

Dunfermline  
& West Fife

# YOUR GUIDE TO WELLBEING THROUGH HERITAGE

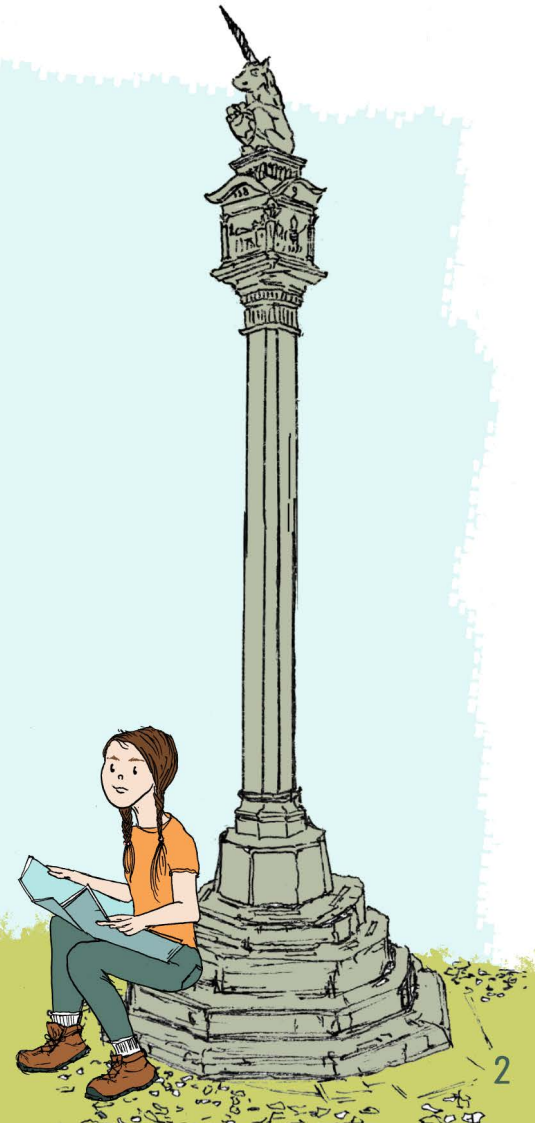




# CONTENTS

Introduction	03
Monarchs, Mines and Music- The History and Heritage of West Fife	05
Heritage and Wellbeing- The Value of the Past for Ourselves, Our Communities and Our Future	07
Map	09
Opportunities to Connect	11
Opportunities to Be Active	15

Opportunities to Take Notice	19
Opportunities to Learn	21
Opportunities to Give	25
Helpful Resources and References	30

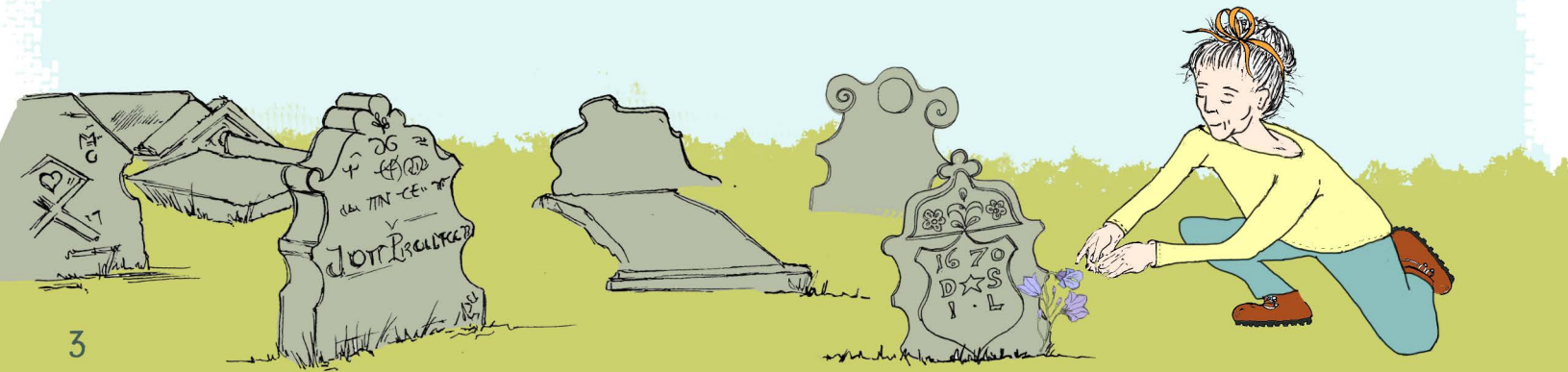


# INTRODUCTION

*Whatever our relationship is with the heritage and history of West Fife, we can get closer, learn more, enjoy more and care more.*

Joining local groups, learning about the past, volunteering or simply taking a quiet walk in a historic landscape, can help increase self-confidence and resilience, and build social connections. It can also help to provide a legacy for future generations by improving the quality of the places we inhabit.

