The Villages of West Fife
Welcome to the villages

Allan Arbuthnott, West Fife Villages Community Planning Group

The West Fife Villages E-Book was the brainchild of the late John Crane of Saline and Jim Hensman also of Saline. They were both very active in the life of Saline and the surrounding villages which is clearly reflected in this E-Book.

John and Jim were members of the Saline Community Council for around 40 years, including acting as chair.

They were also both active in the West Fife Villages and were founder members of the Community Planning Group where John served as Chairman for 10 years.

The annual West Fife Exhibition of Art and Photography was also another of John’s passions and one in which he sought to involve the school children from each village to enter drawings, paintings and photographs.

Two other founding members who still remain are John Le Marie and Donald Murdoch and we must not forget David Scott from Links Media who has provided invaluable support.

To John, Jim, the other John and Donald I would like to say a very big thank-you for all you have done to promote the West Fife Villages and the E-Book.

I would also like to thank the Big Lottery, Comrie Colliery Environmental Trust and Colton Trust without whose contributions this book would not have been possible.

Over a number of years the West Fife Villages Community Planning Group produced a number of booklets detailing what each of the West Fife Villages had to offer visitors and residents alike.

These booklets were very popular but hard to keep up to date and relevant to each village. This is where John and Jim came in and suggested that we produce an E-Book that is much easier and quicker to update and is very accessible via the Internet. In addition to just the historical details of each village, it was decided to make it much more relevant to people passing through West Fife by including information about local shops, businesses and organisations in each of the villages.

We hope you will find the information contained in the E-Book interesting and informative and that you will now plan in a visit to West Fife and the villages.

Have a safe journey to wherever you decide to visit in West Fife.
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Blairhall, which was once a hamlet of just two rows of houses, is now a large village with a population of about 1000.

The village traces its mining heritage back to the Coltness Company, which acquired the lease of local minerals in 1883 and, for the next 25 years, worked the ironstone and upper coal seams.

In 1906 work began on sinking two deep shafts - named after the son and daughter of the Earl of Elgin, the Lord Bruce and the Lady Veronica - to work the lower measures.

To meet the requirements of the new pit, the company had to transfer men from Lanarkshire but, before then, housing had to be provided for them.

A reminder of Blairhall's mining past is provided by a memorial garden.

The primary school was opened in 1925 and also serves the nearby village of Comrie. The building was originally a secondary school.

In recent years, garden plots, seating and games have been developed within the school playground area.

A Fife Council Community Centre offers a range of activities for all age groups - from parent and toddler organisations to senior citizen groups.

Just over a mile south of the village (on the road to Culross) is the 17th century Blairhall House, birthplace of Sir William Bruce, Surveyor General to King Charles II.
Cairneyhill

By David and Mary Richards

Cairneyhill is located on the A994 taking traffic to and from Dunfermline. A hamlet existed in the 17th century. The arrival of handloom weaving brought prosperity and weavers’ cottages are still evident along the Main Street.

Entering from Dunfermline the traveller is given the welcome sight of the church built in 1752.

The church was probably the first Antiburgher Church in Scotland. In 1733 a number of ministers left the Church of Scotland in what is called the First Secession. After many splits and disputes, by 1929 they united to form the Church of Scotland as known today. To the rear of the church’s car parking is located the burial ground and the restored Watch House complete with Information Board. The Watch House dates from the time of Resurrectionists when volunteers would keep night vigil to frustrate the body snatchers.

The Old School House and Village Institute was the first public school in the village, opened in 1874. The building is currently in use for a variety of social activities.

The Village War Memorial is dedicated to the Fallen of two World Wars. The family of a deceased soldier, Macdonald, donated the ground.

Unveiled in 1922 by Mrs. Elizabeth Erskine, two of her sons are recorded; one awarded our highest military honour, the Victoria Cross.

The whole of the area was in a total security lockdown during WW2. The village was an armed location with a five-gun anti-aircraft battery and searchlight facility. The battery and the barrack village lies ruined on private land without public access.

Security was such that attending a funeral required authorisation. The Village Institute was much used for social functions by local and
military personnel.

In the village there is an 18C restored doocot located in the grounds of Forrester Park Golf Resort on Pitdinnie Road.

Situated in the seating area between the Post Office and petrol station is an old milestone stating Dunfermline 3 miles and Alloa 13 miles. Behind is the Sensory Garden with seating and wheelchair access.

On the wall of Number 51 Main Street is a marriage lintel dating from 1710 with the initials DC & AH and the trade symbols of a stone mason.

At the western end of the village the Conscience Bridge is built across the Torry Burn and is mentioned in the Dunfermline Town Council minutes as far back as 1610. Local legend says the name comes from a murderer who confessed to his crime on the bridge.

Cairneyhill today has clubs and societies providing social activities.

There is a primary school, Scout hall and Church Manse available for community use.

The whole village comes together to support Gala Day held in June.

Commercial facilities of hotel; public house; shops including Post Office, garden centre with café; hairdressing salon with therapies; a beauty and nail salon; a petrol filling station, light industry and engineering including motor vehicle maintenance and repair.

The Forrester Park Golf Resort, too, has function facilities.

Fife Council has a mobile library, which stops in the village once per fortnight. There are good bus services, which link to major cities, rail, air and also port facilities.

Cairneyhill enjoys a reputation for attractive floral displays, having a group of dedicated volunteers supported by the community at large. Awards for Best Kept Large Village are evidenced by Gold Medal Awards recognising success and achievement.
Carnock was at the forefront of the Reformation in Scotland and regularly hosted enormous gatherings.

Its 'Preachers’ Tent' is now in the National Museum of Scotland, but visitors can still access Preachers' Brae with its 400-year-old 'Jenny Beech' tree via the track next to the Primary School.

The Church of Scotland’s first historian, John Row (1568-1646), who was also the local minister, is buried in the old churchyard, his gravestone bearing Latin and Hebrew inscriptions.

The Parish Church was built in 1840, with the ruins of the original 12th century church still standing in the old churchyard, which was rebuilt in 1602 by Sir George Bruce of Carnock.

The Primary School, serving both Carnock and Gowkhall, was built in 1864 with extensions added in 1912 and 2007.

Former pupil Debbie Knox was part of the Gold Medal winning curling team at the Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City in 2002.

The 16th century Carnock Inn is one of the oldest buildings in the village, becoming a public house in 1884.

A popular venue is the Community Centre, built in 2005 by Fife Council. It is now managed by Carnock and Gowkhall Community Trust and is used by many groups and individuals for private functions, birthdays and sports.
Charlestown

Founded by Charles Bruce, 5th Earl of Elgin in the latter half of the 1700s, Charlestown is a noted early planned port. The Earl, giving his name to the village, also provided his initials, with the original layout of the community arranged in the form of his initials ‘CE.’

With its abundance of lime supplies, the village offered employment for many, with the limestone processed in kilns, built in the late 1700s.

The lime, used for building and agriculture, was horse-drawn along a purpose-built track, known as the Elgin railway, which linked to both the harbour and Dunfermline.

As well as lime production, coal extraction and an iron industry thrived in the village.

Ship building was carried out in the 19th century. Some of the German Imperial Fleet were brought to the port from Scalpa Flow after the First World War to be broken up.

The village’s historic roots to lime continue today at the Scottish Lime Centre, where the traditional skills in the use of lime in preserving historic buildings are passed on.

Charlestown has its own cricket club - Broomhall - named after the neighbouring home of Lord Elgin.

The club has two teams playing in the East of Scotland League and a Sunday team contesting the Strathmore League.
Comrie was established in the 1930s as a mining village, with many locals working in the colliery until it closed in the middle of the 1980s.

During its glory days, Comrie colliery was the showpiece for the British industry, the pit being the first in Scotland to use skip winding.

In its latter years, it was associated with the Longannet power station.

The remains of Comrie Castle lie west of the village, near Blairhall.

