

JANUARY | 2025 | ISSUE 131

BLACKMOUNT BUGLE

Happy New Year

Northern lights on New Years Day by Yvonne Stuart



*Candymill
Christmas Lights*

*November
Fireworks*





Note from our Councillor



I hope you have all recovered from Christmas and New Year festivities and looking forward to 2025.

The new year has brought in some cold weather, the council as usual has a grit programme where about 51% of the road network is gritted on a precautionary basis and the secondary routes when time permits. Also, as part of the programme we ensure that at least one road is treated into every village. Although this does not cover every road and house it is a system that most councils use, and the % of roads covered in SLC is greater than any neighbouring council.

We are now entering the process for deciding our budget for the following year, the Scottish Government in their budget stated more funding would be available to councils, we should know shortly what that amounts to and hopefully we can reduce any cuts to services.

The social group once again held a Christmas dinner for the senior citizens in the area that was very enjoyable. This group put in a great deal of work on behalf of the community, running events and raising funds to carry out these events. I believe this is very important as it helps create a community and I would like to express my thanks to all who help during the year.

Elsrickle hub has opened for business, hopefully it will be a success and be an asset for the area, again thanks to all who have made this happen.

Cllr Allison

Members of Blackmount Community Council

Chairperson: Alistair Muirhead, chair@blackmountcc.scot

Secretary: Andy Hudson, secretary@blackmountcc.scot

Treasurer: Pauline Irwin, treasurer@blackmountcc.scot

Eric Holford, Anne Hutchison, Steve Jenkins, Sarah McGlasson

Next Community Council meeting: **Monday 3rd FEBRUARY 7pm**

Blackmount Community Grants



The microgrant scheme provides funds up to £500 for activities and projects which bring community benefit, and which involve people in the community by bringing them together to enjoy educational, recreational, leisure and other community activities or which improve the local environment. If you have a project in mind, or would like more information, then please email treasurer@blackmountcc.scot.

JOHN STEELE

We were all saddened to hear of the death of John Steele, whose funeral took place on 8th January 2025. He had lived in Blackmount for his 86 year-long life, was well known and liked all over the area. Born at Walston Mill, he grew up there and spent all his working life farming sheep, cattle and, of course, turkeys with his late wife Agnes, and with his sons Jim and Iain. When they retired, he, Agnes, and Iain went to live in Elsrickle, where he then took great delight in his garden. He was a good friend and neighbour to all who knew him. Our sympathies go to Iain, Jim, and his grandchildren.

Biggar Men's Shed

We received a great Christmas present this year; our purchase of the former Walston Primary School has gone through. We are now the proud owners of our own Shed.

Prior to Christmas, The Knot in West Linton started selling 3D printed items, bird tables and clocks that we have made. This has proved a great success.

In November we had a Doors Open Day for International Men's Day. This was well attended by folk curious about the Men's shed as well as former pupils. Great to hear the former pupils' memories of the school. From our Shedders we wish you all the best for 2025. We are open Weds & Thurs 10-4pm. Mobile 07471491099.



Candymill Christmas Lights

Hello! Down at Candymill Road, we host a colourful and festive display at Christmas each year. After the trials that lockdown brought, we all needed something to cheer us up. And so, it began. At first one or two houses contributed to the display, but as time progressed the community at Candymill also joined in.

Each year, we choose a charity to fundraise for; 100% of all donations that we receive go towards these charities that support children. In 2022/2023 combined we raised £3,450 for the charity Children's 1st, helping children with traumatic experiences. In 2024, sponsoring Les Hoey MBE Dreammaker Foundation, a charity who support children with terminal illness, we reached remarkable heights. We managed to raise £4,623 this year thanks to the help of our community and beyond. We have managed to make a difference to dozens of children! Every penny really does count to spread the Christmas spirit.

We have a Santa's Grotto every Friday and Saturday on the run up to Christmas and we also have a variety of raffles. We cannot thank the community and local businesses enough for their donations.



