moving into homes across the area. The average house price is £396,396 while the average monthly rent is £1,661. Cramond is a picturesque, historic suburb known for its seaside village feel and has a small sandy beach.”

City Councillors heard an update for year 1 of the Connected Communities grant project and the following were some of those mentioned for their good work around Northwest

Edinburgh:- **Spartans, U-evolve, Pilton Community Health Project, Stepping Stones North Edinburgh, Sikh Sanjog, Corstorphine Community centre, Muirhouse Youth Development Project, Pilton Youth and Children's Project,**

The City Council's **Culture and Communities Committee** made particular mention of Davidsons Mains Children's Gala and a joint effort by staff from **Blackhall Library, The Friends of Blackhall Library** and Access Services, to promote the libraries services at the Gala. The mobile bus showed off much of the work services they provide while the main library has been closed.



Proposed Tram Extension Consultation
Residents can give their views on the £3Billion project online or at in person drop-in sessions . Details of these sessions are also on the Consultation Hub and last day for comments is 17th November.

Just search online for “Edinburgh tram consultation”



The Council's Education Committee (of which Editor is a member!) considered a petition to "Improve Blackhall Primary School Playground facilities". They heard from members of the Parent Council who brought photos showing the bare and muddy patches of land. Committee agreed to commission a Report to be brought back to a future Committee.





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Christmas at the Botanic returns, promising new lights, enchanting sounds and a touch of romance

Festive fans can get a head start on the season as tickets go on sale.

Now in its ninth year, the beloved light trail will bring winter magic, transforming the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh into an immersive world of light, colour, and festive cheer.

This year's trail will run for 35 nights, featuring three dedicated quiet nights.

New installations include:

Night Birds – featuring a flock

of five oversized birds that spread their neon-lit feathers to illuminate the night sky.

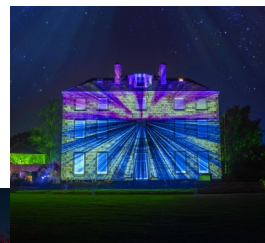
Heart Arch Walk – a tunnel of love made from large LED hearts that set the Christmas mood with a jolly red glow, making a perfect picture spot.

Laser Lights – displaying thousands of slowly rotating coloured beams that burst through fog adding a truly immersive experience.

Regius Keeper of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Simon Milne said: "Each year, our trail organisers work tirelessly to transform our Garden into an exciting

nocturnal showcase, and this year is no exception.

Tickets for this year's show are on sale now. With limited slots and popular dates expected to sell out, early booking is strongly advised to avoid disappointment.





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Edinburgh needs better funding from Scottish Government.

Edinburgh is expanding quicker than any other part of Scotland but the city council gets less funding from SNP Government than any other Local Authority. Edinburgh receives a block grant of £1,878 per person, compared to the Scottish average of £2,350 and, if this mis-match continues, we will be ill-equipped to plan and prepare for our expansion.

Edinburgh Northern is earmarked as a key part of the city's future housing need and though Granton is central to the plan there are other strategic sites around the area including the Royal Victoria Hospital and Police Scotland's Fettes office along with significant developments at Crewe Toll and Trinity.



With more housing comes a need for infrastructure of schools, GP surgeries, shops and transport which all comes at a huge cost. Even if the City Council has the vision and forward planning, Scottish Government must do more to help plan, build, and service expansion with proper infrastructure.



Christopher Cowdy
is standing for
Edinburgh Northern
at the Scottish
Elections
in May 2026



City Plan Spatial strategy

Major new
development areas

*Edinburgh Northern
constituency*



Not building is not an option -

The SNP called a national Housing Emergency in May 2024 and 13 Councils followed suit, including Edinburgh. A shortage of housing puts massive pressure across the board and the young find it particularly hard to get on the ladder with ever rising prices.

The SNP Government struggle to meet their own building targets and resort to restrictions through Short Term Lets, 2nd Homes, and Empty Properties legislation. As a Chartered Surveyor with 15yrs in property development and investment, I know the only way to solve the crisis is to build more homes.