This booklet is part of the Wellbeing Through Heritage Project and aims to provide you with a guide to the many ways in which you can engage with the heritage and history of Dunfermline and the West Fife Villages.



The booklet includes;

A summary of the many different heritage and history activities currently taking place in Dunfermline and the West Fife Villages listed under the 5 Ways to Wellbeing categories;

## CONNECT, BE ACTIVE, TAKE NOTICE, LEARN and GIVE

A map of key heritage and history locations in Dunfermline and West Fife.



# Monarchs, Mines and Music- the History and Heritage of West Fife

With its haunting ruins, bustling harbours and historic towns and villages, West Fife has played a crucial role in the nation's story as an area of royal, religious, commercial, industrial and cultural significance.

## ROYALTY

With connections dating back to the 11th century, the region has been a frequent home for the Scottish and British royal houses, many of whom were buried in Dunfermline Abbey.



## PILGRIM WAY AND A VIBRANT SACRED HISTORY



Home to the shrines of St Margaret (Dunfermline) and St Serf (Culross), the region has a spiritual tradition stretching into the distant past and a fine selection of sacred places and buildings.

## CARNEGIE

The influence of the renowned philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, born in a weaver's cottage in Dunfermline in 1835, can still be seen across West Fife today in buildings like the Dunfermline and Carnegie Library and green spaces like Pittencrief Park.



## HISTORIC PLACES & BUILDINGS

From the medieval centre of the 'Old Grey Town' of Dunfermline to the historic cores of Kincardine, Culross, Charlestown and Limekilns, the region abounds with ancient places and listed buildings.



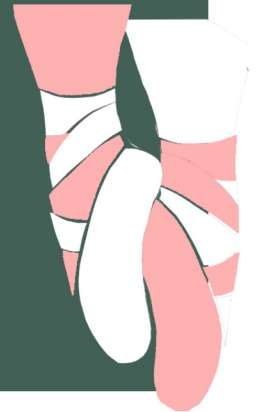
## INDUSTRY

With a strong tradition of textile and linen production, coal mining, paper making and ship building, industry has, and continues to, play a crucial role in shaping the landscape and the lives of communities across the region.



## SONG & DANCE

From medieval poets to ballet dancers like Moira Shearer, West Fife has always had a significant musical and cultural influence.



*So, whether you are interested in medieval saints, mining heritage or 20th century music, this booklet will help you identify the pathways for connecting with the heritage of West Fife by yourself or with like-minded others.*

# Heritage and Wellbeing - The Value of the Past for Ourselves, Our Communities and Our Future

Research by UNESCO has shown the key role that engagement with heritage activities can have in generating positive emotions and a sense of belonging, all of which are strongly connected with

fostering well-being. As well as helping us to **CONNECT**, the activities and places outlined in this booklet provide opportunities to

## BE ACTIVE, TAKE NOTICE, LEARN and GIVE

These are the '5 Ways to Wellbeing' recommended by the NHS for improving our mental and physical health.





# YOU

Engaging with the past and the historic landscape through volunteering, learning, sharing knowledge or simply enjoying a good walk, contributes to our sense of belonging, connection to place and cultural identity, all elements strongly interconnected with mental health and well-being.



# YOUR COMMUNITY

Understanding and engaging with its heritage contributes to a community's collective memory, pride of place, and social cohesion and can be a catalyst for economic growth. Caring for and improving accessibility to the historic landscapes and green spaces also improves the quality of the places we inhabit.



# OUR FUTURE

History fosters engaged citizens and communities. Understanding the past and including it in discussions about present day challenges, fosters engaged citizens and communities. Saving and preserving the documents, objects, stories and places from the past also provides a vital legacy for future generations.