If you wish to support the children who need it most, our display usually begins November 30th-December 1st. We have a Facebook page, Candy Mill Christmas Light Organisation, for you to follow updates and look at our past achievements. Alongside the pleasure we had this year to be featured on the BBC on episode one of Craft Christmas at Beechgrove, which you can watch on BBC iPlayer. Thank you for reading! *By Zara Ballantine*

Elsrickle Community Hub



In October the hall was reopened. We would like to thank those who had put many hours with a paint brush to get the doors back open such as Iain Steele, Kirsten and Steve Jenkins, Pauline Irwin, Anne Hutchison, Mara Orr, Wendy Kinloch, and Tracey Pritchard. It is good to have community groups such as the WI and carpet bowls back. On October 27th we invited the community for a celebratory tea and again we would like to thank those who helped and provided refreshments. Also, thanks to Andrew and Joan Highton for the donation of a table tennis table. To enquire about booking the hall please email echbookings24@gmail.com.
Alistair Muirhead and Jim Kinloch

Community Survey

2023-24

The community survey report is in the final editing stages and we are getting ready to send it to print.

We are planning a launch event too, keep up to date on our website



Blackmount Social Group

The 5th of November saw the annual Blackmount fireworks display in Dolphinton. The event was a resounding success, with more than 300 people attending. The Social Group would like to thank all members of the community who made the event possible – the many people that helped on the evening, Blackmount Parish Church for hire of their hall, Tracey Pritchard, Anne Hutchinson and Mara Orr for their delicious home baking, and Mr and Mrs Smith for providing safe off-street parking in their adjacent field.



The Social Group were delighted to host the Senior Citizens Christmas Dinner following last year's hiatus after the closure of village halls. The event took place on 13th December at the newly opened Elsrickle Hub, with 61 community members enjoying a hearty traditional dinner, superb entertainment provided by Carolann Barrie and Stuart 'Banjo' Nelson, an impromptu stand-up spot by Graham Barrie, and all-round good cheer. Many thanks to Andrea and her team from the Gavel Restaurant at Lanark Agricultural Market, who catered the event and provided a top-notch meal, the community members who kindly provided the deserts, the wonderful Holly, Heidi, Niamh, and Sophie who served the meal, and the many community members that helped decorate and prepare the hall. The meal was a wonderful start to festive season. The Social Group would also like to thank the

BMCC for microgrants that enabled both the firework display and Christmas dinner to take place. *Steve Jenkins*

Blackmount Church

A busy time was had over the festive season and the church was beautifully decorated with festive floral decorations and Tree. Each Sunday in Advent we lit a candle to represent peace, love, joy and hope, and the Christ Child on Christmas Day.

Our Carol Service was packed to capacity, and we were delighted to welcome guests from across the community. Everyone enjoyed their favourite Christmas carols, and the mince pies and shortbread served after the service! On Christmas Eve we welcomed in Christmas Day at our watchnight service.

Everyone is welcome to join us each Sunday at 9.45 for worship and the ensuing coffee and fellowship. A crèche facility is available. Coffee mornings take place on the first Wednesday of each month at 10.30am when we serve crackers and cheese. The next Guild meeting will be on Wednesday 22 January at 2 pm when we look forward to welcoming Rev Bill Buchan. On February 26th, I will be doing a talk about growing up in Northern Ireland and reflecting on my time in Girl Guides. Please feel free to join us at any of our meetings or services.

Gillian Coulter (Session Clerk)

Libberton Church - Worship continues second Sunday of each month at 11am.

Bulk Oil Buying Groups

The Blackmount Group covers households within the ML11 and ML12 postcode areas and is coordinated by Catriona Malone (blackmountfuelgroup@gmail.com). The Dolphinton Group covers the EH46 postcode and is coordinated by Tim McLean (dolphintonbulkoil@gmail.com). If you are interested in joining either group, please contact Catriona or Tim who will explain how the groups operate and put you on the contact list for future orders.

Dolphinton SWI

Our October meeting was all about coffee - Belin Davidson, the owner of Braw Beans, based in West Linton, explained the process of producing an excellent cup of coffee from the raw beans, via the roasting, to the ground grains. There were several varieties of coffee available to taste - it was an informative and delicious evening. In November we made Christmas wreaths - Arran and her daughter provided us with all the raw materials and helped all 25 of us leave with our very own individual festive wreaths. Our mince pie and blether evening in December was very well attended and a wonderful selection of Christmassy treats was enjoyed by all. A couple of games of bingo rounded off a lovely final gathering of the year.