"Scottish government announced a Programme for Government with no plan to end the housing emergency"
- *Shelter Scotland*

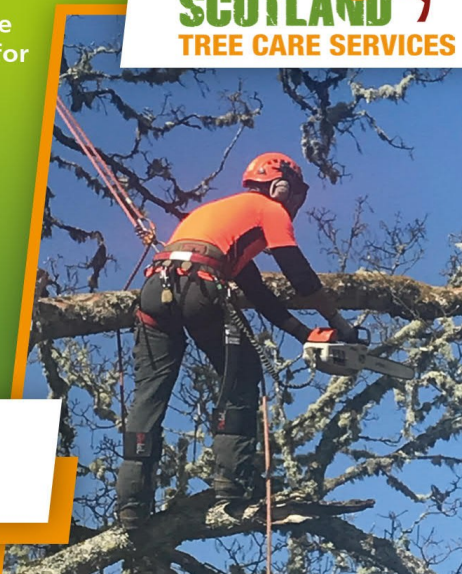
"Build baby build"
- *Sir Tom Hunter*

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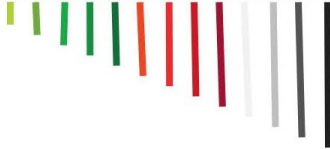
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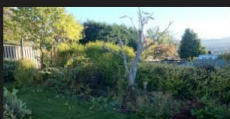
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Every month we publish a selection of things to do in the local area. This is usually found as a result of an online search and we may not have had time to verify all details are correct but we try to set out a good spread of interesting activities and local organisations. So if you see

Blackhall St Columba's Church

Blackhall Horticulture Society

Second Monday of the month at 7:45pm

Blackhall Horticultural Society hold monthly meetings from September to May. The programme caters for all tastes in gardening and welcome suggestions of themes to be covered.

The Society will hold its Annual Plant Sale in May.

Garden visits are arranged, usually in the spring and late summer.

For more info, email blackhall.horti@hotmail.com.

Modern One

Rhythm

Until 28th Oct, Daily, 10am - 5pm

The two paintings by Victoria Morton and Michael Armitage in this display demonstrate the artist's use of colour and painterly gestures to convey feelings of rhythm or movement. In both, the figures seem to merge with their environment, suggesting the embodiment of rhythmic sensations.



something of interest and want to join in, please do some of your own research and contact the organisation in plenty of time to make sure the event is still on and the details are accurate.

Lauriston Agroecology Farm

Market Stall

2nd October, 16:30 - 18:00

Fresh-picked veg grown in the Market Garden. Across the season, there will be bread & pastries from Granton Garden Bakery, mushrooms & tinctures from Rhyze Mushrooms, potted wildflower plants grown by Lauriston



Wildflowers, herbal remedies from Grass Roots Remedies, free range eggs from Croft Organics, and open pollinated veg & herb seeds from Seeds of Scotland. Wakibia & Co may be selling African and Asian vegetables of cultural significance, grown at the farm.

The offer will vary from week-to-week with seasonal produce and making things as small indie organisations. But they always promise a selection of good things!

The Market Stall is held in the farmyard, in front of the 'Welcome' portacabin, through the gate at the back of the Toby Carvery.

Lauriston Castle

The Big Draw

Monday 13th October, 10:00am

Where better to explore this year's Big Draw than the amazing grounds of Lauriston Castle? Come to the Castle courtyard just past Mimi's and collect a drawing board, paper and pencil from the Castle courtyard, and immerse yourself in nature. Why not try the Japanese Garden, or Rose Garden where you are not only surrounded by the beautiful sights of the flowers and plants around you, but take time to notice the smells and sounds of the insects buzzing and the breeze rustling through the leaves. We'd love to photograph your creations for our social media pages.



Step by Step Guide for First Time Buyers

Looking to buy your first home? As a solicitor estate agent, we are here to help you every step of the way.

Step one – Find a solicitor

It is a legal requirement to have a solicitor represent you when buying a home in Scotland and one of our highly experienced conveyancing solicitors will be able to provide you with a fee quote for buying a property. Once you are happy to progress, they will then register you as a client and guide you through the process, advise you and make offers on your behalf. As an ESPC Charter firm, we can offer you even more assurance. We are committed to offering you the very best of service, above and beyond what we are legally required to provide. Please contact us to find out more.