*So, getting involved in some of the activities outlined in the rest of this booklet can be good for you, your community and for future generations.*

## CONNECT

- Dunfermline Family History Group
- Dunfermline Historical Society
- Friends of Pittencrieff Park
- Dunfermline Carnegie Library & Galleries
- Andrew Carnegie Birthplace Museum
- Abbot House

## BE ACTIVE

- Walking Tours of Dunfermline
- Pittencrieff Park (the Glen)
- The Paton's of Dunfermline & Woovers' Alley
- Tombstones & Tales at Dunfermline Abbey Churchyards

## TAKE NOTICE

- Pittencrieff Park
- Dunfermline Abbey Nave

## LEARN

- Dunfermline Family History Group
- Dunfermline Historical Society
- Dunfermline Men's Shed
- Dunfermline Carnegie Library & Galleries
- Andrew Carnegie Birthplace Museum

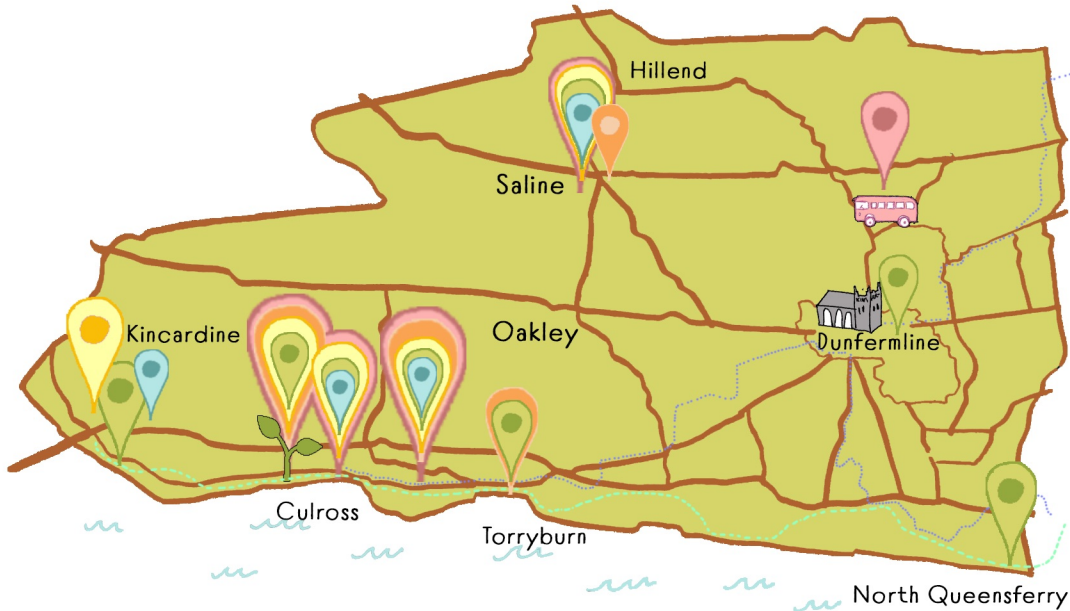
## GIVE

- Dunfermline Carnegie Library & Galleries
- Andrew Carnegie Birthplace Museum
- The Paton's of Dunfermline & Woovers' Alley

# DUNFERMLINE CITY



# WEST FIFE



## CONNECT

- Saline & District Heritage Society
- Kincardine History Society
- Valleyfield Estate
- Culross Palace & Garden
- GROW West Fife

## BE ACTIVE

- West Fife Walks (Saline, Torry Bay, Valleyfield and Culross)
- Fife Pilgrim Way (Culross or N Queensferry to Dunfermline)
- Coastal Path (Kincardine to Limekilns and Limekilns to Burntisland)
- GROW West Fife
- Valleyfield Estate
- Saline Glen

## TAKE NOTICE

- Valleyfield Estate
- Saline Glen
- GROW West Fife
- West Fife Walks
- Torry Bay

## LEARN

- Saline & District Heritage Society
- Kincardine History Society
- Valleyfield Estate
- Culross Palace and Garden

## GIVE

- GROW West Fife
- Culross Palace
- Valleyfield Estate
- Saline & District Heritage Society
- Scottish Vintage Bus Museum/ Lathalmond Railway Museum

# OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT



*Whether you are interested in attending a talk at a local history society, helping to restore an ancient garden or simply joining a group for a walk, West Fife has a number of welcoming and inclusive groups and places that will help you to CONNECT with likeminded people.*

## HISTORY AND HERITAGE ORGANISATIONS

- **Dunfermline Family History Group**

Have you got family story to tell? This group specialises in encouraging and supporting family history research, with monthly meetings including workshops and guest speakers, and an annual outing. They meet on the last Wednesday of the month from September – May in The Music Institute in Dunfermline.