There is much to look forward to in 2025:

- 15 Jan POLE FITNESS, Competitions: Your funniest Christmas gift & a winter scene (any craft)
- 19 Feb SCOTTISH AIR AMBULANCE, Competitions: A kitchen gadget you can't do without (small) & a favourite winter snack.
- 05 Mar Taste & Try, Competitions: Your best vase & an unusual handcraft.
- 16 Apr TBC & AGM, Competitions: An obscure garden item & a photo of summer.

Dolphinton Arts and Craft Group

Wednesday 7.30 to 9pm in Dolphinton

(except 3rd Wednesday of month when Dolphinton WI is on)

We draw, we paint, we chat, we do various crafts. On some weeks we have a tutor, on others we do our own thing. We generally pay £5/week to pay for the hall and tutor if we have one. Everyone welcome. For more information call Pam on 07966 453317.

Elsrickle SWI

Our annual trip, taken in October to Durham, was a great success. The hotel was excellent with very helpful staff. Our first stop after morning coffee was Hexham where we had time to appreciate its narrow streets and impressive abbey. On Saturday the sun shone allowing us a pleasant trip along the river, followed by some free time to enjoy Durham. We all visited the cathedral, which

coincided with a wedding, thus benefiting us to hearing the organ and the bell ringing. On Sunday we visited Barnard Castle and Bowes

Museum. Anne Moffat is now organising the 2025 trip to Carrbridge taking place 3rd to 6th October.



This session's meetings have been very interesting, and we returned to the hall in October. The Christmas meal in the Elphinstone was a very pleasant social occasion with no weather problems unlike the November bowling tournament which was called off due to snow.

The following are planned for 2025. Non-members are very welcome (£5).

- 15 Jan Craft evening – Susan Crosby
- 12 Feb Chair Yoga – Norma Duncan
- 12 Mar First Aid – Gilbert Logan
- 9 Apr AGM/Cake decorating – Katie Hobbs

Elsrickle Carpet Bowling

Come along and play 7.30pm Thursday evenings at Elsrickle Community Hub. On 9th January we held a successful Steak Pie night. Winners were Iain Minto, Ann Ross, Chris Dodds, and Peter Muirhead. Runners up were Scott Swan, Ronnie Reid, and Willie Wilson. Our pairs tournament will be held Saturday 8th February at Elsrickle Community Hub.



Biggar Area Stitch and Textile Group

The programme for the next few months is as follows: -

20 Jan Book Binding, Beth Lancaster

17 Feb Bead and Embroidered Flower,
Patricia West & Andrea Balderson

17 Mar Magic world of Lubi, Lubi Lykan

21 Apr AGM and Annual display

Plus Workshop 8th March Celebrating Crochet (Venue TBC).

Biggar Municipal Hall at 7.30pm (except 17th March TBC).
Visitors welcome (£6). Information about meetings and
events (such as our Spring trip) are found on our The Biggar
Area Stitch & Textile Group Facebook page. For more
details email: secbiggarstitchtextiles@gmail.com

Libberton Primary School

Our Nativity

In December we invited all our families and friends of the school and performed in A Rock and Roll Nativity. Ben, who played King Herod, really enjoyed the part where he was very angry at everyone and had the opportunity to



shout and be cross! All the children who participated really enjoyed playing their various parts and did a very good job. The best song was 'H.E.R.O.D.' – everyone loved singing this one. The raffle held by the Parent Council was very well supported, raising £1140 for school funds!

Young Leaders of Learning

The Young Leaders of Learning went to Tinto Symington Football Club for a training day recently to meet up with other schools who are also taking part. We discussed the skills and qualities an exceptional YLOL should have. We discovered which schools we would be paired with and shared some information about ourselves and our school. We were excited to find out we will be working with Tinto and Wiston.