Step two – Get a mortgage in principle

A mortgage in principle is a document from a lender which tells you how much they may be willing to lend you to buy a property. This is an essential step so that you know what you can afford to buy and how much deposit you will require to progress with a purchase.

ESPC mortgages can help you with this. Their team of independent mortgage specialists can offer mortgage advice for first time buyers, as well as giving you up-to-date information on available support schemes for first time buyers. To learn more about this please visit espc.com.

Step three – Plan your budget

Now that you know how much a bank or building society may lend you, it's a good time to plan your overall budget.

Other costs to take into account when buying a property include:

- extra cash to bid over the Home Report value (your bank won't lend more than the property's Home Report value)
- Land and Buildings Transaction Tax (LBTT)
- legal fees
- removal costs
- furniture/essential items that you'll need to purchase
- any upgrading that needs to be done

Step four – Search for your first home

Now it is time to start your property search!

An ideal way to begin is to register with the ESPC where you will find hundreds of properties, ideal for first time buyers. You can filter your search for the type of property you would like.



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ESPC also lists many properties exclusively for 72 hours, so you can get ahead of other buyers and find your dream home before it's listed anywhere else. Sign up to My ESPC on the ESPC website to receive property alerts.

Step five – View properties

Start booking viewing appointments and look over the home report and sales schedule for each property before you attend (you will find these on the selling agent's website or the ESPC website, to download). Take a note of questions you would like to ask while you are at the viewing that aren't covered in the home report or schedule.

Step six – Note your interest

Once you have found the property you really want, your solicitor can formally note your interest with the selling agent and establish at that point how much interest there is from other people, how long it has been on the market and whether or not there is a closing date set (a closing date is a day and time that the selling agent has set to receive sealed bids for a property).

Step seven – Make an offer

You can make an offer without a closing date being set and your solicitor can advise you on recent sales in the area, including what percentage over home report valuation has been achieved, the contents of the home report and discuss what level you would like to offer at.

Step eight – Your offer has been accepted

Your solicitor will start the conveyancing process (the legal part of a purchase) and your mortgage advisor will take you through your mortgage application. This usually takes around 8 weeks until the settlement day.

Step nine – Arrange removals

Time to plan your removal company for the settlement date and start packing!

Step ten – Move in day

Your solicitor will tell you when the funds are through for your purchase and when you can collect the keys to your new home!

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Craigleith Blackhall Community Council

Community Councils are set up by statute and run by local residents to act on behalf of its area. As the most local tier of elected representation it plays an important role in local democracy and the volunteers are always keen to hear from other residents about local issues and concerns.

Meetings are usually at 7:30pm on the third Monday of the month, in Blackhall St Columba's Church Small Hall, Queensferry Road.

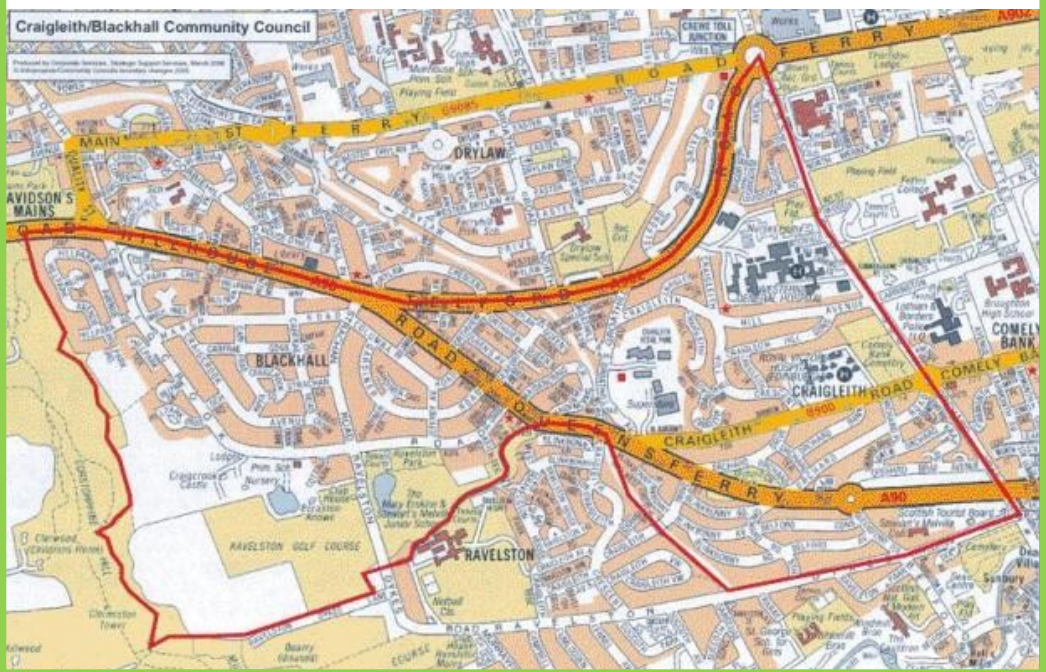
They are always open to the public and are attended by Inverleith and Murrayfield Ward Councillors and Police Scotland. All local residents are welcome to attend.

