



The Bridge

Free

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Special Edition 9

www.dunkeldandbirnamnews.co.uk

Local News, Events and Information for the Dunkeld & Birnam Area

Coronavirus Emergency – The Latest Update



Food and Drink shops in Dunkeld and Birnam.
Photos courtesy of Michelle Lamb from Nova Creative Studios

Keep up to date with the community's response to the coronavirus at
www.dunkeldandbirnamnews.co.uk

Editorial

Greetings to you all and wishing you health and happiness in 2021. The year has got off to a very sombre start and as you can see, we have the return of 'Bridge Specials'. It seems most plans go awry at the moment however I am going to risk sharing the plans for The Bridge until May. I am hoping by then that the situation might have improved and that our community compass bearing will be pointing towards 'normal'.

So here we go ... instead of producing a monthly Bridge edition for Feb, March and April we are aiming to produce two 'normal Bridges' – one around mid-Feb and one early April. In between these times (early March) there will be the option to produce another 'Bridge Special' if there is important information to get out and about the community.

Also, a reminder that all the latest news can be found on our website www.dunkeldandbirnamnews.co.uk We will do our best to provide links from here to other useful information sites such as the one for vaccines mentioned in the Doctors Surgery piece on page 3. You will also find on here our new 'google map' of all the shops in Dunkeld and Birnam with links to their on-line presence – so while you may not be able to visit our wonderful shops in person you can browse and buy from the comfort and safety of your armchair.

So, look forward to catching up in mid-Feb for a Valentines edition. Stay Safe!

Sally Robertson

Community News

Well, not the start to 2021 we were all hoping for, but probably inevitable given the much increased infection level - lockdown once again. We will also have the added complication of the local Co-op shop in Dunkeld closing on 18th January for at least 2 months.

The local Co-op shop provided a great service during the first lockdown in Spring 2020. The shop was a huge support to the PH8 Coronavirus Group-facilitating shopping deliveries to vulnerable people. The shop however requires major refurbishment to meet up to date health and safety standards. This work was initially planned for Autumn 2020 but was delayed and now unfortunately starts while we are in a new lockdown. As they have the necessary approvals in place and the requirement to do the work, unless there is an enhancement of the lockdown measures to stop all construction work, the refurbishment will go ahead. The Co-op project team have given strong reassurance that they will comply with all Covid-19 regulations and are acutely aware of the issues of working in a small community like Dunkeld at this time.

The PH8 Coronavirus Group is taking a number of actions to support the local community at this time.

Local Shops:

We have been working with all the local food shops to ensure, as much as possible, that people can shop locally. Each of the shops have been expanding their range of goods, looking at extending opening hours- to help support key workers or parents who are home schooling who may not be able to get to the shops during the day- and offering delivery services. You will find more details below for each of the shops. We would like to thank each of the shop owners for their support!

Co-op Delivery:

The Co-op will provide home delivery in Dunkeld on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays for each week of closure starting from Friday 22/01/2.

Customers should phone 07787733375 with requirements before noon on delivery days. The Pitlochry store team will pick the items. The store team will then call customer back with any substitutions etc and take card payment over the phone. The store team will then deliver.

Deliveries to people who are self isolating or shielding:

As there will undoubtedly be people who cannot get out to the shops and don't have alternatives in place, we have contacted everyone who had regular deliveries during the last lockdown. We have found that almost everyone who used the service is now receiving home shopping and prescription deliveries either directly from shops or through an arrangement with neighbours, family or friends. However, knowing that circumstances change, we are again offering a volunteer led shopping and delivery service. This will be specifically for people who are shielding or self isolating because they (or a member of their household) have Covid symptoms or have tested positive. This will be a much more ad hoc service than last year and we would ask you to bear with us if we have some teething problems in setting up the processes.

However, please do contact us on 01350 700017 or email: PH8community@gmail.com if you do need support and our volunteers will ensure your requests are handled.

In addition, we will be asking all our volunteers to keep an eye out for folk who may be on their own. Just to knock the door and see how they are managing. So whether you're on the list of volunteers or not, why not just check on your neighbours, especially those on their own? Many of you do it anyway, we know. At this time of year and in these circumstances, it can make all the difference.

We'll be providing regular updates again through the Bridge both online and paper copy and via the local Facebook pages, so do keep an eye out.