To introduce and showcase our school we created a Google Slide of photos and video of our school and playground. Later in December we took part in a Google Meet with our joined schools to get to know each other a little bit better. We shared what we were looking forward to about Christmas and played a fun game of Kahoot and came in 3rd out of 8 teams! We also played a game of Christmas Pictionary and a scavenger hunt. We are now looking to visiting Tinto and Wiston soon! **By Sam P6 and Leon P7**

P6 World of Work Day at Biggar High School

On Friday 6th December, P6 went along to Biggar High School to take part in a fun transition event with all the other schools from the learning community. We were put into groups with pupils from other schools. The aim of the activity was to make Christmas products and sell them. We had to work together to give our team a name, and each team member had a different role. I choose to be the finance manager. Each person had a different role, for example: quality assurance, buyer, seller. We had a fun day working in groups, socialising with other people and making new friends. **By Charlie P6**



Sky Studios Tour

The P5-7s went to Sky Studios in Livingston with Wiston Primary, and we made our own news report about influencers. We had to use Teamwork – we were put into teams and had to plan the reports; everyone was given a different job to do. My job was to be the camera person – it was very fun but was also hard work. At the end of the day, we watched all the groups reports about influencers – there were 4 groups in total. They were all very good – it was extremely fun and exciting. We loved it. **By Thomas P5**

Panto

'A Cracking Christmas Carol' was the Panto the whole school went to see at Lanark Memorial Hall this year. We all booed at Scrooge who played a baddie in the show, but we were very happy when Tiny Tim came onto the stage. The ghosts were very funny – one was from the past, one from the present and one from the future. There were lots of songs which were very good too! There was a break in the middle of the show and Libberton Primary had crisps and some juice! We had a really amazing day. **By Ben & Meg P4**



P7 STEM Day at Biggar High School

On Thursday 5th December we had a really fun day at Biggar High. We worked in groups of 4 alongside pupils from different schools in our learning Community to take on a variety of challenges. After that we all got to sample the high school lunches, they were delicious! In the afternoon we went along to the Science classrooms to take part in activities about our senses. For example, for taste we got to taste Skittles and had to guess their colour. Our favourite parts were trying out the lunches and meeting new people. **By John and Lucy P7**

Black Mount Primary School

We have introduced a house system at School. Pupils suggested names for our houses and voted for their favourite; the winning theme was Scottish Wildflowers – the names were Thistle (green), Heather (purple) and Gorse (yellow). Pupils were allocated a house and the Primary 7's were appointed House Captains. This role will allow them to develop their communication, teamwork and leadership skills. The Parent Council kindly paid for badges for our House Captains and for everyone of each house. House points were introduced with pupils earning points for demonstrating school values, going above and beyond during any aspect of their day and for individual successes/achievements.

I like being a House Captain because I like being a leader and running things. It is exciting each week finding out which house is in the lead.

James, Gorse House Captain

Our House Captains lead House meetings, count house points and share the running total at weekly assemblies. They've had ideas of events they would like to organise in school (a house quiz, house projects and sports day). During outdoor classroom day, we planted our house flowers in planters so we can enjoy watching them grow. Heather was awarded an extra playtime to celebrate being the winning house in Term 2.

I am very proud of my house for winning. I enjoy being a House Captain because you feel important and you have more responsibilities.

Lexie, Heather House Captain

Stone Age

Our whole school learning focus was on the Stone Age. We learned about the different stages of the stone ages. We worked in groups to make posters showing what we learned, we made stone age shelters and clay necklaces.

Thomas, Abi, Abbie & Lydia P6

Did you know that Humans learnt to farm during the Stone Age?

Early on in the stone age, humans hunted animals and gathered fruits and nuts. By the end of the stone age period, they learnt how to farm. They grew crops including maize, wheat and barley!

Christmas

December was a busy month in school with a Nativity, Christmas lunch, party, school disco and a visit from Santa for P1-P3. We had 2 performances of our Nativity, 'Lights, Camel, Action' and the audience were thoroughly entertained by our judges and performers. Craig Revel Horwood looks like a kind judge on Strictly after hearing Caesar's comments on some of the acts! The Nativity was pupil led with learners working together to choreograph their dance routines, create the scenery and design the programmes for the audience.



I liked playing my character and talking in front of an audience. I liked when they laughed at the comments and jokes I made.

(Rowan P3)

I liked being an angel and dancing with the big girls. I liked dancing in front of my mum, dad and my little sister.

(Lilly, P1)

Outdoor Learning



The school had a fun day participating in Outdoor Classroom Day. Activities included storytelling, gardening, Loose Parts play, water play, scooting, skateboarding and roller skating. All activities were linked to aspects of the curriculum but were led by the pupils' interests.