Next meeting: 20th October

For more info:

Visit: www.craigleithblackhall.org

Email: sec.cbcc@gmail.com





A summary of the Minutes from the August meeting. 21 in attendance

POLICE REPORT

There were 168 calls to Police. 1 reported housebreaking, 2 break ins to garages, 1 minor vehicle accident, a 16 year old caught on an off road bike, a number of calls to the Western General Hospital involving youths climbing scaffolding, 2 calls in relation to youths trying car doors.

Police have been abstracted due to the visit of President Trump and JD Vance.

Matters brought to the attention of PCs Cursiter and Gunderson included:-

Queensferry Road new 30mph limit, South Groathill Avenue zig zags, Roseburn Cycleway - a dog became very ill due to ingesting suspected drugs, Quality Street Junction - a motor bike with no number plate passed through a red light, Maidenraig Crescent Hit and Run, Purchase of PC Bob from Police Scotland.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL MATTERS

Service 38 bus - Tram Extension Consultation - South Groathill Avenue - Queensferry Road 30mph Speed Limit - Graffiti in Bus Shelters

WARD COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Cllr Max Mitchell - Service 47/47B will be moved from Straiton Park and Ride - Queensferry Road road surface to be patched - Blackhall Primary School to petition Council for improved playground - Park Rangers to be recruited - Orchard Park equipment has been installed to monitor surface drainage - Proposed Blinkbonny parking zone.

Cllr Hal Osler - Keith Terrace pavement blocked by caravan - Blackhall Library Bins - Fettes Avenue has become a focus for motor caravan parking.

AOCB

South Groathill Avenue Storage Application - SPEN weeded the area at Maidenraig Crescent and planted seeds - Riding of the Marches.



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**Blackhall Probus
welcomes you**

The Blackhall Men's Probus Club organizes social events for retired/semi-retired gentlemen. The club has a membership of around forty. It holds regular meetings with talks given by experts and enthusiasts across a wide range of subjects. We also arrange one or two lunches (including Christmas) to which partners are invited, Quiz, Pie and a Pint sessions as well as local walks.

When: we meet on the first and third Thursday of the month through October - April

Time: 10am with cup of tea and talk to follow

Where: Blackhall Bowling Club on Keith Row

New members are always welcome.
For more details, please contact the President:

Gordon Hamilton
President

0131 332 6089

Email: gdhprobus@gmail.com

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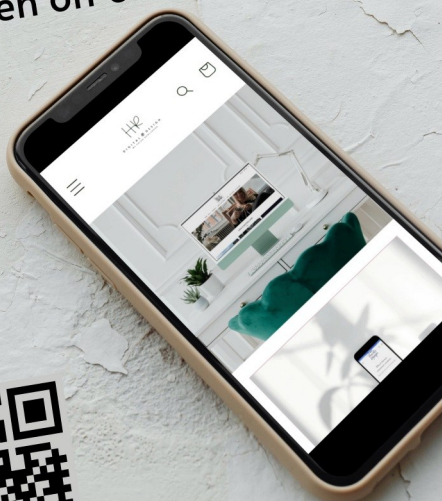
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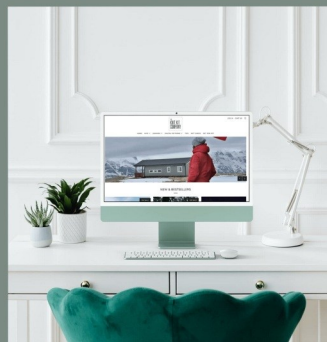
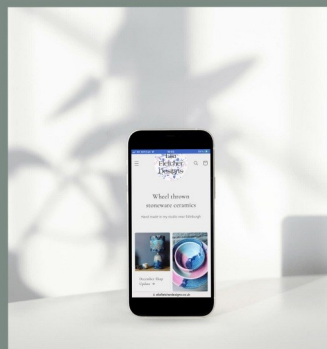
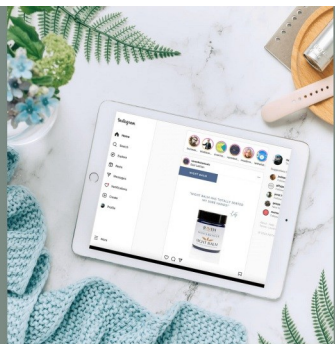
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- Sprawling lawn
- multi car driveway laid with monoblock

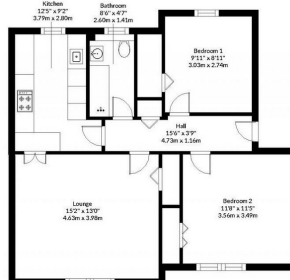
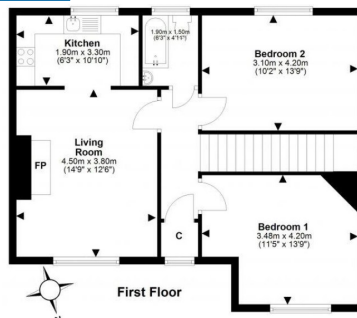
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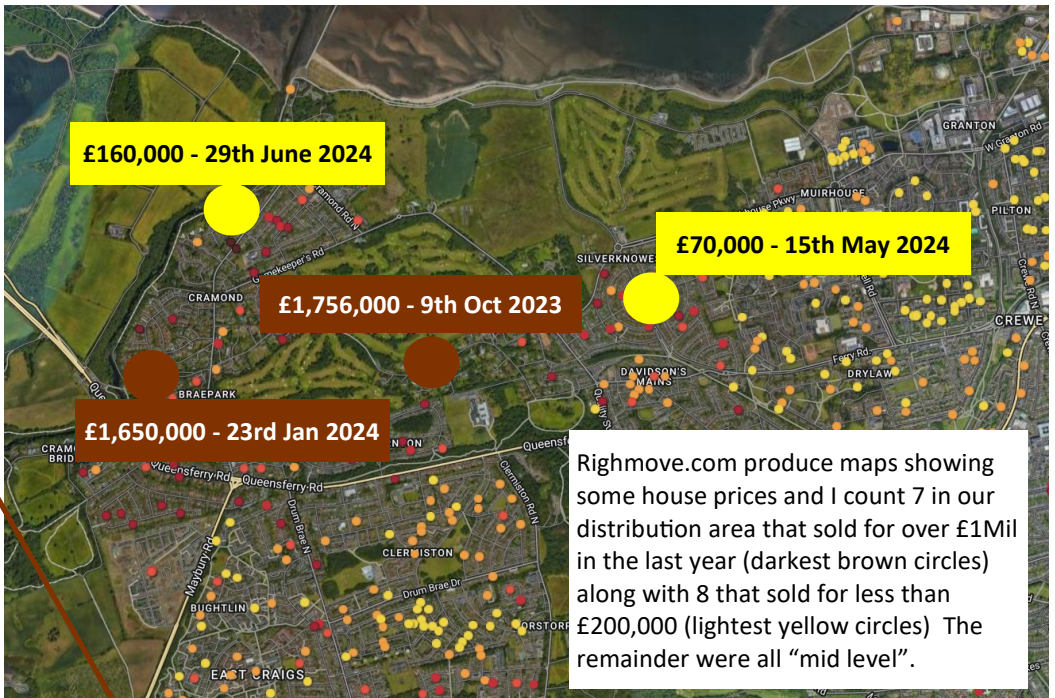


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Summer Term 3 (45 days): Tue 22nd April -
Thur 26th June