If you want to contact us directly for any reason, please contact us on 01350 700017 or email: PH8community@gmail.com.

Finally, a huge thank you to all our volunteers and to everyone who is helping out in the local community at this really challenging time.

PH8 Financial Support Fund

The PH8 Financial Support Fund is available to individuals and families in the local community who need immediate financial support of up to £150.

The ongoing situation has meant that many people are struggling financially for a whole variety of reasons: for example change in work circumstances, extra commitments due to supporting family, specific needs that have arisen due to the Covid-19 emergency.

If you or someone you know needs financial support please contact Fraser Penny, the local Church of Scotland minister, who will quickly handle the request. Any contact will be dealt with on an entirely confidential basis. Fraser can be contacted on 01350 727249 or by email on: r.fraserpenny@gmail.com

The Fund is there to be used and we encourage you to ask for support.

PH8 Foodbank

PH8 Group volunteers are still maintaining the local food larders. You can either contact directly (and completely confidentially) by phone or text to 01350 700018 or by email to: PH8foodbank@gmail.com.

Or you can pick up food yourself from one of the bases in the old telephone boxes on the High Street, Dunkeld or on the corner of Perth Road and Station Road in Birnam.

There is no need for a referral: if you or your family are in need of food please contact us or help yourself to the food you require.

We are incredibly grateful to everyone who continues to provide donations. We would like to particularly thank the recent donations from the Royal School of Dunkeld Harvest Festival and from Erigmore. Thank you to everyone!

Church Services



It was Cardinal Newman who said 'to live is to change' but I don't think even he had in mind such rapid changes as we are living through just now. In the Church of Scotland we had resumed services under the restrictions but decided to stop just before Christmas. Now they are not permitted at all. Guidance and rules about what can and can't be done are constantly changing

out of necessity as required and no one is finding it easy. Spare a thought for politicians and officials with such a difficult job just now but also for folk in our community who are finding the loneliness and isolation is about as much as they can take. Pray for them, and for yourself because God is more ready to listen than we are to pray!

In the middle of all this it is important that we support one another by keeping in touch. Maybe you are someone who feels in need of that yourself. If you do, remember there are always people willing to listen (contact details for the three churches are always published in 'The Bridge') so don't be afraid to get in touch even if you are not in the habit of going to church.

There are many opportunities to find worship of your own particular denomination online. Locally, we are still putting weekly services on YouTube – search for Dunkeld Cathedral Online or use this link <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxk5f1WiRL2-HabvQ-e4zYw/videos?> and you will find all the videos put on there since lock down started.

Stay safe – and look forward to the vaccine! *Fraser Penny*

Community News

Dunkeld and Birnam:

Helping you to keep your food shopping local

Happy New Year! And a massive thank you to everyone in Dunkeld & Birnam who supported our fantastic local shops and producers in the run up to the festive season. The candlelit late night shopping evening in December really shone a light on the great shopping choices on our doorstep.

As we look forward to better times ahead in 2021, local food shop owners are turning their thoughts to how to best support our local community when the Coop in Dunkeld closes from 18th January through to some time in April.

In this special edition of The Bridge we're focussing on those local independent food and drink shops who will ensure that we can plug the gap that the closure of The Coop will inevitably leave for a while.

We've put together some information and top tips here to share the ways that local residents can keep their essential food shopping local over the next few months, and beyond.

Some of you may worry about choice of products and about price when The Coop closes and it's true that our smaller independent food retailers don't have the massive buying power of big supermarket chains.... but we do think you'll be pleasantly surprised at the prices we are able to offer. It's also worth remembering too that local shops employ local folk and often buy products from local producers so are a vital part of keeping Dunkeld & Birnam a vibrant place to live and work. There aren't many small towns in Scotland with such a great choice of food shops on their doorstep!

Please do come on in and see us over the next few weeks and months. We will be thinking carefully about the products we stock to make sure that people can get hold of all their usual shopping staples, at reasonable prices.

It goes without saying that local food shops operate in a Covid-secure way, making sure you'll all feel safe and welcome. This is particularly important during lockdown of course.

Several local shops have been delivering food since last March and alongside the PH8 Group, can arrange to get your shopping dropped off, if that's what you need. And if you don't see what you want when you come in it's always worth asking us if we can order your favourite products in; we can often respond more quickly than a bigger supermarket would.

