

# Community

#SupportDG 

EDITION 14  
Friday 22 May 2020

Kirkcudbright Festival of Light 2019



## What's Inside

Snapshot of time

Community produces fight back comic

Financial and physical wellbeing



Be Kind



Connect



Take Notice



Support



Give



[www.dumgal.gov.uk/supportdg](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/supportdg)

Tel 030 33 33 3000

Dumfries & Galloway



# Welcome to Community

## Your Dumfries and Galloway Community Bulletin



Cllr Elaine Murray  
Council Leader



Cllr Rob Davidson  
Depute Leader

**Mental Health Awareness Week continues, and in today's edition we focus on physical health and financial wellbeing.**

We also continue to bring you stories from across the region that demonstrate the kindness and compassion of individuals who are supporting our citizens and communities through these difficult times.

If you're worrying more than usual - or finding it hard to enjoy your life - or having thoughts and feelings that are difficult to cope with, which have an impact on your day-to-day life, there are lots of options for support out there - there are many helpline and listening services - so please, do not feel you're alone.

On the back page of the bulletin we have many useful contact numbers.

**Be safe.**

with best wishes  
**Elaine and Rob**

 @dgcouncil

 @DumfriesGallowayCouncil

 Email updates [dumgal.gov.uk/newsletters](https://dumgal.gov.uk/newsletters)

We are hosting a series of public online Q&A events focused on Community Support, Business Support and Children, Young People and Parents.

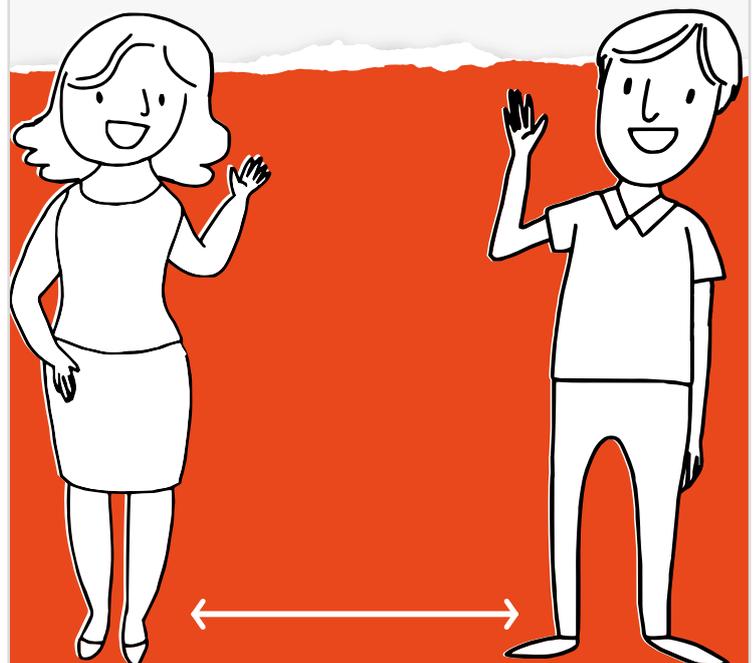
**Chat With Us...**

**Children, Young People and Parent "Children's Rights" on Thursday 28 May**

The video of the event will be available online on 28 May. See <https://supportdg.dumgal.gov.uk/chat-with-us>

## Keep a distance.

Stay 6 feet or 2 metres away from others to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.



# Communities responding to COVID-19



## Snapshot of Time

A photographer from Gretna hit on the smart idea of commemorating the 75th anniversary of VE Day, while capturing a snapshot of the history we're currently living through at the same time.

Lauren Barr of Annan-based Milk and Cuddles Photography used the day to organise and take portraits of local families on their doorsteps, celebrating the landmark occasion while on lockdown. Lauren said, *"I thought it would be a great way to document the current time and what's happening with the pandemic."*

*"I wanted to be creative and take photos that would be a part of people's history. Families could pull them out of albums in years to come and reminisce about where they lived during the pandemic, what they looked like, who they stayed together with, when the world was staying apart"*.

