

CARLOPS CHURCH

In the community, for the community

Newsletter

Volume 20, Number 10; October 2026

Services, October 2026

Services held in church and available via Zoom
Request link from sessionclerk@carlopschurch.org

:

4 October 10am: Isobel Hunter
11 October 10am: Patsy Campbell
18 October 10am: Colin Herd
25 October 10am: Murray Campbell
1 November 10am: Sheena Livingstone

Join us, in the church, and in other activities

We promise you a warm welcome

www.carlopschurch.org

Carlops is one of the West Tweeddale linkage of churches
www.westtweeddale.org.uk

From the Interim Moderator



Sisters and Brothers in Jesus,

Please let me introduce myself: my name is Rev Graham Astles, I am the Minister at the North Kirk in Penicuik and I will be serving as your interim moderator for the foreseeable future together with my friend and colleague Rev John Urquhart, who has been appointed as depute.
My (our) job is not to be your pastor or preacher; you have Elders and pulpit supply for that. My job is to make sure your vacancy runs smoothly and to be a liaison between the congregations of West Tweedale and Presbytery. I will, however, try and get a few letters in the magazine and be present at other times when possible.

Despite the sadness of losing a serving minister, a vacancy can be both an exciting and challenging time. Exciting as you have the opportunity to work together to discern the type of ministry you would like to lead you forward in the years to come.
Challenging as, like many parishes in the nation, these are turbulent times with many unknowns augmented by the pressure to be as efficient and cost effective as possible.
These two things (call and efficiency) may seem at odds with one another, but that provides us with the opportunity to discern what God may be doing with us that He wants to use to reach the people of the villages in which we live.

It also highlights the importance of prayer. Prayer is the most powerful thing we can do. Pray specific things about specific people or situations. It will build our faith and encourage us as we see God resolve seemingly impossible situations. Pray on your own or in groups, pray at home in a quiet place or pray on the bus or as we walk down the main streets. If we struggle to pray, think of it as chatting to God and tell him what is on your heart.
And don't forget to give thanks. He has done marvellous things and will continue to faithfully lead you in the plan he has for you.

With all God's blessings,
Graham.



Meteorological Miscellanea

September

Ci is for Cirrus. Cirrus clouds form in filaments, strands and hooks, as if pencilled on the sky. They do not invade the sky progressively. They are composed entirely of gently falling ice crystals at altitudes above 20,000 feet. On the evening of Sunday 13th September we took a stroll, or dander in Scotland, to Kitleyknowe. Looking skyward we were in awe of its wispiness. We just hadn't seen Cirrus clouds for donkeys ages. We are more accustomed to lumps of mistiness these days which hang about our Pentland tops at 1,700 feet. I hope you enjoyed the evening too.

On Monday 21st September we got along to the good old Dominion Cinema to see the war drama "Pressure" starring Andrew Scott as meteorologist James Stagg who was born in Musselburgh and educated at Dalkeith High School. He was awarded with an OBE for his work as a senior technical officer with the Air Ministry's Met Office. Planners of the Normandy Landings in June 1944 focussed upon a specific overlap of tides, times of day, and phases of the moon. Stagg focussed on stormy weather developing in the North Atlantic. He had to persuade Eisenhower to postpone the invasion. The film portrayed the tension between Stagg and Eisenhower skilfully. Get along to a cinema near you, if you can, and watch how the filmmakers showed how a sunny morning became a stormy afternoon.

My 31 year average for rain in September is 3.31 in/84 mm. With most months this year returning below average figures, which way would September go? Midway through we were on 2.18 in/55 mm. There had been rain on 13 days but most days had very small totals. By the 22nd we were on 2.87 in/73 mm. We could still do it! Did you hear the rain overnight 22nd into 23rd? Overnight we had 0.60 in/15 mm – the wettest night since 14th June 2025. As I go to press we have 4.04 in/103 mm. The

wettest September was in 2012 with 5.69 in/145 mm.

Enough stats. What lies ahead? El Nino "they" say. El Nino is a natural climate phenomenon marked by above average sea surface temperatures in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean. Scientists report that 2026 has rapidly intensified into an historic record-breaking event. We can look forward to our first named storm. Some readers will recall "Storm Amy" at the beginning of October last year when gusts of 96mph scourged Tiree and we were buffeted, thumped, slapped and shaken as the rain lashed down on our "wigwam pod". Look out.