My favourite parts of the day were:

- 1. Decorating the wooden spoons – I made a runaway pea***
- 2. Story telling with Magnus' Dad – he made me laugh***
- 3. Building with loose parts (Ella P2)***



Thank you to local resident Ellen McCann who worked with pupils, exploring clay to make fossils and necklaces. They enjoyed being creative and developing a new skill.



BLACK MOUNT PRIMARY - PARENT COUNCIL

FEB
21

FAMILY FILM NIGHT

Join us for a family film night in Biggar organised by our school house captains

APR
26

TILE ART PROJECT

Celebrate the launch of the tile art installation at the school, activities and refreshments too

FREE

MAY
16

DUNSYRE DUCK RACE

Our annual quacktastic fundraiser where the kids get soaked and adults enjoy a warm cuppa

WE NEED YOUR HELP

Do you have skills or knowledge you could share with the kids? *For example gardening, arts, science, sports...*

Sign up to our Friends of Black Mount Primary volunteer list



[HTTPS://SITES.GOOGLE.COM/VIEW/BM-PARENT-COUNCIL](https://sites.google.com/view/bm-parent-council)

Black Mount Nursery

During December the children at Nursery have been busy collecting items to make hampers to give out in the community. We have two hampers which contain sweet treats, tinned foods and toiletries and we are looking for people in the community to get in touch with the office at Rigside nursery who may like one of the hampers. We look forward to hearing from you.

The children have been involved in a variety of Christmas festivities which have included decorating a real tree which was donated by the community, writing and making letters for Santa, making Christmas tree decorations and having Christmas lunch with the school children as well as having our own Christmas party. Santa attended the party and gave everyone a present afterwards we sang a few Christmas songs to their mummies and daddies.



To contribute to the next Bugle please contact bugle@blackmountcc.scot. The Bugle is published by the Blackmount Community Council (BMCC) but views expressed therein are not necessarily those of the committee. The BMCC cannot accept responsibility for any errors printed in the Bugle. Blackmount Area covering Candymill, Dunsyre, Dolphinton, Elsrickle, Greenshields, Libberton, Newbigging, Weston, Walston and surrounding area.



Rock and Roll Nativity at Libberton Primary School



Lights, Camel, Action Nativity at Black Mount Primary School



Dates for the diary

January

Wednesday 15 th	Elsrickle SWI, Elsrickle Community Hub 7pm Dolphinton SWI, 7.30pm
Monday 20 th	Biggar Area Stitch and Textile, Municipal Hall Biggar 7.30pm
Wednesday 22 nd	Guild meeting, Dolphinton Church 2pm.

February

Monday 3 rd	Community Council meeting, Elsrickle Community Hub
Wednesday 12 th	Elsrickle SWI, Elsrickle Community Hub 7pm
Monday 17 th	Biggar Area Stitch and Textile, Municipal Hall Biggar 7.30pm
Wednesday 19 th	Dolphinton SWI, 7.30pm
Friday 21 st	Family Film Night in Biggar organised by Black Mount Primary School
Wednesday 26 th	Guild meeting, Dolphinton Church 2pm.

March

Monday 3 rd	Community Council meeting, Elsrickle Community Hub
Wednesday 5 th	Dolphinton SWI, 7.30pm
Wednesday 12 th	Elsrickle SWI, Elsrickle Community Hub 7pm
Monday 17 th	Biggar Area Stitch and Textile, Municipal Hall Biggar 7.30pm
Monday 31 st	Community Council meeting, Elsrickle Community Hub

April

Wednesday 9 th	Elsrickle SWI, Elsrickle Community Hub 7pm
Wednesday 16 th	Dolphinton SWI, 7.30pm
Saturday 26 th	Art Tile Project, Black Mount Primary School

Regular groups:

Dolphinton Arts and Craft Group, Wednesdays 7.30 to 9pm,
Carpet Bowling, Thursdays 7.30pm: Elsrickle Community Hub; Dolphinton
Carpet Bowling at West Linton Green Bowling Club
Biggar Men's Shed, Wednesdays and Thursdays 10am to 4pm.

Church Services:

Libberton Church second Sunday of each month at 11am; Blackmount
Church every Sunday at 9.45am and The Guild 2pm on 3rd Wednesday
of each month.