In return for 2-5 digital images of families standing on their doorsteps, Lauren asked for a small donation. After visiting several families in Gretna (while maintain social distancing), she was able to raise £75.00 for the COVID-19 NHS charity. *"Every little helps,"* said Lauren. *"I chose to donate to the COVID-19 NHS fund as I think they need everything they can get because of how hard they're working"*.

## COMMUNITY PRODUCES FIGHT BACK COMIC

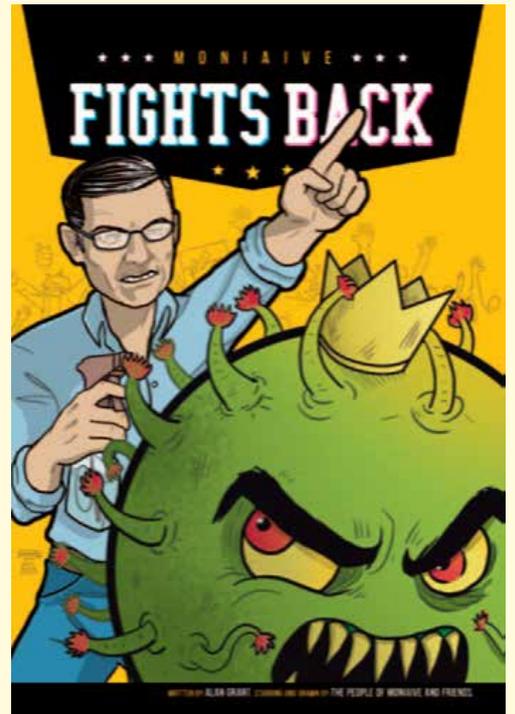
Like many rural communities, the small village of Moniaive has been hit hard by COVID-19 restrictions. Moniaive, Scotland's Festival Village, has seen all festivals, shows and events cancelled.

Looking ahead the community realised that they needed to start looking at ways of revitalising the village economy. Looking for ways to kickstart this campaign, and alleviate the boredom of the

lockdown, it was suggested to comic book writer, Alan Grant, that he put his skills into action and come up with a 'fightback' comic. And here it is. It tells the true story of how the little village pulled together to defeat the economic and social disturbances to everyone's lives.

It portrays just a glimpse of the many amazing people who helped pull the community through these difficult times. It does not attempt to cover the danger to health but rather shows the myriad ways people found to keep the community strong and to help it recover quickly from the effects of the pandemic on businesses, social events and our personal lives.

It is a comic with a real difference, as all the stars and artists are residents of Moniaive aged from four to 88 years old. Over 60 residents took part making this a real community project. **The fight back begins!**



## Taking the Air

If you're able to get out and about, a good walk in the fresh air can do wonders for your mental health, improving mood and sleep quality, as well as being a great stressbuster. One of our volunteer reporters, Angela Nixon, enjoys taking her walks along the River Annan. Angela, who lives in Annan and works at the local high school as a Librarian, said, *"The path from Annan to Barnkirk Point can be a bit of a treasure hunt. It's a six-mile round trip and there's room for proper social distancing measures."*

Apart from the beauty of the natural landscape, the river and estuary are



home to many species of wildlife, including birds and insects. There's also the added bonus of local artist Paul Cowan's installations, blended into the woodland. The walk is part of the Annandale Way, a 55-mile trail that begins up in the Moffat Hills and ends at Barnkirk Point on the Solway Firth, where a cairn marks the final destination.

# Financial Wellbeing

Financial wellbeing is about a sense of security and feeling as though you have enough money to meet your needs. It is about being in control of your day-to-day finances and having the financial freedom to make choices that allow you to enjoy life.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, more people are experiencing financial insecurity. This could be as a result of debt, unsecure working hours, or difficulty meeting day-to-day living costs such as rent and other essential bills. This can impact on your mental health in many ways such as difficulties sleeping and concentrating, an increasing amount of time worrying about bills, and experiencing feelings of anxiety and panic attacks.