Peter Woolverton, Pyethall, 28 September 2026



Our Village Events

Hosted by **Carlops Church**

Friday 23 Oct 7.30 pm **John Kennedy** *Sailor*

Boats and Ocean Adventurers

One shipwreck, three Atlantic crossings
and other adventures

Friday 13 Nov 7.30 pm **Emma Butler-Cole Aiken**
Stained glass artist

Designer and maker of windows
for Carlops Church and Glasgow Cathedral
on working in three dimensions
and "Chasing dreams"

Friday 11 Dec 7.30 pm **Jim Eccleston** *Traveller*

From Broxburn to Brazil:
the travel challenges and the people
encountered on a journey of a lifetime

Admission free but donations are invited
Payments may be made by cash, card or QR code

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www.carlopschurch.org

Our Village Events – December event will have local crafts for sale

Our December event with Jim Eccleston will be followed by an opportunity to not only buy Jim's book but also to browse the work of some local makers and find some ideal Christmas gifts.

Newlands Harvest Supper

Annual **Harvest Supper** at Newlands church on Saturday 10th October at 6.30pm. It will be a potluck supper, where everyone brings food to share and there will be a collection in aid of Farmstrong Scotland.

Everyone is warmly invited and if you would like a ticket, please let me know. Jean Howat: howatjean@gmail.com



CARLOPS, CAIRDEAN, MALAWI

Residents and staff from Cairdean House in Edinburgh, where Nan Buchan lives, visited Carlops Café on 17 September 2026 and presented Carlops Church with £900 as a contribution to our current Malawi project.

The money represents the proceeds of Caridean's 2026 Summer Fete, an annual event which staff and residents organise to raise funds for a charity they select. Carlops' Malawi project was chosen this year because Cairdean people were impressed by Nan's assiduous knitting of teddy bears, scarves, and other items, and decided to support her endeavour.

Accepting the gift on Carlops Church's behalf, Sheena Livingstone, who leads the Malawi support project, outlined activities and achievements to date, and confirmed that this generous donation will enable the latest phase to be completed.



Nan reports that her Cairdean friends thoroughly enjoyed their visit and want to experience Carlops' friendship, hospitality and cakes again soon!

Rennie McElroy

(As well as Rennie's piece the story has been covered by Edinburgh Evening News and the Edinburgh Reporter – read the full story here! For a good cause: Edinburgh care home donates £900 to church)

Discussion Groups

We have 2 upcoming discussion groups – these are informal chats guided by the reading material and open to anyone with an interest.

Forgiveness

4 sessions - weekly from Thursday 29th Oct, 7pm at the Campbells'

Rev Nick Bowry from St Mungo's Episcopal church in West Linton has invited us to join in a study on the theme of forgiveness. The booklet is 'Forgiveness: Making Peace With the Past' by Douglas Connelly and we will have a few to go round.

Study groups are also taking place in St Mungo's church West Linton on Tuesdays at 2pm and in Upper Tweeddale at the Laurel Bank Tea Room in Broughton on Tuesday morning at 10am, both running from 6th October until 11th November.

Nick is also showing a series of films on this theme

- Atonement: Wed 7th Oct at 1.30pm at St James, 7pm at St Mungo's
- The Shack: Wed 14th Oct at 1.30pm at St James, 7pm at St Mungo's
- Unforgiven: Wed 21st Oct at 1.30pm at St James, 7pm at St Mungo's
- The Railway Man: Wed 28th Oct at 1.30pm at St James, 7pm at St Mungo's

Another film 'The Choral' which was released late last year, will be shown at the Penicuik Cinema on Sunday 1st November at 5pm, in the Cowan Institute (aka the Town hall).

Advent Study 'The Meaning is in the Waiting'

4 sessions, weekly from 26th Nov, 7pm at the Campbells'

Based on a book by Paula Gooder this study will follow on from the one above.
Again, we will have some books available.

Please contact Julie Gamble if you have any questions.

Training for Pastoral Support

A message from Jean Howat

We would like to relaunch the West **Tweeddale pastoral support group.**

Linda Hill and I propose two training sessions on **Saturday 17 October and Saturday 14th November from 9.30-12 at Newlands Church** for anyone who is interested in joining the group.