Today the original miners’ cottages have been joined by modern houses and a few businesses.

A purpose-built community centre, next to a recreational area with children’s play facilities, was opened several years ago.

Crombie

The small village of Crombie was once an agricultural settlement and had close links with the nearby Crombie Point, where ships were loaded with iron and coal.

The village expanded in the last century through naval and maritime facilities at the Royal Navy Armaments Depot (RNAD), now DMC.

A small colourful wooden church was built by the Admiralty in the 1920s.

Crombie has a play park and a community leisure centre.
Visitors seeking out Scotland’s most complete example of a burgh of the 17th and 18th centuries should head to Culross.

Its monastery was founded by St Serf in the 5th century and Culross is the birthplace of St. Mungo, patron saint of Glasgow.

Sir George Bruce was responsible for the ‘Palace’ or ‘Great Lodging,’ built between 1597 and 1611, and through the success of his ventures, Culross became known as a bustling port, exporting coal and salt.

Many of the building materials for the Palace - now a National Trust for Scotland property - came from the Low Countries, including the Dutch floor tiles and glass.

Today visitors can explore the Palace, with its tiny rooms, connecting passageways and painted ceilings.

In addition, seasonal herbs, fruit and vegetables can be purchased from the Palace garden. There is a Palace shop and a chance to take part in town walking tours.

Sir George Bruce’s friendship with James VI enabled Culross to be elevated to Royal Burgh status.

Culross Abbey (see Page 36), founded as a monastery in 1217 by Malcolm, 6th Earl of Fife, was dedicated to St. Mary and St Serf and serves as the parish church to this day.

The tomb of Sir George Bruce and his wife can be viewed in the abbey, alongside the tomb
Many of the historic buildings in Culross may look familiar to visitors, thanks to the success of the US television drama series, ‘Outlander.’

A number of scenes were filmed within the village, including the Palace and its garden.

The Royal Burgh featured as the fictional village of Cranesmuir.

For filming, the Mercat Cross underwent a temporary colour change to match the grey and brown of the surrounding buildings.

The Palace’s Withdrawing Room featured too, along with its garden, which became the herb garden of Castle Leoch.
Formerly known as Balclune, Gowkhall lies just west of Dunfermline on the A907.

Newmills, which grew up round the former mining industry, is situated between Low Valleyfield and Torryburn. Approached from the west over what was once a packhorse bridge, Newmills looks out on to Torry Bay and Bo’ness, on the other side of the Forth.

It is a popular residential village, being near Dunfermline but surrounded by countryside.

Once a village of hand weavers, each house at that time had its own well, while a shop sold weavers’ cloth to merchants.

It is served by several shops and businesses scattered along the main street that snakes its way through the village.
Kincardine is listed as an Outstanding Conservation Area, thanks to its many fine buildings and lanes.

Once a thriving port with active boat-building and salt pan industries, Kincardine today is an attractive village with a good range of businesses and facilities.

Among Kincardine’s notable buildings are the Gothic Tulliallan Parish Church dating back to 1832 and Tulliallan Castle, home to the Scottish Police College since 1952, designed by William Atkinson.

Developed on reclaimed land, Kincardine became a Burgh of Barony in 1663. The 17th century Mercat Cross, with its Corinthian pillar, bearing the arms of the Earls of Kincardine carved on the capital, can be seen in the High Street.

Tulliallan Churchyard is the finest-preserved example from mediaeval times.

The former Longannet power station which lies downstream of the village was once the largest coal-fired station in Europe.

Decommissioned in the spring of 2016, its installed generating capacity of 2400 megawatts remained the highest of any power station in Scotland.

Kincardine was the birthplace of Sir James Dewar (1842-1923), inventor of the vacuum flask.

The village has its own 18-hole parkland golf course and beyond that lies Kilbagie which, in the latter part of the 19th century, had its own grain whisky distillery, reputed to be one of the largest in the country.

Grain from the distillery was used to feed 7000 cattle kept in outhouses at the distillery.

The village was also home to rope and sail manufacturing as well as the first paper mill, opened by James Alexander Weir in 1874.

For a while, a mile-long canal ran between the distillery and Kennetpans on the Forth for the transport of grain.
Kincardine’s most famous landmark is its 2696-foot bridge over the Firth of Forth - Europe’s longest swing bridge when opened in 1936.

The cantilever design structure, which took about four years to build, was controlled from a cabin perched on a gantry above the bridge. The swinging central section allowed for the passage of large shipping upstream.

The opening was performed by dignitaries from Fife, Falkirk and Clackmannanshire, who each pressed a button to swing the bridge into its closed position, allowing the queuing cars to cross.

Just over 50 years after its opening and with few large ships requiring to venture further upstream, it was decided to keep the bridge in a fixed position.

Each year, however, saw a steady increase in the volume of vehicles using the bridge and worsening congestion in Kincardine and surrounding area.

As a result, the Scottish Government decided in 2005 to give the go-ahead to a new 1.2-kilometre bridge, slightly further upstream.

The £120-million crossing - the second largest of its type in the world - was opened at the end of 2008 as Clackmannanshire Bridge.

At about the same time, a new bypass was built to the east of Kincardine, leading to the old bridge and further reducing traffic problems in the historic village.

Kincardine Bridge itself is now one of Historic Scotland’s listed structures.
Limekilns, sitting next to the Forth, is a popular spot for leisure boats, reflecting the village’s rich historic links as an important port.

Its harbour was once the port of medieval Dunfermline, with the village’s industrial past ranging from salt-panning and fishing to soap making - along with the processing of lime that gave the community its name.

The ruins of large kilns - now under the care of the National Trust for Scotland - can still be seen today.

Oldest building is the King’s Cellar, which dates back to the early to mid 16th century when it once acted as a store for the palace of Dunfermline. It has also been a library, school and chapel and is now a Freemasons’ Lodge.

Thanks to its picturesque location, the village’s pubs and restaurants are kept busy with visitors, who enjoy fine views over the Forth.

The large harbour was once the northern terminus for a ferry linking Limekilns to Bo’ness, on the opposite side of the Forth.

The village was the birthplace in 1757 of George Thomson, the noted publisher of Scottish folk songs who commissioned music from leading European composers.
Oakley grew from iron works which came into operation in the 1840s when their towering stacks dominated the skyline.

Six furnaces provided jobs for hundreds, but when the business floundered, coal became the new focus with the village expanding further.

One hundred and eighty-feet stacks had towered from the works and the six furnaces, with the engine house being a particularly fine sandstone building.

Oakley Colliery Company worked coal and ironstone between Oakley and Saline, but the venture was not viable because of the depth and faulting of the seams.

By the end of the 1800s, coal mining began at Kinneddar, continuing until the 1930s. When operations ended there, many locals found work at the nearby Comrie mine.

With the decline of the Lanarkshire coalfield in the late 1940s, a large number of miners moved to Fife, a reminder being the outstanding Church of the Holy Name, built to the south of Oakley in the mid-1950s.

It is a listed building with fine stained glass windows by Gabriel Loir from Chartres. Visitors can park in the church grounds.

Inzievar Woods welcome visitors and access has been improved. Jules Verne once visited the original estate house, now converted to private houses.

A community company, Scottish Woods, is based on the eastern part of the estate.

The woods are linked to the Millennium Cycleway via paths through the grounds of Holy Name Church.

There is little trace of the mining industry in the village today, but it is still an active place with its purpose-built community centre, which accommodates the local council office, primary schools, nursery and library among its facilities.
The picturesque village of Saline dates back to at least the 13th century and probably existed many centuries before this time.

DONALD MORMAER, 8TH EARL OF MAR
– Regent of Scotland for nine days

Donhnall (Donald) Mormaer, the 8th earl of Mar, was born around c.1302 in Saline. His father was Gartnait, the 7th Earl of Mar and his mother Christina Bruce, sister to King Robert the Bruce.