So rather than jumping in the car or shopping online, why not look local and enjoy our famously friendly Dunkeld & Birnam food and drink shops. We're looking forward to seeing you soon!

Great news about the COVID-19 vaccines

Vaccine development over the last century has been a triumph of medicine. Arguably global vaccination programmes have been the most effective public health measure in history. Vaccines work by triggering the immune system in our body to recognize specific viruses. Over the years many diseases such as smallpox, diphtheria and polio have been completely eradicated or dramatically reduced by vaccines. If the COVID-19 vaccine works as we hope it will it could change the way we currently live.

If you are lucky enough to be offered the COVID-19 vaccine I would advise that you should definitely take it. It will not only benefit you but also the rest of society and we hope that this is the way out of this horrible pandemic. We know from the recent trial research that the vaccine will reduce the chance of you suffering from COVID-19 disease or suffering more serious disease. We do not know yet whether the vaccines will prevent individuals from being able to transmit the virus. It is too early to tell but ongoing research will find this out. However, since we know that COVID-19 vaccines protect individuals from the disease, we can be reasonably sure that they will reduce disease transmission. So you will protect others by getting the vaccine.

You can be assured that these vaccines are safe and effective because they have been quality tested, as all medicines and vaccines are, by the MHRA (Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency). We are fortunate in the UK to have such a rigorous, robust and high quality process as the one that is operated by the MHRA. The vaccines that are now available have been tested in the usual way, first in animals, then a small number of humans, then a very large number of humans and all the data is collected and rigorously examined to ensure that the vaccine is safe and effective. The only difference for the COVID-19 vaccines is that the process has been speeded up with a "rolling review" but it has been just as thorough and robust as always. They have been able to do this because scientists have been working tirelessly and have also received large amounts of funding from many countries around the world.

There are 3 vaccines developed and approved so far. Two are available now (Pfizer/BioNTech and Oxford/AstraZeneca) and the third is likely to

be here in the Spring (Moderna). They are all different but which one you are offered does not matter because they are all proven to be safe and effective by the MHRA. What matters is the fact that you should take it. The vaccines do not contain the COVID-19 virus and are not infectious so they cannot cause COVID-19.

The vaccine is injected into the muscle of the upper arm and is given in 2 doses. It may take up to three weeks to build up protection after the first dose. The first dose will give you good protection but you will need the second dose to get longer lasting protection.

The side effects are minimal and like many medicines may be experienced by a small number of individuals. Side-effects can be a soreness or heavy feeling and tenderness in the arm at the site of the injection, tiredness, headache and general aches, or mild flu-like symptoms. Most side effects are caused by the desired immune response.

Unfortunately there are also a few people who are unable to receive the vaccine. These are people who have severe allergies and have suffered an anaphylactic reaction in the past. They should discuss this with their doctor. The COVID-19 vaccines have not been tested on pregnant women so are not routinely recommended in pregnancy. It is stated that the vaccines are safe for people with disorders of the immune system. The vaccines may be less effective but will still be safe in this group of patients. All viruses mutate over time, that is they change their structure, and the COVID-19 virus is no different. Several mutations have already been identified and are being studied. Historically we know that most vaccines still work even when viruses mutate. For example the Polio virus first produced 70 years ago is still effective today. So it is likely that this will be the case for the COVID-19 vaccines.

If you have had COVID-19 should you still get the vaccine? Even if you've already had COVID-19, you could still get it again. The vaccine will reduce your risk of getting COVID-19. If you do get it again, the vaccine can reduce the seriousness of the symptoms.

Most of us are too young to remember that smallpox was a highly contagious and deadly disease and killed 40% of adults and 80% of children. However smallpox vaccine was subsequently developed and by 1979 smallpox was completely eradicated. Wouldn't it be great if these COVID-19 vaccines are as successful and we could return to a more "normal" life!

*Philip Rutledge,
Retired GP and Public Health Doctor,
Trochry*

Doctors Surgery and Website for Covid Vaccine info

Surgery will be open as normal with telephone consultations with the GP in the first instance.

To help keep our phone lines available for the GPs use, please consider using our online prescription service via our website rather than phoning in your requests.

