

THE VILLAGE HUG



Connecting Community Creatively

Issue 14 – 21st August 2020

(God said) “I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth.”
Genesis Chapter 9, Verse 13

BUMPER FINAL ISSUE!

INTERVIEW *with James McSporran*

In 2008, I left Torrance and became an outdoor instructor at the Abernethy Trust. This basically meant going out to play every day in the sea, mountains and rivers. The most rewarding part was coaching people to enjoy adventures. Someone might arrive unable to ski, and 5 days later, they'd be flying around the Cairngorms, despite the horizontal sleet, icy runs and horrendous winds!

After 6 years, I moved to London to study Theology and Leadership with a focus on Music, through Holy Trinity, Brompton (HTB), the church that started the Alpha course. London church life was different to anything I had seen before – at that time HTB had 4 church sites (excluding church plants), 11 services and a congregation of 6000. Anyone who has lived in London will tell you of the buzz, and the “anything is possible” mind-set. It was great.

After London, I moved to Edinburgh, to lead the youth work at P's & G's church. This was 3 years of working with great young people and leading a brilliant team of youth workers. (And bumping into Torrance young people at Soul Survivor.)

Eventually, through a friend and mentor, I moved into business, and became a Leadership Development Consultant. Now 3 years in, my speciality is applying psychology to business behaviours and relationships. I work with Senior Leaders, to develop their team culture and leadership effectiveness. Sometimes I wonder if they'll realise I'm an imposter - just a wee Torrance boy who should be on his way to a game of rounders in the park, or collecting glass bottles to get 20p from the shop!

My main lesson learnt, is that often work, or even personal struggles, can be helped by embracing difficult conversations (that we are all good at avoiding). The best leaders find the courage to have the conversation that addresses what's going on and creates a new way of moving forward. It's not easy, but it is rewarding.

Now, I'm married to Rachel, living in Edinburgh (but one day we'll move to Belfast) and running my own consultancy.

If you want to know more, you can contact James via his website
www.mcsporranconsulting.co.uk



Nethybridge, Cairngorms



HTB Church, London



P's & G's Church, Edinburgh

WALKING ROUTE *by David & Janice Russell*

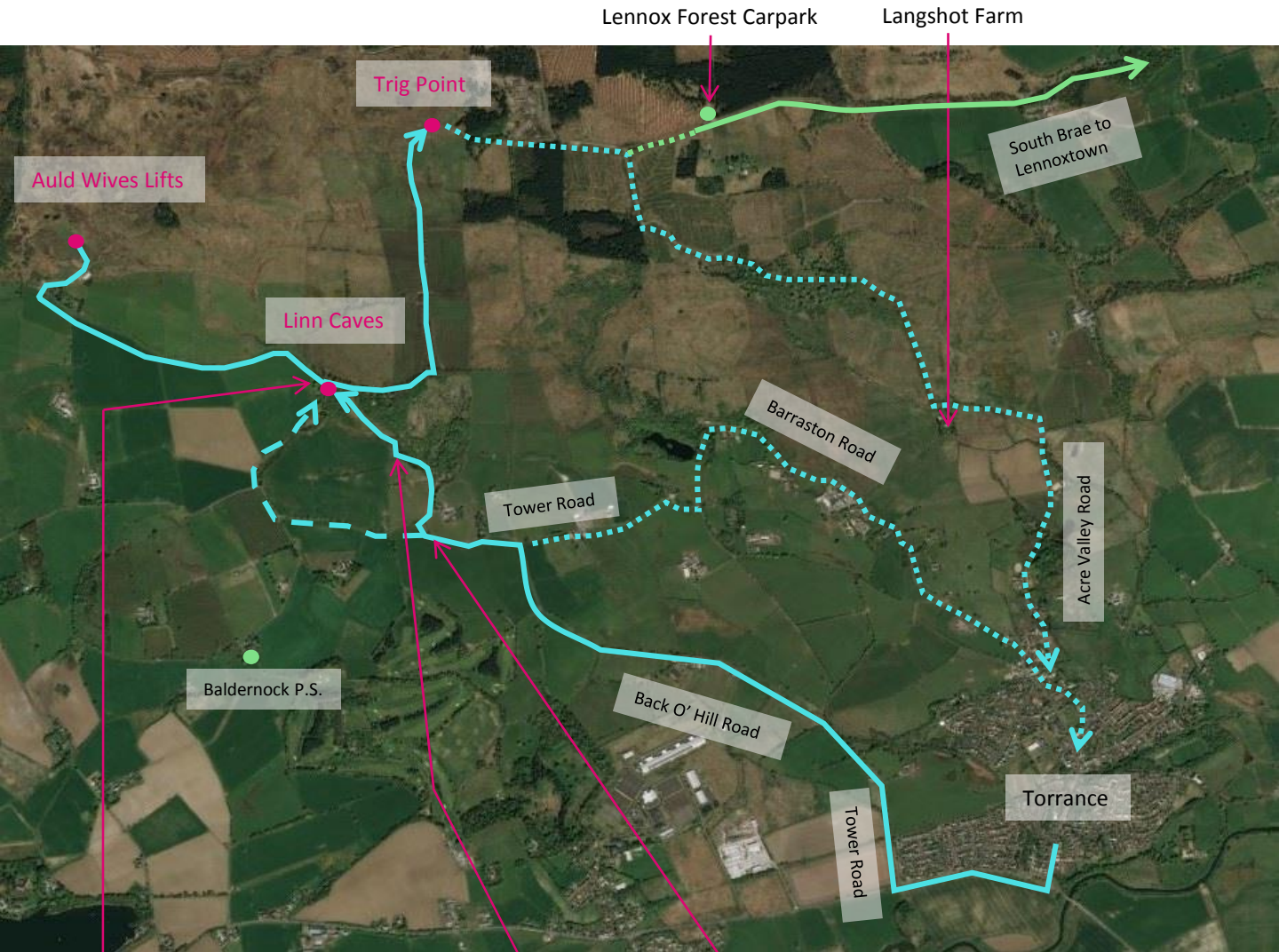
We have been in Torrance 35 years and often heard of the Linn caves, Trig Point and the Auld Wives Lifts but we've never been to any of them until now!