We would emphasise that this training is mandatory so that anyone in the group is fully equipped to provide pastoral care. We would envisage having quarterly follow up sessions which we would also expect everyone to attend.

Session 1

What is our role?; the dos and don'ts of pastoral care; and defining boundaries.

Listening skills, particularly in relation to bereavement and illness, including end of life illness.

Session 2

Further training on pastoral visits following bereavement and also dementia.

Praying together on a pastoral visit.

Please contact Jean Howat - howatjean@gmail.com - or your Session Clerk if you are interested in attending the sessions. And of course, there is no obligation to join the group if, after attending the training, you feel that it is not for you.

People's Emergency Briefing – Carlops Village Hall, 6th November, film starting 7.30pm

What's happening to our climate and natural world, and what could it mean for everyday life here in the UK? Sustainable West Linton and District are showing this 50-minute film which tackles these questions. Free but please book so they know numbers to expect.

The People's Emergency Briefing – Friday 6th Nov 7-7.30pm – Free entry | Carlops Village Centre Yellow Card

Christian Aid News

The 2026 edition of the Christian Aid Magazine has just been published. It features many informative articles from around the world describing how CA tries hard to spend your donation money wisely. You can read about inspirational people who refuse to give up in the face of dire conflict, poverty and injustice, often in war-torn countries or those adversely affected by climate change. Their stories remind us that behind every headline are individuals, families and communities whose resilience and leadership should inspire us all. Lasting change happens when we walk together in faith, hope and love with people the world over.

HIGHLIGHTS

New Chair of Christian Aid

A BIG welcome to Archbishop Thabo Makgoba. His remarkable journey from childhood poverty, eventually rising to Archbishop of Cape Town and head of the Anglican church in southern Africa. He lived through the worst of apartheid in Alexandra township (the Dark City); overcrowded, no electricity, no sanitation, corpses on the streets – where his sense of justice was born. Faith helped him when he had little else. He was hugely influenced as a teenager after meeting Archbishop Desmond Tutu who advised him to give up thoughts of joining the armed struggle. Instead, he chose the priesthood to use the gospel to speak to power. He grew close to Nelson Mandela who taught him leadership skills.

His hope for CA is simple. "Keep the urgent questions alive. Hope is not a feeling you wait to arrive; it is a practice. And on the days that you don't feel hopeful, act anyway. Give, speak out, show up, because hope is built by doing. And to do it together is critical, because courage is contagious, and a voice joined to others becomes impossible to ignore"

Sudan/South Sudan – the worst humanitarian crisis of the century?

Since the vicious war erupted in Sudan in April 2023, more than 12 million people (equal to the population of greater London) have been displaced – that is the scale of this human tragedy. Many have fled to neighbouring South Sudan which is perilously close to civil war itself. Communities are cut off from food, water and medical care needed for survival. CA's Sudan Crisis Appeal has raised an incredible £536,000 over the last year. This has enabled local partners to provide vital support including food and water for families, dignity kits for women and girls, and communal shelters. CA is

a part of the #KeepEyesOnSudan coalition calling for humanitarian aid and strong leadership for a sustainable peace. In April, a 43,000-signature petition to this effect was handed in to 10 Downing Street.

Kenya – Belinda's Beacon of Hope (featured in CA Week 2026 campaign)

An update on Belinda's urban farms network in Nairobi tackling poverty and hunger by growing vegetables to feed young schoolchildren because shop prices are unaffordable.

Middle East Crisis – Laila's story

Since 2023, millions of people have been forced to flee their homes due to violent conflict across the Middle East. The US – Israel war with Iran has escalated the crisis, causing deep anxiety across the region. Laila had to leave Lebanon with her young sons in 2024, and she shares in her own words how the war has left its mark on her family. She describes the strength she receives from CA's partner Mouvement Social.

CA has raised more than £5 million to support similar families in Lebanon, Gaza and the West Bank.

RESTORE Campaign

CA's Restore campaign aims to tackle the debt and climate crises in solidarity with activists like Precious Kalombwana in Lusaka. Zambia is one of 23 African countries that spend more on external debt payments to private lenders than on healthcare and education combined. These corporate lenders charge governments sky high interest rates, raking in profits that drain money away from other essential services. Precious joined CA in London in April to call on the UK Government to act – most debts owed by poor countries are still governed by UK law, a legacy from the colonial era.