- **Scottish Vintage Bus Museum/  
Lathalmond Railway Museum**

Members of both museums take part in the restoration and display of vintage buses and trains.

- **Dunfermline Historical Society**

The society hosts a programme of talks from September to May, and group visits ranging from day trips to week-end away, in April and June. Meetings are held in the Abbey Church Hall, Abbey Park Place, Dunfermline, on the third Thursday of each month and start at 7:30 pm.

- **Kincardine History Society**

The society holds meetings in the Community Centre, Anderson Lane, Kincardine from 2.00pm to 4.00pm once a month from October to March, with talks on local and not-so-local history.



- **Friends of Pittencrieff Park**

The Friends meet regularly to discuss all things Pittencrief related. Meetings are held in the classroom, part of the greenhouse.

- **West Fife Woodlands Group**

West Fife Woodlands is a community group dedicated to the preservation, enhancement and accessibility of West Fife's woodland areas. Join their active Facebook group to find out how to get involved.

- **Saline & District Heritage Society**

The society has its own museum, hosts regular talks on Wednesday evenings at Saline Church Hall, and explores the heritage of the area with local historians and archaeologists.

# MUSEUMS, LIBRARIES AND HERITAGE ORGANISATIONS

- **Culross Palace & Garden**

Events and activities including themed walks and tours are regularly held at site which is run by National Trust for Scotland.

- **Dunfermline Carnegie Library & Galleries**

In addition to its exhibitions, regular events are held at the Library and Museum.

- **Andrew Carnegie Birthplace Museum**

Regular events are held at the museum, from family activities to chess challenges.

- **Fife Coast & Countryside Trust**

Get involved in river and marine habitat restoration with the FCCT.

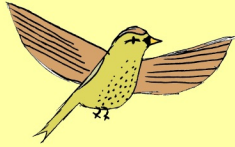
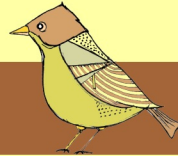
- **Abbot House, Dunfermline**

Learn new skills, bring out your artistic side and have lots of fun at the regular creative workshops held in Abbot House, Dunfermline.

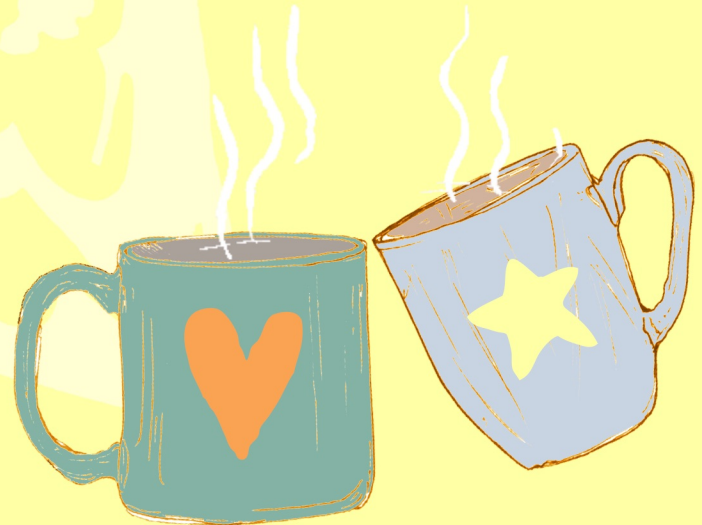
- **GROW West Fife**

Meet people and learn new skills with Grow West Fife, a community vegetable garden based at Blair Castle near Culross.

# MY HERITAGE CONNECTION CONNECT



“I really enjoy the range activities  
and having the opportunity  
to meet like-minded people.”



# OPPORTUNITIES TO BE ACTIVE

*Regular exercise is great for our physical and mental wellbeing. From walking and cycling trails, to gardening, restoration and conservation projects, West Fife is full of heritage and history opportunities that will help you to get ACTIVE.*



## WALKING AND CYCLING TRAILS

- **Saline Glen**

A range of short, medium and long walks have been developed by the Saline and District Heritage Society and are available on the Saline and Steelend Community Council website.