Donald became the 8th Earl of Mar in 1305 when he was still an infant. For much of his youth he was kept prisoner along with his mother at Bristol Castle under the orders of King Edward I. After the battle of Bannockburn, in 1314, he was set free along with other members of the Bruce family. However, Donald chose to remain in England until 1319 when he returned to Scotland to receive his Earldom.

He soon returned to England where he fought for King Edward II, to whom he had great admiration for, both at the battle of Boroughbridge and the battle of Biland in 1322. He became the keeper of Bristol Castle in 1326 but returned to Scotland in 1327 when King Robert the Bruce bequeathed him the charters for thanage of Clova in Forfar, and the lands of Salklyn (Saline) in Fife naming him his nephew.

He remained in Scotland and on 2 August 1332 he was elected regent of Scotland upon the death of his uncle, Thomas Randolph, Earl of Moray. However, his regency only lasted for nine days before he was killed at the battle of Dupplin Moor, the same battle where the famous English longbow was first demonstrated.

Originally involved mainly in agricultural businesses, weaving was carried out in the 18th and 19th centuries and later the opening of coal mines in the area resulted in the growth of the population.

Saline has a number of fine 19th century Jacobean-style cottages in its main street, and North Road boasts a row of well-preserved weavers’ cottages.

Saline and District Heritage Society was formed in 2011 and has facilitated the restoration of the old graveyard in Bridge Street. Two information boards tell the story of the graves and the flora and fauna located in the graveyard and wild flowers attract a variety of birds...
The Session House Museum, located close to the Church, is open from the end of May to the beginning of September (Sundays, 10.30-1pm Tuesday evenings 6 – 8pm and Wednesdays 10 – 12 noon). There is a different themed exhibition each year and entry is free.

Future plans of the Heritage Society include a second excavation to try and locate the 13th Century church which was known to have existed, possibly in the old graveyard, and to research and record the 19th century mining hamlet called Bickram Village.

**SIR WALTER SCOTT**

Novelist and poet Sir Walter Scott often stayed at Nether Kinneddar, a house located a short distance south of the village. This was the residence of his friend William Erskine, Lord Kinnen达尔. Lord Kinnen达尔’s wife, Euphemia Robison, is buried in the old graveyard Mausoleum – Sir Walter Scott penned an epitaph to her which disappeared many years ago and recently, the Heritage Society erected a replica.

The well-known novelist Annie S. Swan also has connections with the area as, in 1927, she purchased Bandrum, a house and estate located close to the village. Bandrum is now a nursing home and its café, Brightside, is open to both residents and the public.

On a hill above Bandrum, there is a folly known locally as The Temple. It was built in 1845 by Captain Patrick Hunter of the East India Company to watch over the Forth but apparently, the previous owner of Bandrum, David Black, built a wooden tower in 1805 to commemorate the Battle of Trafalgar. One of the architects of The Temple was a local mason called Lewis Mercer, who is buried in the old graveyard in Saline. The Temple has wonderful views of the River Forth and beyond.

Saline Glen is one of the few remaining areas of naturally-regenerating ancient woodland. Several years ago a survey was undertaken of the flora which revealed that there are at least 90 types of plants, 32 species of trees and 12 species of ferns. The Glen is open to the public.

The ruins of Killernie Castle sit at the south-west extremity of Saline Hill, close to the village of Steelend. It was once owned by the Scotts of Balwearie, descendants of Sir Michael Scott, renowned knight and wizard. The ruins now consist only of fragments of two towers, of which the southern is said to be the more recent, bearing the date 1592.

For the new Millennium, a group of ladies in the village known as “The Quilters” decided to make a village quilt using photo transfer images of old photographs to create a visual record of the history of Saline.

In August of 2000, the quilt was presented to
the Community Council. It now hangs in a special display cabinet in the Community Centre.

This quilt is truly a pictorial history of the parish, and most of the places of interest within the parish are depicted on the quilt.

If the Community Centre is open, call in and ask if you can view this record of Saline’s pictorial history, which hangs in the vestibule. Alongside the quilt there is a detailed description of each of the illustrations. These include pictures of Olympic Games participants from the parish, (we have a medallist) and pictures of most of the larger buildings and historical sites.

In 1840, the barrowman plough was invented in Saline by John Barrowman, who is buried in the old graveyard. This was a very successful implement and was sold worldwide. A few have survived until the present day and the late John Crane was instrumental in locating one and bringing it back to the village for restoration. There is a model of it in Saline Community Centre and eventually the original will go out on display.

There are a number of walks both within and outwith the village that take in the beautiful scenery and historical features. Two start from the car park at Steelend and you can either go round the golf course past the Temple or continue down to the Brightside café (opening hours vary) at Bandrum.

The third walk starts close to Kinneddar Mains and the new houses on Oakley road and takes you round a pre-historic settlement. Walk leaflets are available at the Brightside café, Bandrum, Shieldbank Coffee Shop and Saline Golf Club.

Saline Golf Club sits on rising ground at the east end of the village. This nine-hole course was established in 1910. It has attractive views to the south. Visitors are welcomed and catering facilities are available.

Saline has a number of places to stay in, eat in or enjoy a day out at - See Directory at back of booklet.

A large part of the information above was extracted from John Crane’s ‘The Saline Parish Historical Trail, (Second Edition) ’ ISBN 0-9546920-1-2. It has been updated by Linda Moyes and Jackie Kerr from Saline and District Heritage Society
Steelend

Situated a short distance east of Saline on the B914, Steelend was originally a mining village, developing from a number of collieries in the area.

Faults in the coalfield, however, frequently caused difficulties in the mining operations. Steelend remains a close-knit community and facilities include a popular miners’ social club where visitors are welcomed to regular events.

At one time there was a famous boxing club at Steelend. This was located in a row of miners’ cottages. Many of the boxers went on to represent Scotland at international level.

Steelend takes its name from a farm that was originally called “Stalend” - thought to indicate a place for putting up horses.

A recent explanation put forward by Dr. Simon Taylor, is that Steelend derives from “steel”; Scots for the end of a ridge or hill-spur. Steelend once had an interesting iron church which was moved twice during its lifetime.

It was originally built as temporary accommodation for the Brucefield Congregation in Dunfermline around 1895, was then moved to Upper Steelend in 1908 to serve the increasing number of coal miners before being moved again to the village of Steelend around 1938. It was finally demolished in the 1980s.
Torryburn, a popular residential village lying next to the Firth of Forth, served as one of the ports of Dunfermline in the 1600s, exporting coal and salt from local operations.

The village once belonged to the Wardlaw family, Henry being the Bishop of St Andrews between 1404 and 1440.

Walter Wardlaw was the Bishop of Glasgow from 1367-1389 and was promoted to Cardinal by Pope Clement VII.

Notable buildings include the former Parish Church of Torryburn and Newmills which was put on the market several years ago.

Reconditioned in 1928 by the Rev. W. Pitcairn Craig, the church was rebuilt in 1800 by Rev. David Balfour, on the site of the original structure. The earliest building on this site was a simple thatched-roof church, built in 1616.

Another historic building is Craigflower House (now flats) with its crowstepped gables, on the shore. It served as a private school for many years until closing in the late 1970s.

On a more macabre note, Torry Bay may still have the remains of a witch under its mudflats!

After the witch died in prison in 1704 she was buried under a large stone between the high and low water marks in the bay. However, by the 19th century, her skull and other body parts were recovered and sold! It is believed to be the only known witch's grave of its type in Scotland.

The bay and the neighbouring Torry Nature Reserve and Fife Coastal Path make the village a draw for walkers and nature lovers.
The former mining community of Valleyfield comprises High Valleyfield and the much older Low Valleyfield.

The villages are split by the B9037, with Low Valleyfield lying close to the Firth of Forth, and the larger High Valleyfield more inland and on higher land.