**MENTAL  
HEALTH  
AWARENESS  
WEEK** 18-24 MAY 2020



Here are a few ideas to help maintain your financial wellbeing:

## Write down your budget

Knowing your income, expenditure and disposable income once your day-to-day expenses are covered, will give you confidence in your decisions. If your partner or spouse usually looks after the finances, be sure to talk the budget through with them, so that you both understand your financial situation.

## Avoid income comparisons

Research shows that comparing ourselves to our friends or peers reduces life satisfaction. Keep in mind that we all have different priorities and find pleasure or enjoyment in different things. For example, you may love to travel and invest in experiences, rather than having a big car or house.

## Look for the positives

Research in the field of neuroscience has shown that practising gratitude regularly can help to rewire your brain structure. Feeling grateful stimulates the production of natural 'antidepressants' such as serotonin and dopamine, giving you a feeling of contentment and wellbeing. Try writing down three things you are grateful for each day.

Organisations who can provide help include:



### Citizens

#### Advice D&G

offer help and support on a range of issues including debt, money and housing: **0300 303 4321**.

### National Debtline

**0808 808 4000** and

### Stepchange

**0800 138 1111**

are both debt charities offering free expert debt advice.

### Money Advice Service

offer free and impartial advice on managing your money: **0800 138 7777**.



Money can be a common source of stress for individuals and conflict in the strongest of relationships.



# Physical Health

Exercise in almost any form can act as a stress reliever. Being active can boost your feel-good endorphins and distract you from the anxieties of everyday life, something that has never been more important than during COVID-19. Getting yourself into unhealthy behaviour patterns of behaviour – sleeping in later, not going outside for daily exercise, going to bed later – can make you feel worse. Even a little exercise can go a long way for stress management, whether that is running, walking or yoga.

Exercise pumps up your body's level of endorphins, production of these triggers a feeling of well-being and boosts your happiness and are also scientifically proven to reduce physical pain. Regular exercise also increases your self-confidence and can lower the symptoms that are associated with mild depression and anxiety in turn improving sleep that is often exacerbated by these conditions.



Being physically active can help you to forget your problems and irritations, as you are solely concentrating on the movements of your body.

Below are some tips that you may find useful for helping to maintain good physical health in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic:

## Exercising at Home

Where possible you should try and exercise inside where possible and outside once a day. Evidence tells us that prolonged periods of sitting are not good for our health, so it is important to try to move around the home as much as you can. When staying at home you can find free easy workouts on British Heart Foundation's 10-minute living room workout, or from a simple YouTube search. Whether it is a few star jumps in your bedroom, yoga, or dancing, exercise will help get the adrenaline out of your system and combat any stress or anxiety

you may be feeling. This will also keep your heart, lungs, bones and muscles healthy.

Our Council's **Active Schools and Community Sport** teams across the region are sharing activities that can be done alone or as a family group online on their Facebook pages.



For the duration of May, **the Mental Health Foundation have launched Take Action, Get Active 2020**. The challenge links to Mental Health Awareness Week's theme of Kindness, and is all about being kind to yourself by taking some



time out each day for yourself.

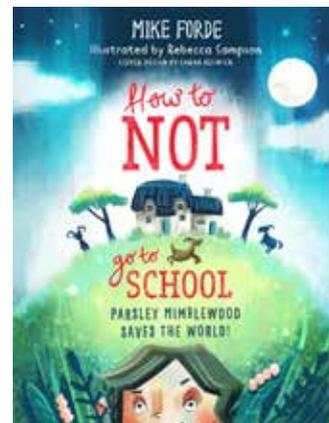
You are encouraged to be active for 30 minutes a day, which may include running, walking and cycling, but this does not have to be strenuous – you can do the gardening or get those arm muscles moving by baking a cake. Whatever your physical ability, this challenge is for everyone. Ultimately, you can get creative in this challenge by taking on whichever form of movement makes you happy.

Whenever you are exercising, please do so with caution and only if you feel well enough.



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## Book of the month for kids:



*'How to NOT Go to School: Parsley Miblewood Saves the World'* by Mike Forde, illustrated by Rebecca Sampson, Cover Design by Sarah Beswick.