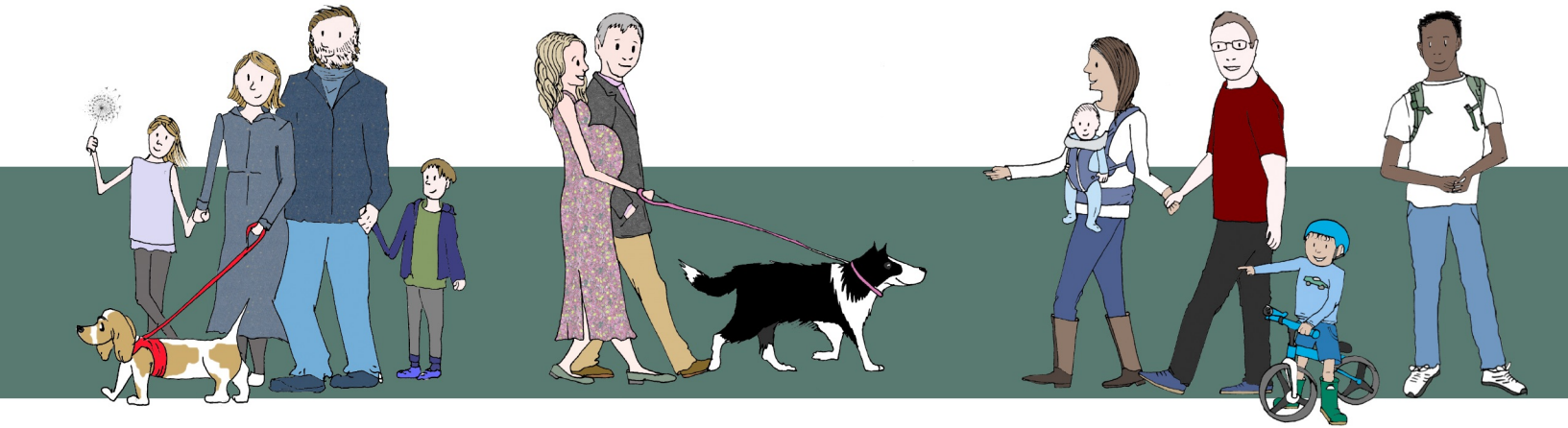
- **West Fife Walks**

A selection of routes around Saline, Torry Bay, Valleyfield and Culross are available on the Fife Walking website.

- **Follow in the footsteps of Medieval Pilgrims**

The Fife Pilgrim Way follows the route taken by countless pilgrims in the Middle Ages to Dunfermline and St Andrews. Two sections of roughly 9 miles, beginning in Culross and North Queensferry pass through West Fife and finish in Dunfermline.





### Coastal Walks •

The Fife Coastal Path has two sections (from Kincardine to Limekilns and Limekilns to Burntisland) that pass through West Fife and provide a fascinating glimpse of regions industrial past.

### A Walk in the Woods •

Forestry and Land Scotland has three woodland trails of varying lengths in West Fife featured on their website.

### Walking tours of Dunfermline •

Take a walk around historic Dunfermline with one of six historic and cultural tours of the town.

# ARCHAEOLOGY, GARDEN RESTORATION AND LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION

- **Saline & District Heritage Society**

The society holds regular community archaeology activities.

- **Tombstones and Tales at Dunfermline Abbey Churchyards**

Established in 2019 as part of a community project, this friendly group are shining a light on forgotten stories from the Dunfermline Abbey Churchyards. Join their Facebook group to find out how you can get involved.

- **The Paton's of Dunfermline & Wooers' Alley**

This dynamic project aims to celebrate the achievements of this 19th century artistic local family and improve the green space which was the location of their former home at Wooers' Alley.

- **Valleyfield Estate**

The Valleyfield Heritage Group and the West Fife Woodland Group have a variety of ongoing projects offering volunteer opportunities. Recent initiatives have seen volunteers repairing footpaths.

- **GROW West Fife**

Get involved in gardening and the restoration of stables and greenhouses with other volunteers at Blair Castle.

- **Fife Coast & Countryside Trust**

The FCCT provides opportunities to get involved with conservation and habitat restoration.

- **Friends of Pittencrieff Park**

The Friends engage in gardening and other conservation activities in the Glen.



“Keep moving, be active and give yourself a hug.  
Perfect outdoor setting, I love being a warrior too.”



# TAKE NOTICE



*West Fife's woodland, parks, museums and historic buildings provide quiet and calm spaces where we can get away from the distractions of the modern world and focus on ourselves*

## OUTDOOR AND INDOOR SPACES

- **Dunfermline Abbey Nave**
  - This ancient building in the heart of Dunfermline provides an ideal place for reflection and contemplation.
- **Pittencrief Park**
  - The park has lots of quiet places and routes, particularly around the Glen.
- **Torry Bay**
  - The Fife Coastal Path and the wider bay are full of quiet places and routes
- **Valleyfield Estate**
  - The woodland is a suitable setting for mindfulness activities.
- **Woodlands**
  - Forestry and Land Scotland has three woodland trails of varying lengths in West Fife.
- **West Fife Walks**
  - There are many routes and quiet places to be discovered around Saline, Torry Bay, Valleyfield and Culross.
- **Saline Glen**
  - Saline Glen and Kirkland House gardens are ideal settings for mindfulness activities.