High Valleyfield grew out of mining from 1908, with the colliery becoming a showcase for the industry before closing in 1978.

Physical reminders of the village’s mining past include the statue marking the site of the colliery as well as the imposing memorial to the 35 men who lost their lives in an explosion in 1939.

As well as claiming so many lives, 26 men were injured, two seriously, following the explosion of methane gas - or fire damp.

A monument sits on the site of the colliery.

An inquiry found that there were serious breaches of regulations, with the owners being charged with neglect.

During the period in which the Valleyfield Estate was owned by Sir Robert Preston, the acclaimed landscape gardener Humphry Repton was employed to design a number of features on the estate.

The famous Repton Garden was one of his projects and there is still evidence of the Repton artifacts, along with some rare and invaluable natural habitats in Valleyfield Woodland Park.

There is a Community Orchard on the site of what was the Estate Kitchen Garden.

Villagers enjoy many wonderful walks in the area - particularly in the Spring!

Valleyfield Heritage Project is active in the village and has several plans in the pipeline.

Businesses in High Valleyfield include fast food outlets, a Co-op and Post Office / general
store paper shop / store and a chemist. There is also a community centre, social club and health centre.

**Low Valleyfield**

Picturesque Low Valleyfield makes a particularly colourful sight in the summer when its award-winning floral displays are at their best. This old hamlet became a Burgh of Barony in 1663 until 1760, under Sir George Preston of Valleyfield and, like Culross, was part of Perthshire until the boundary changes of 1891.

The main jetty was at Jessamine Cottage with regular boats to and from Bo’ness.

At the east end, work began on the colliery in 1908, when the engine houses were built, prior to sinking commencing in 1909. Actual production began in 1911.

Working practices in the pit changed over the decades, with up to a dozen ponies being used until the 1930s for haulage work underground.

The railway opened in 1906 and there was a daily service of three passenger trains.

These trains were an important part of local life, with daily newspapers and goods being delivered to the railway station for collection.

This passenger service stopped in 1930.

Today, Low Valleyfield has a small industrial estate and offers visitors fine walks along the lagoons to Preston Island.
The West Fife Villages are easily accessible from all parts of the UK. Once here you will find plenty of free parking in all communities. However, for those wanting to tour the area on foot, bike or by bus, the following may be useful.

The villages connect to two major cycle routes; the western part of the Fife Coastal Path running along the coast between the Forth Bridges and Kincardine, and the West Fife Cycleway between Dunfermline and Clackmannan.

Kincardine and Clackmannan are connected by a route created by groups in Clackmannanshire, creating a virtually off-road circuit.

An important link joins the coastal and inland routes via the restored Blairhall Colliery site and Valleyfield Wood between Blairhall and Newmills. It also gives access to Forestry Commission Scotland’s Balgownie Wood

www.scotland.forestry.gov.uk

A sketch of the route can be obtained at

www.westfievillages.co.uk

These cycle routes are also available for walkers and riders, and mostly suitable for wheelchair use.

More details of Fife’s other cycle routes can be found on Fife Direct

www.fifedirect.org.uk/cycleways

Fife Council’s Core Path Plan can be found on Fife Direct www.fifedirect.org.uk/corepaths

Most bus services are operated by Stagecoach Fife. All services are covered in a single Dunfermline and West Fife Travel Guide that is available from Dunfermline Bus Station and on some buses.

Most buses are wheelchair and buggy accessible; the few that are not are listed in the
timetable. Drivers can provide advice and assistance.

Services 4A, 4B or 4C run between Dunfermline via Carnock and Oakley on a half hour frequency.

Service 6 runs between Crombie and Oakley via Charlestown, Limekilns, Dunfermline, Wellwood, Steelend and Saline.

Service 8 runs hourly between Dunfermline to Culross via Cairneyhill, Torryburn, Newmills, High Valleyfield and Low Valleyfield.

Service 8A runs hourly between Dunfermline and Alloa via Kincardine. It follows the same route as service 8 as far as High Valleyfield but misses out Low Valleyfield and Culross.

Service 28 runs between Queen Margaret Hospital and Falkirk via Dunfermline, Wellwood, Steelend, Saline, Oakley, Blairhall, High Valleyfield, Low Valleyfield, Culross and Kincardine. It operates every three hours and is a useful link between the inland and coastal communities.

Express coaches on the X24 and X27 services run to Glasgow via Cairneyhill and Kincardine to Glasgow bus station roughly every 20 minutes. The X24 continues to Glasgow Airport every hour.

There is a park and ride facility in Kincardine, where coaches take around 50 mins to Glasgow.

If you intend to travel more than once, best buy is one of Stagecoach’s “rider” tickets.

The best local ticket is the Dunfermline Dayrider Plus. The Fife Dayrider covers all of Fife, the Fife Dayrider Plus extends this to Dundee and Edinburgh, while the East Scotland Dayrider covers most of East Scotland, including Aberdeen. There are concessions for children, young people and families.

Details of tickets and timetables can be found on the Stagecoach web site [www.stagecoachbus.com](http://www.stagecoachbus.com) or by using the link [www.stagecoachbus.com/promos-and-offers/east-scotland/guide-to-stagecoach-east-scotland-tickets](http://www.stagecoachbus.com/promos-and-offers/east-scotland/guide-to-stagecoach-east-scotland-tickets)

Tickets can be bought on the bus or by using the Stagecoach app that can be downloaded from the Apple App Store or Google Play. This is a useful app with lots of bus information for visitors.

Compiled by Donald Murdoch
Preston Island, a firm favorite with nature lovers and walkers in general, is steeped in history.

An island in name only these days, the reclaimed land now forms part of the Torry Bay nature reserve which lies between the former Longannet Power Station at Kincardine and Comrie Point, east of Torryburn.

The reserve covers more than 680 hectares and is one of the largest inter-tidal areas in the upper Forth, with the mudflats being an important habitat for an abundance of birds.

A circular walk of just over four miles from Culross gives visitors amazing views of the three Forth bridges downstream, the Linlithgow hills and, on a clear day, Stirling hills to the west.

The mud flats of the site of Special Scientific Interest provide an abundance of food for the birds, such as shelduck, wigeon, curlew, redshank and dunlin that overwinter at Torry Bay.

A large part of the reserve and lagoons was formed from ash which was pumped as slurry from the old power station.

In the autumn, sandwich tern, ringed plover, ruff and greenshank can be seen.

Pockets of saltmarsh contain colourful flowers such as sea aster, thrift and scurvy grass.

Cockles, mussels, periwinkles and tellins are frequently washed up on the beach, while the rockpools are often home to butterfish, gobies, sea anemones, shore crabs and shrimps.

One of the lagoons features specially constructed spits and islands to encourage the breeding of wading birds and ducks.

The main island, part of the Longannet Biodiversity Action Plan, was landscaped and covered in gravel to offer a nesting place for wading birds and terns. It is now used by ground-nesting varieties, such as ringed plover - safe from foxes, stoats and other ground predators.

Enclosed by a sea wall which extends well out into the Forth, the reclaimed land and lagoons are used as a roosting site for waders displaced at high tide from downstream Torry Bay.

The expanses of open grassland are also a haven for breeding skylarks, while the meadows attract butterflies such as ringlet, meadow brown and common blues.
Several well-maintained ruins of early 19th century industrial use are to be found on Preston Island.

Established as a mine in the early 1800s by local entrepreneur Sir Robert Preston, the operation came to an abrupt end following an explosion.

Later the buildings housed an illicit distillery.

Sir Robert – also known as ‘Floating Bob’ owing to his maritime past – amassed a fortune as a commander in the East India Company and a captain of the trading vessel, Asia, and later as a partner in a London-based trading business.

Sir Robert died in 1834, aged 94.

He and his wife are interred in Culross Abbey church.