This is a fantastic guide for kids and adults alike to help navigate the strange world of lockdown and NOT going to school. Parsley Miblewood is a home-schooled kid who sees herself an expert, and the story follows her daily whimsical adventures along with her 11 animals and 7 imaginary friends. Join her as she tackles the close-to-home challenges of missing friends, dealing with emotions and feeling cooped up.



**Will you care for your grown-ups?  
Solve a mystery with an imaginary detective vampire?**

**Teach yourself?**

**And feel all sorts of emotions?**

Don't miss this relevant and satisfying read. Free to download here: <https://parsleymiblewood.wordpress.com/>, where you can also donate to NHS charities instead of payment, if you want to.



*"If you don't stand for something you will fall for anything."*

Malcolm X

## Random Acts of Kindness

Instead of your usual activity page, today we are encouraging you to take action and carry out a random act of kindness for someone else.

Research shows that helping others can be beneficial to our own mental health. It can reduce stress, improve our emotional wellbeing and even benefit our physical health.

### What are the benefits?

1. Helping others feels good.
2. It brings a sense of belonging and reduces isolation
3. It helps to keep things in perspective
4. It helps make the world a happier place – it's contagious! Acts of kindness have the potential to make the world a happier place.
5. The more you do for others, the more you do for yourself! Evidence shows that the benefits of helping others can last long after the act itself by providing a 'kindness bank' of memories that can be drawn upon in the future.



### There are also several benefits for your physical health too:

1. It reduces stress Positive emotions reduce stress and boost our immune system, and in turn can protect us against disease.
2. It helps get rid of negative feelings Negative emotions such as anger, aggression or hostility have a negative impact on our mind and body. Engaging in random acts of kindness can help decrease these feelings and stabilise our overall health.
3. It can help us live longer. Giving and helping others may increase how long we live. Studies of older people show that those who give support to others live longer than those who don't.



## Kindness Checklist

- Call a friend that you haven't spoken to for a while
- Send a letter to a grandparent
- Send flowers to a friend
- Offer to pick up some groceries for your elderly neighbour
- Send someone a handwritten note
- Walk your friend's dog
- Tell your family members how much you love and appreciate them
- Help your parents with household chores
- Make someone laugh
- Offer to cook for a friend or family member
- Make a cup of tea for a friend or family member
- Tell someone you know that you are proud of them
- Tell someone you know why you are thankful for them
- Send a motivational text to a friend who is struggling
- Send someone you know a joke to cheer them up
- Send someone you know a picture of a cute animal
- Send an inspirational quote to a friend
- Send an interesting article to a friend
- Make and send a care package to someone who needs it
- Contact someone you haven't seen in a while
- Spend time playing with your pet
- Sign up to do voluntary work in your local community
- Reach out to a friend, family member or neighbour who is experiencing loneliness
- Have a clear out and take items to a charity shop once they are back open
- Make a donation to a charity
- Lend your ear - listen to your colleague who is having a bad day
- Say good morning
- Bake a cake for your colleagues
- Give praise to someone for something they've done well
- Pick up some rubbish lying around in the street
- Smile and say hello to people you may pass every day, but have never spoken to before



# Improving Access to Services

ContactSCOTLAND-BSL is a video relay service for deaf British Sign Language (BSL).



ContactSCOTLAND-BSL is provided by Sign Language Interactions on behalf of the Scottish Government. The service is a free, and connects deaf BSL users throughout Scotland through an online BSL

interpreting video relay service (VRS). The service is now available 24/7 which means Deaf BSL users can contact any service that relies on telephone contact with their service users or customers. This includes public, third and private sectors within Scotland. The service can also be used to contact GPs, workplaces and of course family and friends.

Contact Scotland is available in various formats including an app which can be downloaded directly from your electronic devices AppStore or Google play. Contact Scotland is also available on PC/Laptop.