## MY HERITAGE CONNECTION

### TAKE NOTICE

“I like to sit in Abbot House garden with a cup of tea and look over to Dunfermline Abbey. Listening to the bees buzzing and the bells ringing in the distance you can feel the history in this place, and it makes me feel calm and connected.”



# LEARN



*LEARN more about this fascinating region and its people, develop new skills or get involved in wildlife conservation.*

## LOCAL HISTORY AND HERITAGE SOCIETIES

- **Saline & District Heritage Society**

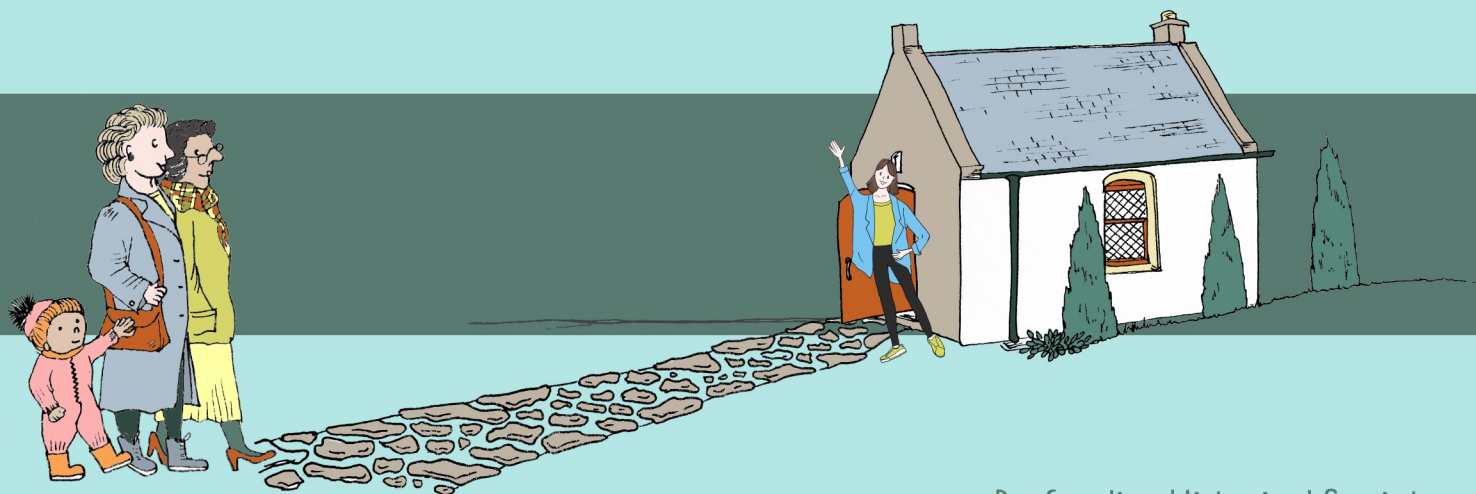
The society has regular meetings, online and in person, the museum requires volunteers, in researching and setting up displays and members take part in research projects on the local area.

- **Kincardine History Society**

The society hosts talks on local and not-so-local history in the Community Centre, Anderson Lane, Kincardine from 2.00pm to 4.00pm once a month from October to March..

- **Dunfermline Family History Group**

Have you got family story to tell? This group specialises in encouraging and supporting family history research, with monthly meetings including workshops and guest speakers, and an annual outing. They meet on the last Wednesday of the month from September – May in The Music Institute in Dunfermline.



### Dunfermline Historical Society •

The society hosts a programme of talks from September to May, and group visits ranging from day trips to week-end away, in April and June. Meetings are held in the Abbey Church Hall, Abbey Park Place, Dunfermline, on the third Thursday of each month and start at 7:30 pm.

### Valleyfield Heritage Project •

This active community group holds monthly meetings at Valleyfield Community Club, with a focus on mining history.

# LIFE-LONG LEARNING

*A number of projects and places across Fife offer the opportunity to develop skills in conservation and restoration or directed learning.*

- **Andrew Carnegie Birthplace Museum**

The museum has a 'History at Home' section with resources (mainly aimed at schools) and descriptions of its collections, as well as holding regular learning and skills events on site.