Turn off Tower Road at East Blairskaitth Farm (the one with the horses). Go through the quarry, it's a good road until you come to junction. A small path leads to The Linn caves about 200yards to left.

To go to the Auld Wives Lifts continue along the single track road from the caves. Pass two houses on your right and turn right up the track in front of the third house. The stones are located further up the track on the left after the farm buildings.

To go to the Trig Point, from the caves go east along a road with a sign post for Lennox Forest; follow this road north through about four gates and it will take you to Trig Point.

You can chose to return to Torrance by the route you came, or by completing the 'Barraston Loop' or by following the tracks through the sapling forest to Acre Valley Road.



The caves are located in these trees



Follow the path past this old quarry

Turn off Tower Road at the East Blairskaitth Farm or follow the blue dashed line option on single track



The Auld Wives Lifts

The Auld Wives Lifts are rock formations in a natural amphitheatre.

The stones bear graffiti going back to the Victorian era and carvings that are possibly Celtic and Iron Age in origin.

Their name is thought to be from a centuries-old local myth involving 'witches' throwing the stones into place.

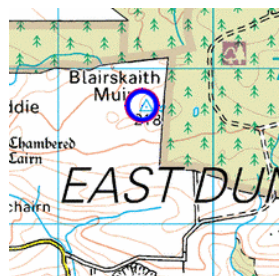


The Linn Caves



The Linn Caves are former man-made lime mines behind a natural waterfall.

The Trig Point Near Torrance



Trig points are typically concrete pillars and were erected by the Ordnance Survey.

The process of placing trig points on top of prominent hills and mountains began in 1935 to assist in the accurate re-triangulation of Great Britain.

The pillar at Blairkaith Muir was completed in February 1946 costing £10.17s.0d.

There are wonderful views all around, including South over Glasgow and North as far as Loch Lomond on a clear day.

Unplugged by Eric Clapton.

About the album –

Unplugged was recorded in 1992 in front of a live studio audience in Windsor and aired as the first episode of MTV's third series of their show, Unplugged. The premise of the show was simple: take musicians who normally play electronically and have them "unplug" to perform their favourite songs acoustically to a small group of fans in a studio setting. Eric Clapton was the most successful act the show ever had. He performed a mixture of his most famous songs, some of which were changed dramatically from their originals, new songs he was working on and several classic blues songs which had been early influences on him when he started playing guitar. To me, this album is the complete package in learning everything about playing and performing with a guitar. Every novice and expert guitarist alike can benefit from it.