InterpreterNow app

To register with the service or to find out

more information please visit: [www.contactscotland-bsl.org](http://www.contactscotland-bsl.org) If a BSL user is registered with the service, a hearing individual can make contact by calling: **0131 510 4555** and providing the BSL users names of extension numbers.

**contact SCOTLAND BSL**

**On-line Sign Language Video Relay Service (VRS)**

Providing access for Deaf BSL users

**24/7**

Deaf User | Online Interpreter | Hearing User

**VRS for ALL!**

Calling Government to Garages, from Health Centres to Hairdressers or from Charities to Child Care... the opportunities are endless.

**How to use contactSCOTLAND-BSL**

Deaf people	Hearing people
- Use smartphone/tablet click on contactSCOTLAND-BSL app	- Call <b>0131 510 4555</b>
- Use PC/Laptop	- Connect to online interpreter
- Connect to online interpreter	- Check Deaf person is online
- Relay message	- Relay message
- <b>Connected!</b>	- <b>Connected!</b>

[www.contactscotland-bsl.org](http://www.contactscotland-bsl.org) | [info@contactscotland-bsl.org](mailto:info@contactscotland-bsl.org)

f @contactScotland

24 hours | 7 days a week | Non-emergency calls only

## On Parade

The Army is always good at adapting in a crisis – and Dumfries and Galloway Army Cadets are no exception. The local Army Cadet Force works with around two hundred 12 to 18-year olds in detachments across the region. Being a cadet is about self-reliance, team building and dealing with challenges – as well as having fun.

Three new Lord-Lieutenant's Cadets were recently appointed, namely: Cadet Sergeant Leah Flett (Dumfries), Cadet Corporal Georgia Johnston (Stewartry of Kirkcudbright) and Cadet Corporal Fraser Baird (Wigtown), in preparation for when duties resume.

However, during the present crisis, all face-to-face activities have been suspended. Resourceful instructors have been going online instead, using Microsoft Teams, and developing training

packages which cadets can do remotely. Many adult volunteers are key workers such as refuse operators, nurses and residential care workers, so they've been balancing work commitments with cadet force duties too.

One of the biggest challenges has been testing skills, given that face-to-face tests can't happen at the moment. So, cadets have been collecting digital evidence, to help them meet external requirements for the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards and Scottish Qualification Authority units.



# Key Contacts

**National COVID-19 Helpline** 0800 111 4000

For people who don't have family or existing community support and can't get online and who are over 70, disabled, require the support of mental health services, are pregnant or receive a flu jab for health reasons, will be directed to our dedicated local team who can offer essential assistance.

<b>NHS24</b>	111 www.nhsinform.scot
<b>Emergency</b>	999
<b>Doctor Out of Hours</b>	111
<b>Dumfries and Galloway Council</b>	030 33 33 3000 www.dumgal.gov.uk/SupportDG
<b>Business Support Helpline</b>	01387 260280 Mon-Fri 9am-5pm
<b>Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub</b>	030 33 33 3001
<b>Social Work Out of Hours</b>	01387 273660
<b>Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway</b>	0300 303 8558
<b>Dumfries and Galloway Citizens Advice Service</b>	0300 303 4321 www.dagcas.org
<b>Samaritans</b>	116 123
<b>SHOUT</b>	Text SHOUT to 85258 for free
<b>Scotland's Domestic Abuse Helpline</b>	0800 027 1234
<b>Age Scotland</b>	0800 12 44 222 Mon-Fri 9am-5pm
<b>Shelter Scotland</b>	0808 800 444 Mon-Fri 9am-5pm
<b>LGBT Helpline Scotland</b>	0300 123 2523
<b>Childline</b>	0800 1111

If you have any positive stories about things that are happening in your community and would like to see them featured in Community – please email us at [communitybulletin@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:communitybulletin@dumgal.gov.uk) and one of our reporters will get back to you.

If you would like some help understanding this or need it in another format please contact 030 33 33 3000

Follow the Scottish Outdoor Access Code on your local exercise during Covid-19 restrictions.

Take away all your litter and leave gates as you find them.



**KNOW THE CODE**  
outdooraccess-scotland.scot