Part of the attractive track leading to the reserve and Preston Island
Woodland promises a Snowdrop Spectacular

A local Snowdrop Festival has grown to be a highly-popular annual fixture, attracting hundreds of visitors to the area. Run by the award-winning West Fife Woodlands Group, the “carpets” of snowdrops found in Valleyfield Woodland Park now form part of the Fife Snowdrops Spectacular. Started in 2007, the West Fife festival gives visitors the chance to stroll through the impressive grounds of the former Valleyfield Estate. While many are happy to make their own way along the network of paths, others keen to learn more about the estate and Georgian life, can join guided walks at weekends, led by a member of the woodlands group. These walks follow a carefully chosen trail through naturalised snowdrops and remnants of a Humphry Repton-designed landscape, his only work in Scotland. As part of the Visit Scotland’s Snowdrop Festival, the West Fife event runs from the end of January to mid-March. While the walks are free, donations are welcome. Visitors to the Snowdrop Festival should access Valleyfield Woodland Park from near Shiresmill, KY12 8ER. The Fife Council-owned woodland is a public place and visitors are free to explore its delights at all times throughout the year. Event details and any necessary changes to Snowdrop Festival arrangements (such as curtailment due to adverse weather) will be posted on www.westfifevillages.co.uk and on West Fife Woodlands’ Facebook page. Alternatively, contact the Dunfermline tourist information centre on 01383 720999 or email dunfermline@visitScotland.com.
Several West Fife villages have been taking part in the annual and popular Beautiful Fife competition over the years. One of the most successful has been Cairneyhill, which has its own bloom group. Modern containers have been acquired or purchased and a greenhouse, hut and storage facilities obtained to provide a base for the group’s activities. Local successes continued in the 2017 Beautiful Scotland and Fife competitions. Low Valleyfield Improvement Group collected a Silver award in the Scottish competition and a Gold in the Fife contest, along with an Innovation Award.

In the overall Fife small villages’ competition, Limekilns and Charleston tied with Townhill, receiving Gold Medals.

Cairneyhill was awarded a Gold Medal in Beautiful Fife. It was the third successive year that the community had taken the top prize. Carnock’s efforts in Fife were rewarded with a Silver Gilt Award. Crombie secured a Bronze Award.
Limekilns

Kincardine

Culross

Newmills
If you go down to the woods today...!

By Donald Murdoch

One of the West Fife Villages’ major assets is the number and variety of forests and woodlands.

All are open to the public, free of charge, at all times although some access is limited when forestry operations are being carried out.

Most are owned by Forestry Commission Scotland and full details, including downloadable leaflets, can be obtained at www.scotland.forestry.gov.uk

The following notes summarise each forest or woodland.

**Devilla** is the largest of our forests. Its Scots Pines make a perfect habitat for iconic red squirrels; it is a real stronghold for these frisky animals in lowland Scotland.

After you’ve tried spotting them along the Red Squirrel trail, you could try finding the four lochs, home to darting dragonflies and agile otters.

Also look for relics of past times among the trees such as an enigmatic stone monument, where legend says that the Battle of Bordie Moor raged in 1038 and covenanters met on misty moors.

**Blairadam** is our next biggest. Three exciting trails wind through this forest with its attractive mix of mighty spruce and colourful beeches.

William Adam, the noted Scottish architect, built Blairadam House here in the 1730s and landscaped the surrounding estate. Sir Walter Scott was a regular visitor.

Adam also built pits to extract coal, which continued into the 1960s. Follow the trails to spot red squirrels, lofty trees, elegant bridges and old mine workings.

On dark evenings you might even glimpse a ghostly miner or the famous “Beast of Blairadam.”

The Kelty Heritage Trails group was instrumental in the trails’ development and enhancement. Look out for the mythical cat carved on to the bridge abutment north of the forestry...
office. The bridge carried the mineral railway to the main Edinburgh to Perth line. Nearby is a totem pole carved by local children and First Nation carvers from Vancouver Island, Canada.

**Balgownie Wood** is set in the gently rolling Fife countryside and is an opportunity to get back to nature.

This quiet woodland hides some magnificent ancient oak. The land once belonged to nearby Culross Abbey and was first planted with trees in medieval times. There’s been forest here ever since, making it an unusually rich, complex woodland.

The 2.5 miles (4km) of paths and tracks are a mix of wide gravel forest roads and narrow earth paths, with some short moderate and steep slopes. Access from the east from the West Fife Cycleway has been improved for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders through the restored Blairhall Colliery site and paths created through the west part of the colliery site by volunteers from the West Fife Woodlands group. (See also ‘Getting Around in West Fife’). The former colliery site hosts a wide range of native plants.

**Inzievar Woods** are located south of Oakley and easily accessed from the West Fife Cycleway.

The west part is owned by the Woodland Trust and is joined to the east part by a path between Holy Name Church (car parking available) and the part belonging to the community company, Scottish Wood.

Public access to the eastern park has been enhanced by Scottish Wood’s charity arm, ‘Dynamic Woods. Further details are available at [www.scottishwood.co.uk](http://www.scottishwood.co.uk)

While access to the woods is encouraged, please note that the former mansion is privately owned and that the access road between the two parts is required for access for residents and businesses.

Please do not enter private property nor park on the access road.

**Muirside Estate** is a large area south of Saline recently planted as mixed woodland by Forestry Commission Scotland.

Access is welcomed and several informal paths have been formed by local feet. However, Saline and Steelend Community Development Trust has ambitious plans to create a network of all-abilities paths around Saline and Steelend with connections to the West Fife Cycleway at Oakley and Blairhall.

Keep up to date at [www.salinesteelend.org](http://www.salinesteelend.org)
Whole communities in the West of Fife grew up round the mining industry, which played such an important part in the daily lives of locals until a few decades ago.

Today, there is little evidence of mines and miners, apart from some memorials and reclaimed land.

History records that in the early 17th century, the area boasted a very novel but ultimately unsuccessful solution to extracting coal from beneath the sea.

A moat was constructed off Culross by Sir George Bruce, at the entrance to a coal pit under the Forth. Although encased in walls which sat above the surface of the water, the venture was ended after a storm - in the same year that the pit had been visited by an impressed James VI.

One of the showcase pits was Valleyfield which closed in the late 1970s and sadly made international headlines in 1939 when 35 men lost their lives in an explosion.

Coal was mined in the area for many years and two of the first to work the upper seams extensively at Valleyfield were Lord Archibald Cochrane, 9th Earl of Dundonald along with the Prestons of Valleyfield.

Work on Low Valleyfield Colliery began in 1908, with the engine houses built before sinking commenced in 1909.

The coalfield was enormous and, in the early days of the sinking, part of the coal seams cut through were those worked by the Earl of Dundonald and the Prestons of Valleyfield.

It was reckoned that the Valleyfield coal was the best coking and navigation quality in the...
In 1911, the first year of production, a sinker was killed after falling off scaffolding in No 1 pit, followed later in the year by two men and a boy (15) who lost their lives in a methane gas blow-out.

An inquiry into the 1939 explosion found that there were serious breaches of regulations, the owners and management being charged with neglect.

Working practices also changed over the decades, with up to a dozen ponies being used until 1930 for haulage work underground.

At one time there were also around a dozen pit head girls employed on the picking belts, "tables" and tipplers - with one losing her life.

After the Second World War, development continued at Valleyfield and, in 1954, work started on sinking No 3 pit.

As several neighbouring collieries closed in the 1960s, Valleyfield received an influx of manpower but, through a combination of factors, the last mine cars of coal were delivered up the Valleyfield pit in April 1968. Valleyfield had lost its identity as it became Kinneil Valleyfield Colliery, operating from Kinneil, the pits having become linked by a tunnel under the Forth.

In the 30 years from 1942, another 17 workers lost their lives at Valleyfield.

When the colliery closed in 1978, many of the men were transferred to other undertakings, but those operations too came to an end.