How it sits in the artist's career –

This album was one of the most significant land marks in Eric Clapton's career for several reasons. Most notably, he was recovering from the death of his son in 1991, which influenced many of the new songs that he shared with the audience that night, the most famous of which was 'Tears in Heaven'. Having watched footage of the performance, Eric is visibly moved by the rousing response he received after debuting the song. Due to the passionate song writing and sheer talent that is consistently displayed throughout the record, Unplugged quickly became Eric Clapton's best selling album of his career.

Influence –

As is probably rather evident by now, this album has influenced me tremendously. My first memory of this album was a copy of my dad's I found in a pile of CD's as a child. I can still remember sitting in my room with it playing on my CD player and thinking "I want to do that". As I started taking guitar lessons, without asking my teacher, I was given a few songs from the album to learn. The beauty of some of the songs on this album, such as "San Francisco Bay Blues" or "Nobody Knows You When You're Down and Out" is that they were simple. Eric had learnt them as a boy and played them as part of the album purely for his own enjoyment as he had many fond memories playing them in the early days of his career. "Running on Faith" is a particularly special song to me as I performed it at a friend's wedding for their first dance.

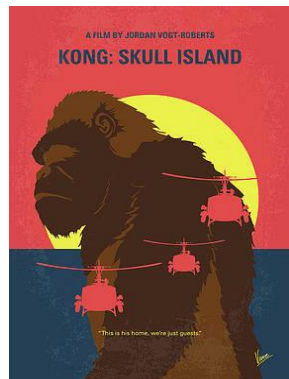
Favourite song –

It is difficult to pick a favourite song from this album as many of the songs have different connections to me that I consider important. However, if I was to pick only one that I could listen to again and again, it would have to be "Layla". The version on Unplugged is far flung from the original, but it is because of this that I love it. Eric transformed the established rock song into an emotive, soulful and rhythmical cover. He sang the song one octave lower than the original which added an authenticity to his sound that he has carried with him since.

Kong: Skull Island – Cert 12, ITV2 – Saturday 22nd August, 20:00

This is definitely not a film to be watched for character, but is a fun big budget summer blockbuster in its own right. Kong: Skull Island is a return to form for the giant ape. What’s more interesting is the film shies away from old King Kong tropes such as showing him on the top of the Empire State Building, although he does smash many an aircraft out of the sky. What gives this film its ultimate strength is the fact that instead of taking Kong out of his home like the other iterations have, we spend the majority of the film on Kong’s turf, where he has the high ground, which makes for some interesting action scenes.

3/5 Village Hugs



Avengers: Age of Ultron – Cert 12, BBC One – Saturday 22nd August, 23:20

Joss Whedon reluctantly returned to direct the sequel to the original Avengers Assemble and it shows. Although this is by no means a bad film, it definitely doesn’t live up to the original, and ultimately feels like a stepping stone to set up better films further down the line. That being said, all the chemistry between the heroes is still here, which leads to some great character moments, often from characters you wouldn’t expect. James Spader is also excellent as Ultron, although the character is left a tiny bit short. The film overall saves itself with excellent visual effects, good chemistry between the main characters and thrilling action scenes.

3/5 Village Hugs



The Secret Life of Pets – Cert U, ITV2 – Sunday 23rd August, 18:20

The Secret Life of Pets is a film that is without a doubt aimed at younger audiences, although there is still enjoyment to be had for adults as well. A lot of the jokes land where they need to, and Kevin Hart brings a flare of energy to the film that keeps the audience engaged, since watching a fluffy white rabbit lead an underground resistance of ex-pets is as amusing as it sounds. Although the film’s focus is on Max and his relationship with his new adopted brother Duke, one of the best characters in the film is Chloe, played by Lake Bell; her sarcastic demeanor is portrayed perfectly and gives the character a certain edge the others lack.

3/5 Village Hugs



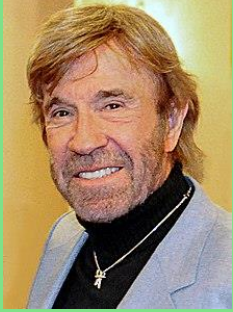
District 9 – Cert 15, Sony Movie Channel – Sunday 23rd August, 01:35

Another one for the night owls, District 9 is a Found Footage film truly like no other. While most other Found Footage films are thrillers or horrors, this one is a science fiction/action film featuring Sharlto Copley as Wikus Van Der Merwe, a government worker who is framed and hunted by his wife’s dad, a military commander desperate to catch him after Wikus is infected by an alien disease. As he evades the military and the police, he finds help from an alien refugee residing inside the extra-terrestrial shanty town District 9, and discovers government plans to shift the aliens into what is effectively a concentration camp. With this new information, he helps the aliens in finding ways to rebel against the government.