Autumn Term 1 (86 days): Wed 13th Aug -
Fri 19th Dec

Spring Term 2 (58 days): Mon 5th Jan - Thur
2nd April

Total: 189

HOLIDAYS

- 7th Apr - 21st Apr (11 days)
- 5th & 6th May (2 days)
- 19th May (1 day)
- 27th June - 12th Aug (33 days)
- 15th Sep (1 day)
- 13th - 17th Oct (5 days)
- 22nd Dec - 2nd Jan (10 days)
- 16th - 20th Feb (5 days)
- Total: 68 days**



2025/26

Oct				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31				
Nov							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
Dec	W					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30			
Jan	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31							
Feb							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
Mar							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
Apr			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30						
May						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8			11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		
Jun	W					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8				11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
Jul	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12			15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30								
Aug				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31				
Sep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11			14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30							

Distribution of the Barnton magazine covers 5 Primary school and 4 High School catchments and I thought you might be interested in a brief overview. I have given contact details for each one including Phone number and addresses for websites, email, Twitter plus where they have a Facebook Page. There is a whole range of info available on their online Pages but let me know if you think any else specific should be mentioned here.

Davidsons Mains PS - 336 1184

DmainsPrimary.com
admin@davidsonsmains.edin.sch.uk
@MainsDavidson

Blackhall PS - 336 1023

BlackhallPrimary.co.uk
admin@blackhall.edin.sch.uk
@BlackhallPS

Clermiston PS - 336 3361

Clermiston.edin.sch.uk
admin@clermiston.edin.sch.uk

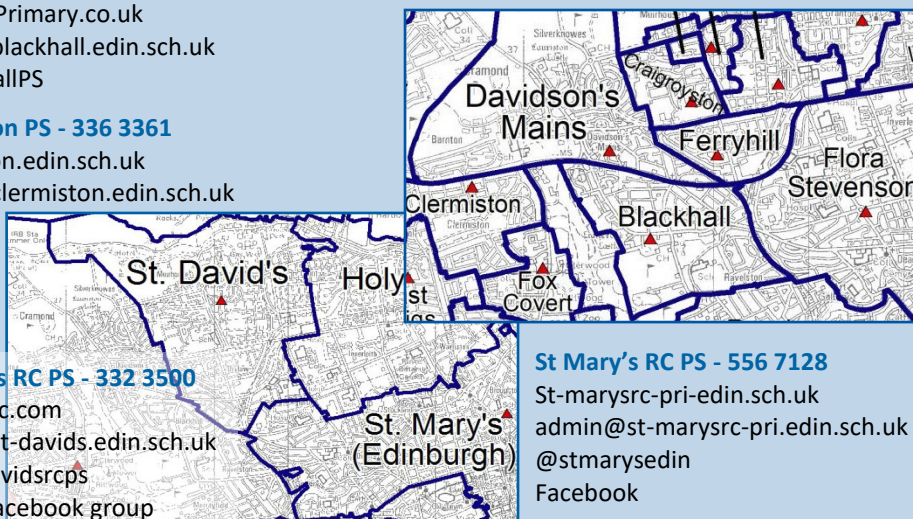
Flora Stevenson PS - 332 1604

theFloraStevensonPrimary.com
admin@florastevenson.edin.sch.uk

Royal High Primary PS - 669 3200

admin@royalhigh-pri.edin.sch.uk

Primary schools



St David's RC PS - 332 3500

Stdavidsrc.com
admin@st-davids.edin.sch.uk
@saintdavidsrcps
Private Facebook group

St Mary's RC PS - 556 7128

St-marysrc-pri-edin.sch.uk
admin@st-marysrc-pri.edin.sch.uk
@stmarysedin
Facebook

Secondary schools

St Augustine's RC HS - 334 6801

Staugustinesrchs.uk
admin@st-augustines.edin.sch.uk
@staugustineshs



Royal HS - 336 2261

Royalhigh.wordpress.com
admin@royalhigh.edin.sch.uk
@Royal_High_Sch

Broughton HS - 332 7805

Broughton.edin.sch.uk
admin@broughton.edin.sch.uk
@BroHighOfficial
Facebook

St Thomas of Aquin's RC HS - 229 8734

St-Thomas-of-aquins.org.uk
admin@st-thomasaquins.edin.sch.uk
@thomasofaquins

Why a stretch goes a long way

As we age, our muscles tighten and range of motion in our joints decreases. This can impact even the most active lifestyle and hinder your normal day-to-day activities. Tasks that used to be simple, like zipping up a dress or reaching for a can off the top shelf, may become extremely difficult.