To the north of Valleyfield at Blairhall, the Coltness Company acquired the lease of minerals in 1883 and, for the next 25 years, worked the ironstone and upper coal seams.

In 1906 work began on sinking two deep shafts - named after the son and daughter of the Earl of Elgin, the Lord Bruce and the Lady Veronica - to work the lower measures.

To meet the requirements of the new pit, the company had to transfer men from Lanarkshire but, before then, housing had to be provided for them.

At one time more than 1000 people were employed at the colliery, which closed in 1969.

For more on mining, visit www.fifepits.co.uk/
Scottish Mining

Photo: Andy Young

Low Valleyfield, with its various sidings, was busy with rail traffic during its mining days
Culross Abbey Parish Church is part of the former abbey founded in 1217 by Malcolm, 7th Earl of Fife.

Culross may have been chosen because this was the birthplace of Saint Mungo. The abbey was first colonised by monks of the Cistercian order who came from Kinloss Abbey on the Moray Firth.

Construction of the abbey church was completed by 1214, with additional work carried out in the 14th, 15th and early 16th centuries, before being abandoned after the Reformation in 1560.

The original church layout was cruciform in plan, without aisles. However by the late 15th/early 16th century all the lay brothers had left and the abbey community consisted only of choir-monks. With no further use for the western half of the church or nave it was left to deteriorate. By 1646 it had become just a roofless ruin. Today only the south wall remains, serving to enclose the manse garden.

Circa 1500, Abbot Andrew Masoun added a tower, through which you entered the church today, to finish off the surviving church structure, which by this time consisted of only the choir or chancel. North and south transepts were also created, perhaps utilising existing appendages to the choir.

The choir and its additions were taken over for use as a parish church in 1633, while the adjoining abbey buildings were left to fall into decay.
By around 1640 the north transept was in a ruinous state. So much so that worshippers had to protect themselves both from the elements and the hazards due to pigeons perched on the rafters overhead.

The situation was remedied in 1642 thanks to the generosity of the younger George Bruce of Carnock, who rebuilt the north transept, albeit afterwards for the exclusive use of workmen employed at his saltworks and collieries. This then became known as the New or Bruce Aisle.

At the same time he constructed a burial chapel for his family, the Bruce Vault, against the north wall of the church.

Originally the chapel could only be accessed from outside, with the door carefully locked. However it can now be entered from within the church, following the reconstructions of 1905/6.

Inside on the east wall you can see a very fine monument to Sir George Bruce and his family. Later the chapel was adopted as his own by Sir Robert Preston of Valleyfield, on acquiring the Culross estate. This is now the final resting place of Sir Robert and Lady Preston, his wife. On the north wall is a monument to Lady Preston.

On the south wall you will see a brass plaque headed FUIMUS, the motto of the Bruces, describing how the heart of Edward, Lord Bruce of Kinloss, is buried there. He was slain in a bloody duel fought in 1613 with Sir Edward Sackville, near Bergen-op-Zoom in Holland.

The south transept is more modern. Like the north transept it likely started as an appendage to the original abbey church choir, with perhaps little change until extensive modifications and renovation work were begun in 1905.

Today the church and adjoining manse are A-listed and the remains of the abbey buildings are protected as a Scheduled Monument. Both are open to the public daily and weekly worship takes place in the church.
Admiral Cochrane remembered

A bold and cunning naval commander, also noted as a fighter for radical causes, is recognised by an impressive bust in Culross. Born in Ayrshire in 1775, Admiral Thomas Cochrane spent his childhood and formative years at Abbey House in Culross, then home of the Earls of Dundonald, before joining the Royal Navy. The bronze memorial stands near the Town House, with a detailed inscription sitting on the pavement below the sculpture. It was long felt by locals that while Cochrane’s life had been celebrated in many South American countries and Greece, it had not been recognised in his home land.

Prior to the unveiling of the plinth and bust in the Town Square in 2004, the only reference to Cochrane in Culross was a plaque and housing development, Cochrane Haven.

During his time with the Royal Navy, he gained distinction against the French, being dubbed "le loup de mer" (The Sea Wolf), by Napoleon, after a series of sensational victories in his sloop, the Speedy.

In 1818 he sailed to South America as Naval Commander-in-Chief of the Chilean Navy, then engaged in throwing off Spanish Colonial rule. He routed the Spanish and then the Portuguese, both on sea and land, as Admiral of the Chilean, then of the Peruvian, and finally Brazilian Navies.

In 1831 he succeeded his father’s title as the 10th Earl of Dundonald. Also an MP and great inventor, he was buried in Westminster Abbey, London, in 1860. He was the inspiration for the daring fictional naval hero Horatio Hornblower.
Championing all racing

Knockhill – the home of Scottish motor sport – has been one of the biggest draws in West Fife since the track opened in the mid 1970s.

The brainchild of Tom Kinnaird, the undulating 1.3-mile circuit linked together an old farm service road and disused railway line.

After a few false starts, the circuit really came to the fore after 1983, when motor cycle racer Derek Butcher purchased the complex and invested heavily in developing its facilities.

As one of the shorter circuits in the UK, close racing is guaranteed and, because of the elevation changes, spectators get commanding views of the track.

Knockhill has been a regular host for many years of the two biggest British championships – for Touring Cars and Super Bikes – with the competitors enjoying the unique challenges of the hillside circuit.

Top Scots drivers such as David Coulthard, Dario Franchitti and Allan McNish all raced at the Fife track as they progressed their way to Formula One, Indy Cars or Le Mans victories, while overseas visitors have included Kimi Raikkonen.

On two wheels, the home country has produced such outstanding riders as Niall Mackenzie, the late Steven Hislop and Iain Duffus.

Aside from the two main events of the year, Knockhill’s packed programme includes supercar days, rallies and close club racing, for both cars and bikes.

The circuit also offers members of the public the chance to get behind the wheel of a host of exciting machinery, such as rally, racing and classic cars, in ‘driving experience’ packages.

For further information, visit www.knockhill.com
Phone 01383 723337
email enquiries@knockhill.co.uk
The largest museum in the area is home to almost 200 historic buses, housed on the site of a former Royal Navy stores depot at Lethalmond, north of Dunfermline.

The Scottish Vintage Bus Museum (SVBM) has been based at the 45-acre site since 1995 and draws a healthy number of visitors, particularly for its special events when the buses are out in action, carrying passengers.

Before the museum came into being, enthusiasts were keen to restore old buses, which they were stored in increasing numbers in farms and various depots in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

A large shed, which could accommodate 40 buses, was eventually opened between Glasgow and Edinburgh in 1986, but it was sold to an expanding dairy firm in 1994 - hence the move to West Fife.

Catering for buses from the 1920s to the 1990s, visitors to Lethalmond can see how the vehicles developed over the decades, from basic A-B city and rural transport to luxurious inter-city coaches.

Run on a voluntary basis, the museum is open every Sunday from the beginning of April to the start of October.

Entrance charge includes a guided tour of the site and storage sheds in a vintage bus, starting and ending at the Exhibition Hall - where visitors can spend as much time as they wish. The Exhibition Hall houses vehicles and artifacts as well as the museum cafe and shop.

In addition to the public areas, the museum has extensive workshops and storage areas for its members.

During the tours, museum volunteers will try to include some of the workshops so visitors can see the effort required to restore and maintain the collection.

Main event each year is the Open Weekend, when the museum tries to get as many exhibits as possible on display in the museum grounds, as well as arranging transport related stalls and visiting vehicles.

There is also a Running Day when, in addition to a free Dunfermline service, there are free round-trips of between 30 and 45 minutes.

www.svbm.org.uk
A growing retail business with a proud local past

One of the longest established businesses among the West Fife Villages is Fairleys, which has occupied the same site in Cairneyhill since 1901.

Founded by James Fairley, the business was one of several nurseries that flourished in the village, specialising in its early days as a potato merchant.