Write to your MP and ask them to keep up the pressure on the UK Government at caid.org.uk/RestoreMP

I hope my brief resume has whetted your appetite……. hard copies of the CA magazine will soon be available in church to take home and read in full, at your leisure?!

The complete magazine can also be viewed online at www.christianaid.org.uk

Robert Higgins, CA Chair

St Andrew's West Linton - Plans for Children's Events

We are delighted to announce that Rebecca Hodgson has joined the team leading children's events, especially the Sunday Club. Sunday Club is held on the first Sunday of the month at St Andrew's, and is open to anyone who would like to attend. Currently, it has been used by predominantly younger children (2 to 8), but we now have a significant cohort of young children who are older than that. Rebecca has volunteered to develop and lead a programme for them, which is more suitable to their needs. Ann and I will be delighted to help out with the older group where we can.

At present, the new group will run at the same time as Sunday Club, during the service on the first Sunday of the month (most months). They will use the Church Office in the Old Church Hall, as this is logistically helpful, but gives the group their own space in which to meet. Artwork (etc) may be displayed more publicly, as of course the Church Office is locked for much of the time, and we envisage the office being used as a meeting space only. It is considerably easier to heat than Room 2 at the OCH.

We are also launching a regular series of Family Services. These will be held throughout the year, usually at festival days. This is in response to very positive feedback from parents and congregation to the events we have held on a more ad hoc basis this year. The next event will be on Sunday 25 October (Harvest service) and children will be participating in the service. After that, we have our usual Nativity event on Sunday 6 December, which will be led predominantly by the children, as successfully done in previous years. Please do ask Ann Lyon or Kate Whalley for more information – kate@westlinton.com annlyon@live.co.uk

Please note that these family services are open to everyone throughout the Linkage and beyond. We are most happy to welcome visiting children and their families, including babies. We do have to thank the congregation for their warm and friendly welcome to the children when they visit, which has been most welcome and very much appreciated by the parents bringing children along.

The Column

CARLOPS JAMS AND JELLIES

It's autumn. Keats' "Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness". Ripening temperate fruit in garden and hedgerow. Jam- and jelly-making time.

Over the next few weeks, I plan to make a range of preserves which I hope people will buy, both to enjoy, and to support Carlops Church. All income from sales of jams, jellies and marmalade is donated to Carlops Church to fund the upkeep of our building and so, help support our activities for the whole community.

Some of the fruit comes from my own garden, but most is donated by friends and neighbours whose gardens produce more than they can use themselves. I'd like to thank Anita and Ian John, Marlyn and Frank McKenzie, Wendy and Peter Raine, Margaret and Colin Torrance, Kate and Steven Whalley, and Yvonne White for their generosity. The range of fruits donated includes blackcurrants, redcurrants, gooseberries plums, damsons, apples, crab apples, elderberries, sloes, rowans and rose hips. The sugar is donated too, so all the proceeds of sales go to church funds. I am also grateful to all who recycle jars to me throughout the year. All this collaboration helps strengthen our status as an eco-congregation.

Last season I experimented with the autumn hedgerow produce to make combination jellies: apple and sloe; rosehip, rowan and apple; crab apples and blackcurrant; plum and sloe; and, at the end of season, "hedgerow jelly", which included too many varieties to squeeze on to the label! These were popular and prompted repeat sales. I find it reassuring that my most severe taste critic, Rennie, is frequently seen carefully piling unlikely quantities of them on to toast, bread and oatcakes. When making a jeely piece becomes a balancing exercise in civil engineering, the jam-maker must be doing something right!