4/5 Village Hugs



Do you know what the connection is between these people?



Chuck Norris



Snoop Dog



Quentin Tarantino



Bo Derek

They all live in Torrance... California!

If you've ever put 'Torrance' into a search engine or a digital map looking for something related to our village, you may have inadvertently come across Torrance, California.

It's a small city located in the South Western region of Los Angeles County, around 20 miles from Downtown Los Angeles.

The 145,400 population enjoy a moderate year-round climate with just 12.55 inches of rain per year.

The town was founded in 1911 by real estate developer Jared Sidney Torrance.

Does anyone fancy setting up a twinning and exchange programme with Torrance, CA, and Torrance, East Dunbartonshire?! ... no, seriously!



5 things to do in Torrance, California

1. Old Town Torrance – enjoy the a walk around the Art Deco buildings and a coffee bar or the old brewery.
2. Western Museum of Flight – explore California's aerospace history at Torrance Airport.
3. Alpine Village – the place to go for German food and shopping.
4. Torrance County Beach – take in the 1.5 miles of white sands.
5. Madrona Marsh Preserve – see this natural oasis and visitor centre in the heart of urban Torrance.



In June 2012, I was 18 and had just completed my first year at University studying Product Design Engineering. I left Torrance for the first time when I got a fantastic opportunity to move to Coventry for a summer internship at Jaguar Land Rover. It was exciting but not the most obvious of choices for me, since I have never had any real passion for cars – as was shown when in my first week I had to ask my boss what a saloon car was!

My education continued at Jaguar Land Rover with two further summer internships and then joining the Graduate scheme once I completed my degree. The internships were invaluable for me, showing me what I was working toward in my degree and how I could see a career ahead of me in an industry I would normally never have considered. I worked across many departments, which helped me to understand the complexity of designing and manufacturing the car, and I quickly found my niche in a department called Vehicle Package. This team acted as the problem solvers to physically fit together components from other departments whilst also taking into consideration ergonomics – the customer experience. This is where I contributed to the design of the car, not necessarily testing the 0-60mph speed or the efficiency of the engine: as a woman of 160cm, would I be able to climb into a Range Rover gracefully? As a woman in engineering, I often have a different perspective and not just due to my shorter stance. Since 90% of my colleagues were men, I have learnt what a different approach I would typically take. Working in engineering has never been a personal challenge to me (I wanted to go to Art School) but I have enjoyed making a place for myself in a typically male-dominated industry.

When I was an Undergraduate Product Designer, Dyson was always the dream company to work for. I was delighted at the start of 2018 when I had an exciting opportunity to move from Jaguar Land Rover to join the new Automotive Department at Dyson. The team was developing a brand-new electric car from scratch and I was to lead the design of the trunk and 3rd row seating for the vehicle. I loved the change in dynamic between the companies: from experienced, process-driven at Jaguar Land Rover to what seemed a bit fast and loose at Dyson. However, this meant that my design input and decisions were making real impacts in the area of the car where I had sole leadership, and I loved the challenges and wins that a fast-paced start-up environment brought. Unfortunately, after just under 2 years with the project, the car project was cancelled with no notice. There were several reasons, but it seems mainly to do with the strains that the automotive industry was under and the un-profitability of the electric vehicle market. I was sad that the car the whole team worked so hard on would never be appreciated by the general public, but I am incredibly thankful for my time at Dyson.

After a short period of redundancy, (during which I took a trip to New Zealand to visit my brother Lewis), I have now found myself back at Jaguar Land Rover working as a Project Manager in the Software Engineering department. This role has proved challenging for me, starting shortly before lockdown, but now that I am settling in, I am enjoying the experience of a different side of the industry. It has been a steep learning curve but one that I am happy to have at this time of job uncertainty.

If at age 18, I had told myself that within 10 years I would have an established career in an automotive company and be living in the West Midlands in England, I would never have believed it. Whilst I did not view all the changes in my career as opportunities at the time, I feel they have grown me as a person and an engineer. I am very thankful for all the twists and turns at the start of my working life and would encourage any young person to grasp any chance they get to expand their comfort zone, even if it doesn't seem like a good fit at the start. I for one didn't think it would lead to sitting in the passenger footwell of a Jaguar F-Type at 125mph in the name of product development! Now, about that saloon car.....