Please consult our website for updates on our COVID vaccine clinics: www.craigvineansurgery.scot.nhs.uk

NHS Scotland are vaccinating in a defined order of priority with older people vaccinated first in each group. However, you do not need to do anything - the NHS will contact you to invite you to come forward to be vaccinated. You do not need to get in touch with your GP.

Let's all stay flexible!

In this current world of Covid-19, we're all getting used to things changing very very quickly. All your local food and drink shops are having to run very very fast to keep up with the changing government legislation and guidance.

This means that some of the information printed here will change - for example, how we respond to changes in take-away food legislation, which, by the time you read this, should be pretty clear, but at the time of writing it (Wednesday), it wasn't clear at all!

So, in the spirit of minimising your journeys outside your home, if you're in doubt about whether the shop you need is open, or whether it stocks what you want, ring first, have a cheery chat, and check before you leave your home.

Dunkeld & Birnam Food & Drink Shops

Birnam Post Office & Chattan Tea Room *Open Mon to Friday 9am - 5pm (9am - 12.30pm Saturday)*

We offer fresh rolls, bread, dairy products, eggs etc. Fruit & vegetable orders (pre-order available)

Take-away & pre order service: hot filled rolls, sandwiches, toasties, scones, cakes, pastries, traybakes, quiches.

Hot Meal Wednesday - main meal and pudding take-away £9.95. Deliveries on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

01350 727342 / chattantearoom@yahoo.com

Birnam Village Shop – Best One *Open 7 days 6.30am - 9pm (7am - 8pm Sunday)*

Great range of convenience store essentials. Newspapers, fruit & veg, sandwiches.

Delivery service available 7 days a week with cash or online payment.

01350 727395 / birnamvillageshop@gmail.com

Corbenic *Open Fri & Sat 10am - 3pm*

We have a large variety of loose grains and pulses that can be weighed out, and herbs, spices, and other organic larder essentials such as tinned tomatoes, spreads, cooking oils and lots more.

And not forgetting our delicious freshly baked organic bread from the Corbenic bakery delivered to the shop.

As ever, we will continue selling the Fill refill household cleaning products which are hugely popular and are an excellent way to save money and do your bit for the environment.

01350 727330

Dunkeld Butchers *Open Mon to Sat 9am - 5pm*

We pride ourselves on offering great quality meats sourced from Scottish farmers. We also have a lovely range of seasonal fruit and vegetables, dairy, cold cuts and bread.

You can order over our social media platforms at any time or call our shop. All deliveries can be made and paid over the phone, ensuring no contact with our driver.

01350 727266 / info@dunkeldbutchers.co.uk

Dunkeld Fine Foods Grocery Store *Open 7 days, 8am - 8pm*

We stock newspapers, milk, breads, meats, refreshments, chocolate, world and local foods. Lots of lovely staple products and a few nice treats too! Great range of frozen food and frozen meals.

Deliveries Available.

Tel 01350 728189 / shop@dunkeldsmokedsalmon.com

Dunkeld Whisky Box *Open Fri & Sat 12pm - 5pm. Personal shopping by appointment*

A wide selection of whisky, craft beer & lager, gin and other spirits. We can you help find something that suits most tastes and budgets. Click & collect, local deliveries and UK wide postage available. We continue to host 'Beyond the Box' online tastings (fixed dates and private sessions available).

01350 727670 / drams@dunkeldwhiskybox.co.uk

Livvi's Little Lunchbox *Open 7 days 8am - 3.30pm (9am - 3.30pm Sundays)*

A lovely selection of bloomer bread, rolls and pastries along with everything you need to make your own at home. Lots of lovely Gluten free and vegan sweet and savoury treats available too. Homemade cakes, scones, sausage rolls, pies, hot filled rolls and paninis with a coffee or hot chocolate. Full take-away service too!

Don't forget to follow us on our socials for updates on your "Bake for family fun" @home free ingredients.

01350 727343 / contact@livilittlelunchbox.co.uk

The Scottish Deli *Open 7 days 10am – 5pm*

Huge range of storecupboard essentials and deli treats. A wonderful range of cheeses, meats, olives, speciality foods, Scottish gins, a stunning wine collection, and great selection of beers. Frozen curries. Homemade pastries, traybakes and quiches. Full take-away service of gourmet sandwiches, teas and coffees.

01350 728028 / info@scottish-deli.com