A regular stretching program can help lengthen your muscles and make daily activities routine again.

The word flexible comes from the Latin word flexus, which means "to bend." Flexibility is the degree to which an individual muscle will lengthen. Stretching increases flexibility, which will help you perform daily activities and reduce the risk of muscle, joint and tendon injuries. Stretching also improves circulation, increasing blood flow to the muscles. Increased blood flow provides more nourishment to the muscles and gets rid of more waste by-products in the muscle tissue itself. Improved circulation can also help speed up recovery time if you suffer a muscle injury.

What's more, stretching can help eliminate or decrease low back pain, one of the most common kinds of structural pain, affecting a large percentage of the population. Muscle tightness in the quadriceps, hamstrings, hip flexors, and low back muscles is a common cause of low back pain. Stretching these muscles will often eliminate the pain. Keep in mind that every joint is tied to another joint, so if one muscle is tight, it is going to affect another joint or muscle.

One of the greatest benefits of stretching is that you're able to increase your range of motion, which means your joints can move further before an injury occurs. Stretching after you exercise (at least after you've warmed up a bit) has proven to be much more effective than

pre-workout stretches, because by the time you've completed your workout, the muscles are "warm." Post-exercise stretching also helps reduce soreness, improves workout recovery, and ensures muscle and tendons are working properly.

There are no disadvantages to stretching - unless, of course, you do them improperly, which is actually easy to do if you don't know what you're doing. Here are a few tips to keep in mind before starting any stretching program:

DON'T bounce when stretching; hold your position for the specified time.

DON'T stretch cold muscles; always do some type of warm-up for at least five minutes: jogging in place, walking on a treadmill, light jump rope, etc.

DON'T overstretch. There should be a little discomfort, especially if you're not used to stretching, but it should not be painful.

DON'T stretch a muscle improperly. If you are not sure of the proper stretch or how to perform it, get some assistance from a professional.

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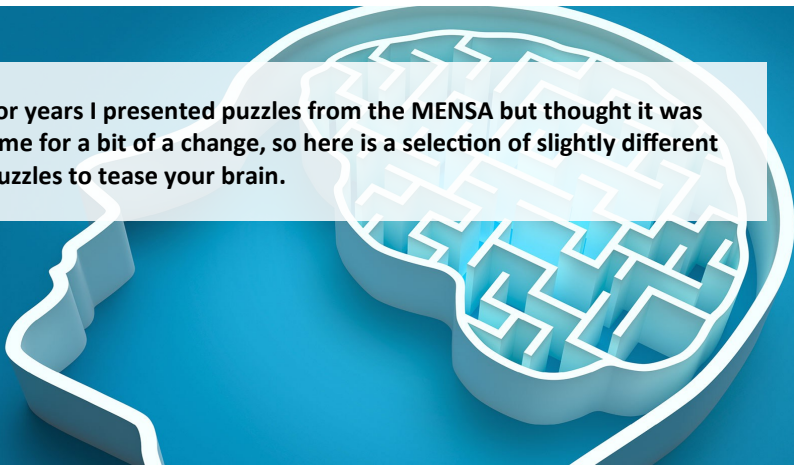
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For years I presented puzzles from the MENSAs but thought it was time for a bit of a change, so here is a selection of slightly different puzzles to tease your brain.



Place the words below into pairs so you have 5 lots of eight letters, each of which is an anagram of at least one other word.

What are the 5 words?

Peer
Time
Date
Wall
June

Tone
Snob
Seat
Pale
Veil

Which is larger, the number of seconds in a day or ...
... the number of hours in 10 years?



At the recent BrainBashers code-breaking convention, Billie Brisk won the speed contest.

The following sentence was deciphered in a record time of 123 seconds.

What was the well-known saying and how has it been encrypted?

MOOT CYNA SKOO IOPS
EHTL TORB YCBH

Last month's answers:

Q1: 1
Q2: C
Q3: Gate 2



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