New Land Rover Defender



The Dyson Electric Car



Jaguar F-Type



Torrance songwriter Tommy Reilly has confirmed his latest project is to come to the small screen in the autumn. He's written the songs and music for a re-booted version of the beloved '90s cartoon series 'Animaniacs'. The show will air on Hulu (Disney's US streaming service) in November. The show boasts non other than Steven Spielberg as it's Executive Producer.

Tommy's other current project is 'Our Ladies' –a Scottish comedy drama that has had it's cinematic release date pushed back from April to September this year due to the pandemic.



He has collaborated on both projects with his long term writing partner Roddy Hart, whom you may know from Radio Scotland and The Key Sessions on BBC Scotland. They both previously worked on the 2017 indy hit film 'Anna and the Apocalypse'.

FACTS

Remember **FACTS** for a safer Scotland

- F** Face coverings 
- A** Avoid crowded places 
- C** Clean your hands regularly 
- T** Two metre distance 
- S** Self isolate and book a test if you have symptoms 



nhsinform.scot/coronavirus
#WeAreScotland

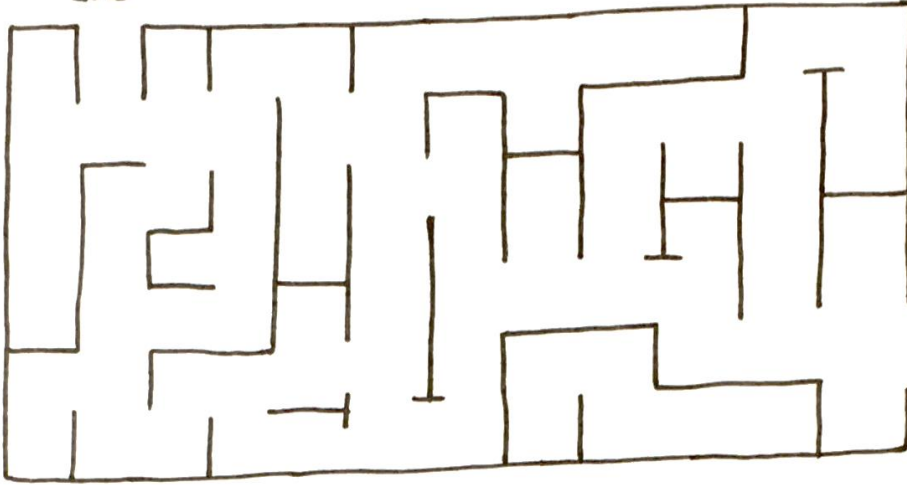


Back to school

puzzle page



Help Nigel and Fiona find their way home after school!

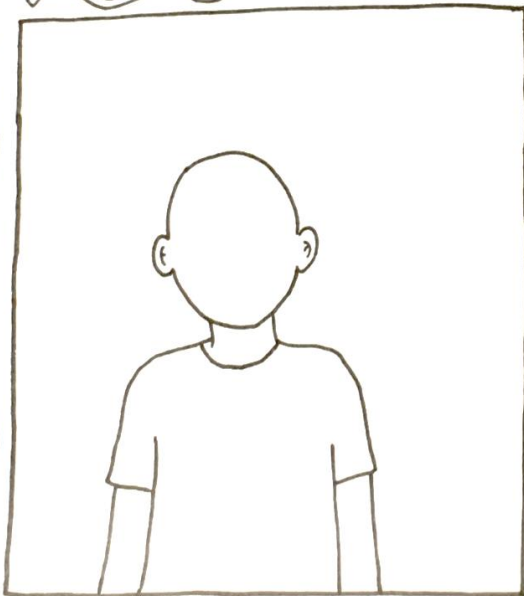


What is your favourite thing about going back to school?

Design a cartoon character!

Follow the directions below to create your own cartoon character!

1. If your favourite subject is history, give your character curly hair. Any other subject give them straight hair.
2. If you walk to school, give your character a blue or purple shirt. If you get to school another way give them an orange or yellow shirt.
3. If you are in any after school clubs, give your character a smile. If you aren't in any clubs, draw your character with their tongue sticking out.
4. Add eyes and a nose. Color in the background and the rest of your character any way you want!



WHEN THIS IS OVER I'LL BE EXCITED ABOUT...

**...GOING TO S.U.
CAMPS AGAIN.**

**...PLAYING NETBALL, HOCKEY
AND BASKETBALL AGAIN.**

**...GOING SHOPPING
WITH MY FRIENDS.**

... SCHOOL BEING NORMAL AGAIN.