From small beginnings on a strip of land, Fairleys blossomed as trade picked up and further ground was acquired to grow flowers - some 70,000 roses a year - and vegetables.

In those days, much of the hard work on the land was done by Clydesdale horses, which proved a popular sight with villagers and the two-dozen workforce at Fairleys.

As well as tending the nurseries, the loyal employees looked after three large, coal-fired greenhouses which were used to bring on tomatoes and cuttings.

One of the locals working at McDonald’s nursery in the village was John McDonald (no relation), who became foreman at Fairleys.

John expanded Fairley’s and went on to purchase the business in 1958, following the death of James Fairley. Working with his wife, Martha, the business continued to flourish in the McDonald’s ownership.

Son George, who started picking fruit at the nursery as a 12-year-old during his school holidays, joined the business full-time in his early 20s.

Raised in the village, George remembers when Cairneyhill was just a main street - and he could recall everyone’s name when he was
delivering their newspapers!

“I went to the local primary school at the top of the village, which served both Cairneyhill and Crossford, but the building was demolished many years ago.

“I also remember working on the stooks at Mire End Farm and can recall when the village had its own crisp factory.”

Over the years, George saw the gradual shift from growing to retail at Fairleys, with some of nursery land sold off to a developer for housing.

Since the death of John McDonald in 1986, the business has been run by George and his younger brother Ian.

In addition to selling everything from gifts to garden sheds, Fairleys has its own and very popular coffee shop, along with a boutique, La Vida, run by George’s daughter, Laura.

Ian’s son, Alexander, also works in the business, looking after the outside areas.
Friends and Neighbours show community spirit

Friends, family and community are important to people in the West Fife Villages. Saline and Steelend have taken this a bit further to celebrate what is important to their community through the arts.

By Donald Murdoch

In 2010 Saline and Steelend carried out a comprehensive consultation exercise that led to the publishing of a Community Action Plan and the establishment of Saline and Steelend Community Development Trust.

The consultation highlighted the interest in art as a medium to bring people together and to improve the attractiveness of the villages. In turn, this resulted in the 'Friends and Neighbours' project.

The project was the brainchild of two local artists, Marylla Ferguson and Liz Harvey, who were subsequently joined by Ian Holmes-Lewis and Clare Hebbert.

The first part of the project was the creation of two ceramic tile mosaics.

The tiles were designed and made by around 400 members of the local community, starting with the local primary school. The tiles depict
things in the community that were important to people.

Marylla and Liz gave the mosaics a unique touch by assembling the tiles into views seen from Saline and Steelend. They are now displayed in the two villages.

The popularity of the tile-making workshops was such that it was decided to hold an event to celebrate the completion of the mosaics. This involved a workshop making lanterns from willow, supplied by Clare.

The lanterns were then carried on a torchlight procession between the two mosaics, led by Ian’s Sambangra Drumming Group, another initiative that developed from the Community Action Plan.

This celebration event attracted an immense attendance. This gave the group confidence to embark on another ambitious project; the creation of a life-size horse and plough sculpture, made from more willow supplied by Clare.

This reflects the community’s pride in the Barrowman Plough that transformed agriculture in the early 19th century.

Crieff-based artist June McEwan helped local people (on an appallingly wet weekend) to weave the willow to create the sculpture, which now enhances the entrance to Saline.

What started as a one-off project to stimulate community spirit has developed into an ongoing initiative to enhance the community through various art forms, also including music and dance.

The intention is to enhance the path network and the Heritage Trails being promoted by Saline and District Heritage Society through a combination of works on site and events to celebrate the community’s heritage. Details of these can be found on the websites referred to in this book.

The ‘Friends and Neighbours’ project has only been possible due to the hard work of those who participated but Saline and Steelend Community Development Trust would also like to acknowledge the financial contributions made by the Coalfield Communities Regeneration Trust, Comrie Colliery Environmental Trust, Blair House Trust and Fife Council.
The artistic talents of West Fife residents are showcased each year with a well-supported event in Saline.

Attracting hundreds of entries, from all ages, the West Fife Villages Exhibition of Art, Photography and Crafts is held in the village Community Centre and Church Hall in late April or early May.

It has been held since 2006 and came about largely through the enthusiastic efforts of the villager John Crane, who sadly died in 2016.

An ‘open door’ policy has always operated at the show, with artists invited to bring along their exhibits on the Friday before the weekend show.

The exhibition is also very much a community affair involving the Community Council, Horticultural Society, Environmental Group, local WRI, Church and School.
Local businesses have provided the following information. Any business owner who would like to be included should email david@linksmedia.com

**Bed and Breakfast**

Balnacraig Bed and Breakfast, Main Street, Saline KY12 9TL
01383 852 568
e-mail balnacraigbb@gmail.com
Balnacraig offers a choice of two rooms; a twin and a double that may be configured to sleep a family of four.

Bunree Bed and Breakfast, Craigluscar Lane, Dunfermline, KY12 9JB
Info@bunreebandb.co.uk
01383 738 827; 07740 594 984
www.bunreebandb.co.uk

Carneil Farmhouse Bed and Breakfast, Carneil Road, Carnock, KY12 9JJ
01383 850 285

**Self Catering**

'Bramble Brae, Balgownie Mains Farm, Culross, Dunfermline, Fife KY12 8EL
info@bramblebrae.co.uk
07866 739 629
Sleeps eight situated on Balgownie Mains farm outside Culross.
www.bramblebrae.co.uk

Nether Kinneddar Lodge offers self-catering accommodation in a former stables close to the historic Nether Kinneddar House on the edge of Saline.
Contact www.scottish-cottages.co.uk for further details

Yellowscott Country Park, Greenknowes, Kelty, KY4 0JN
01383 839 318 or 08454 682 011
yellowscottcountry@gmail.com
Yellowscott Holiday Lodges offer luxury lodges within 15 minutes drive of many attractions.
www.yellowscottcountry.co.uk

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Single-seater racing at Knockhill
Cherry Tree Lodge, Saline, Dunfermline
KY12 9TA
01383 851059 or 07940421038
email: markandtill@cherrytreelodge.net

Cherry Tree Lodge - nourishing mind, body and soul.
A home for well-being, art and nature, we are a retreat space, a gathering place and a guest house for like-minded folk. You can book a room or the whole house. Secluded, accessible, with stunning views in the heart of Scotland, we offer a tranquil home from which to explore... Come rest a while.

Space
Cherry Tree Lodge is secluded and yet easily accessible.
We offer a tranquil, relaxing space for those exploring the area - business people who want a more personal experience than a hotel or those just wanting to stay a while, a place where you can just "Be."

Guest access
We have five bedrooms to choose from, sleeping 10. There are three seating areas in the house and many options in the grounds. In 2014 we installed a 22m meditation labyrinth - you have use of the meditation room with a selection of guided CDs and, since spring 2015, we have the art studio available for guest use.

Guest interaction
Rather than owners of the place we see ourselves as stewards of the space.
We enjoy having dinner with our guests which we offer on some days.
Our vegetarian food is often described as delicious and we include most dietary requirements.
If you are looking to book the whole house you have probably gathered by now that we are not a "party house", more a home for a group retreat or a similar interest gathering linked to well-being, art and nature. Till and Mark will be in residence and can help you plan your meal requirements whether it is just breakfast you need or full board.

www.cherrytreelodge.net

Limekilns harbour
Cafes / Tea Rooms

Bessie Bar Tea Room, Culross
07742 537301
www.facebook.com/pages/Bessie-Bar-Tea-Room-Culross-Fife/254924144613138

Biscuit Café, 2C Little Sandhaven, Culross.
Open 10-5pm daily
01383 882050

Brightside Cafe, Saline, KY12 8HR
01383 851030
Brightside Cafe is a recently provided facility in the former mansion, Bandrum House, serving fresh coffee and tea, cakes and hot food dishes.