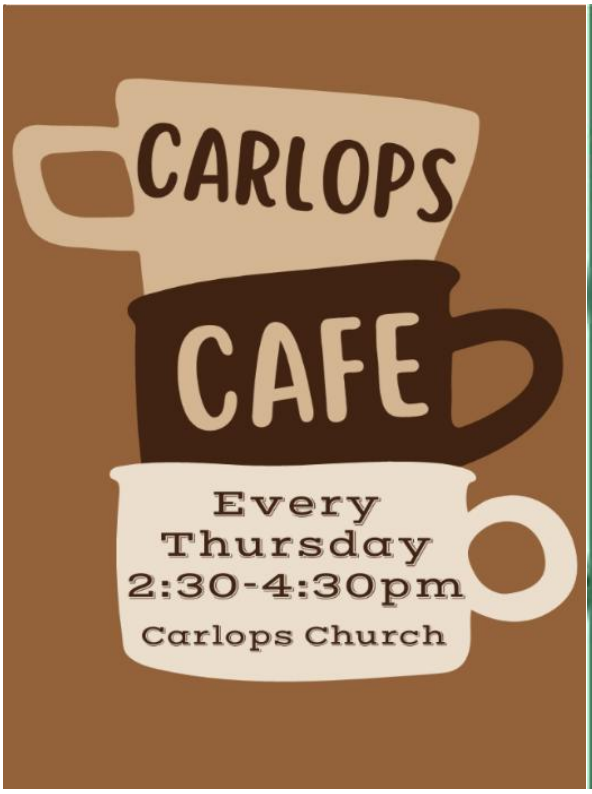
Various 2026 season products are already in the church for sale. There is an honesty plate and a card-reader if I'm not around to serve you. And for those who have asked: Yes, I will make

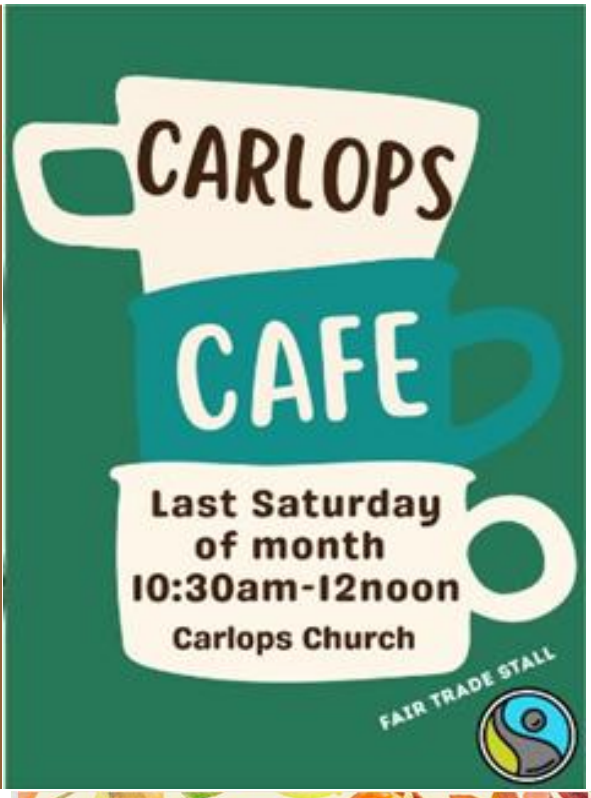
marmalade again in January and February 2027. Seville oranges for marmalade are the only fruit I need to purchase, Carlops being just a tad too cool for orange trees to flourish. Thanks to Shaz in West Linton for obtaining a stock for me every year.

In 2026 to date, you have bought 70 jars of preserves: 37 of marmalade and 33 of various jams and jellies. Incidentally, the price (currently £3) is set to approximate to what local supermarkets charge for *Bonne Maman* products.

I hope these culinary efforts continue to attract and to please. Warm thanks to all who enjoy these products. I appreciate your support.

Mary McElroy
29th September 2026









Keep up to date with all events across the linkage [West Tweeddale Parishes Diary]

West Tweeddale Guild
Quiz Night

Saturday 24th October
Starts 7pm

New Church Hall
West Linton

Sandwich Supper provided

Raffle

Teams of Four - £5 per person
Under 15s free - 10 Extra Points if you have at least one team member under 15

All proceeds to Guild projects
e.g. Playful Beginnings (CrossReach)

Everyone welcome - to join in or for more information contact Fiona Burnett (fiona@glenholm.co.uk - 07944 196234)

West Tweeddale Parishes
www.westtweeddale.org.uk

WANDERINGS

GATHERING TO CONNECT
WANDERINGS
LIFE AND FAITH

10am Wed 7th Oct-
Accessible walk @Glenholm

10.30 Fri 9th Oct -
Welly Wanders in the woods

2.30pm Sat 31st Oct -
Broughtonknowe Woods

Broughtonknowe Woods - for more info #Wanderings-Scotland

BIGGAR BRIDGE CLUB

INVITES YOU TO
AN AFTERNOON TEA
AND SOCIAL BRIDGE
IN AID OF

BIGGAR CANCER RSEARCH



Friday 23rd October 2 till 5.30pm
Tickets £10 and Raffle
Biggar Rugby Club
Hartree Mill Sports Ground ML12 6JJ
Contact Fiona Murray



07957 312162 or fifmurray@gmail.com

If you need help

As well as The Open Gate (advertised below) our linkage of 6 churches has some help available for anyone in need.