- **Dunfermline Carnegie Library & Galleries**

Research family and local history with the extensive collection of records, maps and photographs, in the Local Studies Reading Room.

- **Dunfermline Men's Shed**

Part of the nationwide movement the 'Shed' meet at the Steadings in Pittencrieff Park and offer informal learning and skill-sharing as well as encouraging individual pursuits and community projects.

- **GROW West Fife**

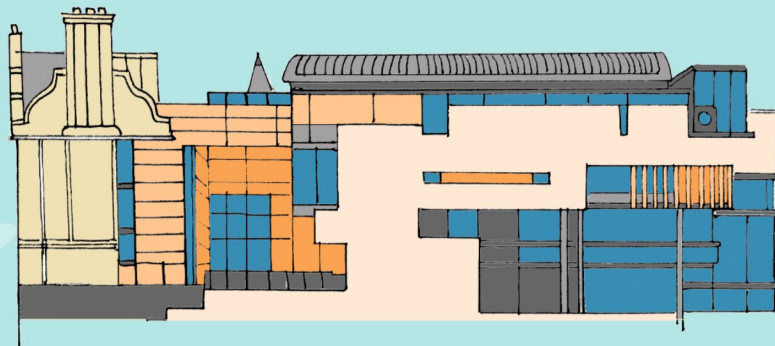
Learn traditional building and gardening skills as part of restoration project at the walled garden in Blair Castle.

- **Fife Coast & Countryside Trust**

The FCCT runs outdoor adult learning activities on Sustainability and Coastal safety among other subjects.

- **Culross Palace & Garden**

Volunteer roles at the palace provide opportunities for learning local history and customer service skills.





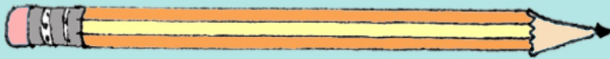
# MY HERITAGE CONNECTION

## KEEP LEARNING

“A lovely relaxing class, I found the technique quite challenging and should be become easier with practice.”



“Really enjoyed it, it was very therapeutic and lovely to learn a new craft.”



“An excellent opportunity to relax and create a piece of art in a relaxed non-judgemental positive environment. I will encourage others to attend.”

“Enjoyable activity, inspiring and motivating. Therapeutic and very focused.”



# OPPORTUNITIES TO GIVE

*Giving your time, skills and passion as a volunteer is a wonderful way of meeting people and contributing to your community. From one-off projects to regular roles, there are volunteer opportunities in West Fife to suit everyone.*

## RESTORING HERITAGE SITES, GARDENS AND LANDSCAPES

- **GROW West Fife**  
Get involved in gardening and the restoration of stables and greenhouses with other volunteers at Blair Castle.
- **Fife Coast & Countryside Trust**  
Numerous volunteer opportunities in conservation and habitat restoration are available with the trust.





- **Valleyfield Estate**

The Valleyfield Heritage Group and the West Fife Woodland Group have a variety of ongoing projects offering volunteer opportunities. Recent initiatives have seen volunteers repairing footpaths.

- **The Paton's of Dunfermline & Woovers' Alley**

This dynamic project aims to celebrate the achievements of this 19th century artistic local family and improve Woovers' Alley, the green space which was the location of their former home. Up-to-date information can be found on The Amelia Trail and the Patons of Dunfermline Facebook page.

# VOLUNTEERING AT INSTITUTIONS

- **Saline & District Heritage Society**

The society's museum in the old session house requires volunteers, in researching and setting up displays, and opening to the public.

- **Culross Palace & Garden**

Volunteers are involved in admissions, guiding and conservation at the palace.

- **Andrew Carnegie Birthplace Museum**

The museum encourages volunteers, especially those involved in Duke of Edinburgh and other schemes.