Oakley Cafe, 11A Station Road, Oakley, KY12 9QF.
07444 13 88 93 oakley@email.com
We serve local quality produce and fine sweet treat. We do outside catering for up to 300 people and specialise in smaller home dinner parties where we serve high cuisine in clients’ homes or chosen venues.

Mat Austin was personal yacht chef to Alexei Miller - the third most important politician in Russia and head of Gazprom at that time.
www.oakleycafe.com

Peppermint Bothy, Main Street, Blairhall, KY12 9HQ
01383 853311; 0770103281
We are a small local café serving breakfast and lunches. We also do take-aways and plenty of cake!
We are family run, who all come from Blairhall originally and now Comrie.

The Walled Garden, Righead Farm, Culross, FK10 4AT 07951 530571
Farm shop and café. 10am-5pm, Wed to Sun.

Inns

Red Lion Inn, Culross
01383 880225
Meals. Open 12-9pm daily
www.redlionculross.co.uk/menu

Convenience Stores

Spar and Post Office, 82 Main Street, Cairneyhill
01383 880 353
sparcairneyhill@gmail.com.
Also on Facebook
We are a village shop, supplying groceries, hot and cold filled rolls, Stephen’s pies, pastries, rolls and cakes; Johnston’s the Butcher sausages, black pudding, haggis, steak pies and steak rounds; Puddledub bacon and sausages; greetings cards, wide range of stationery products; wines, spirits; juices, sweets and ice cream. We offer a free home delivery service to disabled and housebound customers. Newspapers and magazines. Post Office services. We are open from 6am to 9pm Monday to Saturday and from 7am to 9pm on Sunday.

Cycles

Hardie Bikes, 86c Main Street, Cairneyhill, KY12 8QU
01383 889088
www.hardie-bikes.com

Ice Cream

Nelson’s of Culross
Blair Mains Farm, KY12 8JW
01383 882138
www.nelsonsofculrossicecream.com
Garages / Filling station

At Nicky’s Garage, Main Street, Cairneyhill. 01383 881700
We are here to help you refuel and get on your way. We provide petrol, diesel, red diesel as well as air, vacuum and car washing facilities. Or why not pop into our shop to pick up those essential car supplies or make use of our Hermes parcel delivery/return service.
We pride ourselves in our freshly made hot and cold food, served all day. We offer a selection of homemade baking, filled rolls, paninis and salad boxes as well as a daily selection of specials including homemade curry, steak pie, macaroni cheese or loaded nachos. Feel free to phone ahead and order your

Arts and Crafts

Culross Pottery and Gallery
www.culrosspottery.com
01383 882050

Graham Harris Graham
Fine art photography.
Housed in the NTS Townhouse, Culross 07494-782-295
Open daily 10am-5pm
www.ghgraham.com

Lallybroch, Culross
Arts and crafts store. 10am-5pm (closed Monday)
https://lallybrochculross.com

Places to Visit

National Trust for Scotland Palace Townhouse Study
01383 880359
Opening: April - October - Please check website for exact dates, hours and prices.
www.nts.org.uk/Visit/Culross

Culross Abbey Ruins
Free and open all year
https://www.historicenvironment.scot/visit-a-place/places/culross-abbey/

Culross Abbey Church
Open to visitors. Free.
www.culrossabbey.co.uk
www.visitscotland.com/info/see-do/culross-abbey-p1390051

Culross Abbey ruins
Fisheries
Balmule Park Fishery, Valley of Balmule, Townhill, Dunfermline, KY12 0RZ
07470 223998
balmulefishery@gmail.com
Balmule is popular venue for bait and fly fishing that is stocked with rainbow, blue and brown trout. It also has a kids’ fun pool and a cafe.
www.balmuleparkfishery.co.uk
Craigmuscar Fishery, Craigluscar Reservoir, Dunfermline, KY12 9HT
01383 732891
craigluscarfishery@icloud.com
https://www.visitscotland.com/info/see-do/craigmuscar-fishery-p1507041
Loch Glow
Kelty
07803839737
www.fisharound.net/location/public/2665/Loch-Glow

Golf
Saline Golf Club, KY12 9LT
01383 852591
Saline Golf Club is a major community hub. As well as a nine-hole course with spectacular views over the Forth, the club hosts regular events and serves great value pub meals and snacks.
Visitors are welcome and anyone wanting a round can usually find a friendly partner at the bar.
Visitors are welcomed to the Thursday evening light-hearted quizzes.
www.salinegc.co.uk

Tulliallan Golf Club, Alloa Road, Kincardine on Forth, FK10 4BB
01259 730396, 01259 731395
Founded in 1902, Tulliallan Golf Club is one of the oldest clubs in Central Scotland and is set in woodland adjacent to the Tulliallan Estate with scenic views of the River Forth, Ochil Hills and the Forth Valley.
Tulliallan Golf Course offers a challenging test of golf, requiring accurate shots in order to score well. Thanks to its excellent drainage, Tulliallan Golf Course is rarely closed. Temporary greens are seldom used and we try to keep playing the full course with normal greens for 52 weeks of the year.
www.tulliallangolf.co.uk

The course also has its own restaurant, The Puttery, which is open to non-members.
www.tulliallangolf.co.uk/the-puttery/

Outdoor activities
Craigmuscar Activities
Craigluscar Farm, The Cottage, Dunfermline KY12 9HT
The place to go for a range of fun and exciting outdoor experiences.
www.craigluscar.co.uk
Corporate events

Broomhall House,
Charlestown, Dunfermline
KY11 3DU
enquire@broomhallhouse.com

From the stately drawing room with its magnificent 18th century French mirrors to the dining room and its splendid fireplace made of the marital bed of James VI, Broomhall House is truly a remarkable place and a wonderful historic venue for private and corporate events. Broomhall hosts board meetings and company ‘away days’, to business celebrations and product launches, utilising the grand interior of the House.

www.broomhallhouse.com

Wedding venues

Windmill Barn, Crombie Point, Dunfermline
KY12 8LN
01383 882458
clare@windmillbarn.co.uk

Windmill Barn had its first wedding in April 2016. It is perfect for relaxed, intimate weddings. The wee barn can seat 86 guests for a wedding breakfast going up to a total of 120 guests in the evening. There are many pretty spots for your outdoor ceremony with the wee barn offering a plan ‘B’ if the weather is poor! The barn comes with wooden tables, a variety of wooden chairs, benches for your ceremony, heating and lighting (includes lots of fairy lights!). There are also a few extras like the PA system, vintage blackboard and barrels which come with the venue.

www.windmillbarn.co.uk

Other organisations

Saline and Steelend are strong communities with active groups organising activities. As well as the Saline and District Heritage Society referred to earlier, Saline and Steelend Community Development Trust has an ongoing “Friends and Family” project that aims to enhance community spirit through the Arts in various forms. An early success was the design, manufacture and installation of tiles to illustrate both communities’ heritage and environment.

Up to date information on events and activities can be found on the Saline and Steelend (www.salinesteelend.org) and West Fife Villages (www.westfifevillages.co.uk) websites. Details are also available from the Community Bulletin available from the Village Store and Saline Golf Club.

Saline Parish has an interesting history that is described in more detail in John Crane’s book, “Of Cabbages and Kings”. Copies can be obtained from the Saline museum or by contacting Saline and Steelend Community Council via the Saline and Steelend web site (www.salinesteelend.org).

West Fife Enterprise is one of the very few non-government organisations in Fife contributing to employability inclusion and economic regeneration.

westfifeenterprise.org.uk/about-wfe

Historic information

The ruins of a distillery stand at Kennetpans, north of Kincardine. Information about their fascinating history can be found at www.kennetpans.info

This Directory is being updated and expanded in the ebook version of this booklet. Please visit www.westfifevillages.co.uk for up-to-date information.
Thanks also to:

Colton Trust
Comrie Colliery Environmental Trust
Inner Forth Landscape Initiative