Food bank

The minister's benevolent fund offers emergency assistance throughout our linkage areas. If you require assistance, please contact us by email. All emails will be dealt with in the strictest of confidence. People may need other kinds of support and we are also ready to help with that or direct you to others who can
emergencyfoodbank@standrews-westlinton.org

Pastoral Group

We are a small group of people who are there to offer a listening ear in confidence.

If you know anyone who might appreciate a visit, please do contact our pastoral group lead Jean Howat howatjean@gmail.com

We are not professional counsellors but rather sympathetic listeners.

Contacts

Interim Moderator for West Tweeddale: Graham Astles
Email: GAstles@churchofscotland.org.uk

Church Administrator: Kate Whalley Email kate@westlinton.com
Telephone 01968 733 112 Office - Friday 9.30 am – 12.30pm
Old Church Hall - Friday 2.00 – 4.00pm

Christian Aid: Mary Levison
Telephone 01968 674 566 Email marylevison@btinternet.com

Church bookings: Sheena Livingstone
Telephone 01968 661 282 Email sheena@deanfoot.onmicrosoft.com

Coffee drop-in, Carlops Café and Soup Lunch: Mary Levison
Telephone 01968 674 566 Email marylevison@btinternet.com

Treasurer and Eco Group: Anna Woolverton
Telephone 01968 660 382 Email annapye@btinternet.com

Flowers: TBC
Telephone

Newsletter and website: Julie Gamble
Telephone 07980 258 381 Email julieggamble@yahoo.co.uk

Session Clerk and Organist: Murray Campbell
Telephone 01968 660 530 Email d.m.campbell@ed.ac.uk

Request a card for someone: Bridget Wilcox
Telephone/text 07980 836 817 Email bridgetwilcox@hotmail.com

Diary notes



Forthcoming events

October

Thursday 1 October	2.30-4.30pm	**Carlops Cafe**
Tuesday 6 October	7.30-9.30pm	**Gaelic Psalm Singing**
Thursday 8 October	2.30-4.30pm	**Carlops Cafe**
Tuesday 13 October	7.30-9.30pm	**Gaelic Psalm Singing**
Wednesday 14 October	12.30-2pm	**Soup Lunch**
Thursday 15 October	2.30-4.30pm	**Carlops Cafe**
Tuesday 20 October	7.30-9.30pm	**Gaelic Psalm Singing**
Thursday 22 October	2.30-4.30pm	**Carlops Café**
Friday 23 October	7.30-8.30pm	**Our Village Talks – John Kennedy – Sailor – Boats and Ocean Adventures**
Tuesday 27 October	7.30-9.30pm	**Gaelic Psalm Singing**
Thursday 29 October	2.30-4.30pm	**Carlops Cafe**
Saturday 31 October	10.30-12pm	**Coffee Drop-in (Carlops Café) and Fair-Trade Stall**

November

Tuesday 3 November	7.30-9.30pm	**Gaelic Psalm Singing**
Thursday 5 November	2.30-4.30pm	**Carlops Cafe**
Tuesday 10 November	7.30-9.30pm	**Gaelic Psalm Singing**
Wednesday 11 November	12.30-2pm	**Soup Lunch**

Thursday 12 November	2.30-4.30pm	**Carlops Cafe**
Friday 13 November	7.30-8.30pm	**Our Village Talks – John Kennedy – Sailor – Boats and Ocean Adventures**
Tuesday 17 November	7.30-9.30pm	**Gaelic Psalm Singing**
Thursday 19 November	2.30-4.30pm	**Carlops Cafe**
Tuesday 24 November	7.30-9.30pm	**Gaelic Psalm Singing**
Thursday 26 November	2.30-4.30pm	**Carlops Cafe**
Saturday 28 November	10.30-12pm	**Coffee Drop-in (Carlops Café) and Fair-Trade Stall**

Material for next issue

To Julie Gamble by Wednesday 28th October 2026 please