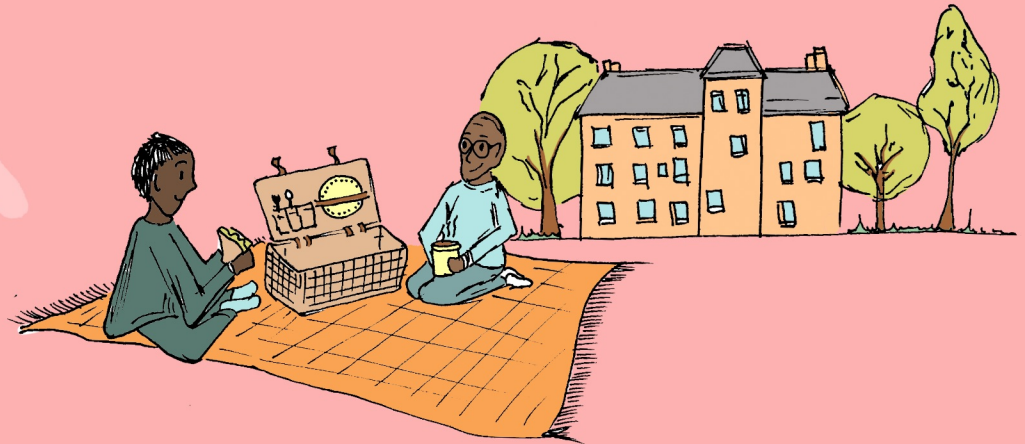
- **Dunfermline Carnegie Library & Galleries**

There are various opportunities to volunteer including research at Dunfermline Local Studies, leading groups on short local walks, and welcoming visitors to venues.



# MY HERITAGE CONNECTION GIVE

“Giving my time to volunteer in the Glen plays a part in keeping me fit, active and helps maintain my wellbeing. When the visitors say they appreciate our efforts it's a bonus!”



## Helpful Resources and References

# HISTORY AND HERITAGE SOCIETIES AND GROUPS IN WEST FIFE

- Saline & District Heritage Society; [www.salinedistrictheritagesociety.wordpress.com/](http://www.salinedistrictheritagesociety.wordpress.com/)
- Kincardine History Society; [www.kincardinehistory.com](http://www.kincardinehistory.com).
- Dunfermline Family History Group; [www.dfhg.org.uk](http://www.dfhg.org.uk)
- Dunfermline Historical Society; [www.dunfermlinehistsoc.org.uk](http://www.dunfermlinehistsoc.org.uk)
- Friends of Pittencrieff Park; [www.friendsofpittencrieffpark.org.uk](http://www.friendsofpittencrieffpark.org.uk)
- Scottish Vintage Bus Museum/ Lathalmond Railway Museum; [www.svbm.online](http://www.svbm.online)
- Dunfermline Men's Shed; [www.dunfermlineshed.org.uk](http://www.dunfermlineshed.org.uk)

## HERITAGE AND WELLBEING

- For more information on the '5 Steps to Wellbeing' see; [www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/five-steps-to-mental-wellbeing/](http://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/five-steps-to-mental-wellbeing/)
- UNESCO, 'Heritage, Mental Health and Wellbeing Brief Report', Heritage and Our Sustainable Future Series, Issue 6 ; 5th November 2021- Heritage, Mental Health and Well-Being – UNESCO UK
- Pennington A, Jones R, Bagnall A-M, South J, Corcoran R (2018) The impact of historic places and assets on community wellbeing - a scoping review. London: What Works Centre for Wellbeing
- History Relevance Campaign, 'Value of History', 2021, Value of History Statement | History Relevance
- Historic England, 'Our Wellbeing and Heritage Strategy' , 19 May 2022, Our Wellbeing and Heritage Strategy | Historic England

## MUSEUMS, LIBRARIES AND HERITAGE ORGANISATIONS

- Abbot House, Dunfermline; [www.abbothouse.org](http://www.abbothouse.org)
- Andrew Carnegie Birthplace Museum; [www.carnegiebirthplace.com](http://www.carnegiebirthplace.com)
- Culross Palace & Garden; [www.nts.org.uk](http://www.nts.org.uk)
- Dunfermline Carnegie Library & Galleries; [www.onfife.com](http://www.onfife.com)
- Fife Coast & Countryside Trust; [www.fifecoastandcountryside.co.uk](http://www.fifecoastandcountryside.co.uk)
- GROW West Fife; [www.growwestfife.org](http://www.growwestfife.org).
- Historic Environment Scotland; [www.historicenvironment.scot](http://www.historicenvironment.scot)
- Walking tours of Dunfermline; [www.dunfermline.tours](http://www.dunfermline.tours)

Supported by  
**The National Lottery**<sup>®</sup>  
through the Heritage Lottery Fund

Le faic bhon  
**Chrannchur Nàiseanta**  
tro Mhaoin-Dualchais a' Chrannchur



CREDITS:  
Dr. Tom Turpie  
David Hicks

DESIGN AND ILLUSTRATION:  
Jess Leech – The Ricketty Desk

[www.wellbeingwestfife.com](http://www.wellbeingwestfife.com)