By Members of Crossover

“Heavenly Father,

Maker of rainbows, you have called us to love our neighbours and as safety measures ease we want to thank you for the outpouring of love and care we have seen across our village.

Fill us with your Hope as we venture further, meet more people and start to see some normality return to our lives...

...Hope that friendliness and care for one another will continue.

...Hope that the losses we have experienced will heal as we mourn loved ones, lost opportunities, lost income and lost security.

...Hope for our world that our recovery will also be a recovery for our planet, with new habits and more sustainable lifestyles.

...Hope for the future that you promise us in the name of your Son, Jesus.

Amen.”

Are you in need of help, prayer, to be listened to in confidence?

Please don't hesitate to contact the following number by phone call, WhatsApp or text:

07788 797238

This is a dedicated phone number, used only by the Prayer Ministry Team. And see page 13 below.



Alex Samuel
@Alex_Samuel95

Why am I on my knees worshipping God?!



FOOTBALL FOCUS

This time 2 years ago I was out of a job, released and injured, which nearly finished my football career. In the middle of that God gave me a vision that I would play for wycombe. But then I discovered that I needed an operation. After recovery, pre-season had already finished and that vision seemed an impossibility. Then a week before the season started Wycombe asked me to go for a trial...and the rest is history. I am so thankful to God and for the people that He's put in my life. It has made the impossible, possible! 🔥

Base

- 6 oz margarine
- 8 oz self raising flour
- 1 oz cornflour
- 3 oz caster sugar

1. Melt the margarine, add the sugar and flour.
2. Press into a Swiss roll tin and bake for approximately 15 minutes at 170°C.

Caramel

- 4 oz butter
- 4 oz caster sugar
- 1 tin condensed milk
- 1 tablespoon golden syrup

1. Place all of the ingredients in a large microwavable bowl.
2. Cook on high, stirring every minute or so until toffee coloured (about 11/12 minutes).
3. Pour the caramel over the shortbread.

Topping

- Approximately 200g milk chocolate

1. Melt the chocolate and pour over the caramel when it is cold.
2. Cut into slices once the chocolate has cooled in the fridge.



THANK YOU!

After 123 pages spread over 14 issues it's time to say thankyou all for reading and sharing *The Village Hug* over the last few months.

We simply couldn't have done it without all the fantastic submissions of articles, walks, features, competition entries and recipes. A special mention goes to our regular contributors.

Thanks also to June and Phil Malloch for their gracious proof reading and advice each week, and to Linda McEwan and Iain Nisbet for their digital distribution skills.

From the Editorial Team –Sean, Norman and Craig.

P.S. Look out in a fortnight's time for the publication of special compilation versions of *The Village Hug*!

NEW SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES – *On the church website*

The church buildings are remaining closed for worship and for the café for the time being. Please look out for any changes to this situation on the church website or social media accounts below.

Now is the perfect opportunity try out our revitalised Sunday morning services that are beginning this week.

We will not be using Zoom but will use a different system accessed via the church website that will let us share at a higher quality while still allowing us to 'watch together' at 10.30am and to greet each other before and after the service.

You should go to <https://www.torranceparishchurch.org.uk/sunday-service/> to find out more and to connect on Sunday morning. The 'watch together' feed will open in a new web browser tab and will work on a PC or Laptop as well as from an iPad or phone.

You will also be able to watch the service on-demand at a different time if that suits you better. There shall also be specific content for children available.



PRAYER MINISTRY – *Wednesdays 10.30am in the church*

Every Wednesday from 2nd September the church building will re-open from 10.30am to 11.30am to offer prayer support to anyone in our village struggling with the many challenges we are facing during the current pandemic. We would be pleased to listen and pray for you in a safe and confidential setting about any concerns you may have. Two people from our prayer team will be on hand each week to welcome you. For your safety, social distancing will be observed, masks worn and hand sanitisers will be provided.



THE GIRLS BRIGADE – *Wednesdays, from 6.15pm online*

The Girls Brigade are restarting on-line from Wednesday 2nd September for a block of 6 weeks up to the October holiday, when the situation will be reviewed.

Any girl is welcome to join and should contact Sheila Traynor at sheila@traynor1.plus.com to get the GB enrolment form to sign up. There is only a £10 fee.

There are sure to be a variety of games and activities appropriate for each age group, including a Pilates teacher for the older girls!

The times will be: P1 to P3 6.15pm to 6.45pm and
P4 to S6 from 7 till 8pm.



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