

# Crail Matters

Incorporating Kingsbarns Eagle

16 January 2026

Issue: 435

## A Historical Account of Crail Church

Crail Church is one of the most historically significant ecclesiastical buildings in the East Neuk of Fife, embodying over eight centuries of religious, civic, and architectural change. The earliest surviving fabric of the church dates from around 1175, placing its origins firmly within the period of medieval parish formation in Scotland. Around 1200 the nave was rebuilt and a tower erected, signalling both the growing importance of Crail as a burgh and the church's central role in communal life.

The church was formally reconsecrated on 21 June 1243 by David de Bernham, Bishop of St Andrews, as part of his extensive programme of parish church dedications across the diocese. The close relationship between kirk and burgh was reinforced in 1310 when Robert the Bruce granted a charter to the Burgh of Crail, strengthening its civic status during the Wars of Independence.

By around 1500, Crail Church had acquired the parapet and spire that continue to define its external appearance, reflecting late medieval prosperity. In the early sixteenth century the church reached a high point in its pre-Reformation standing. In 1514, Pope Leo X issued a papal bull directing William Myrton to admit Alexander Dunbar to the vicarage of Crail. In 1517 the church was erected into a collegiate foundation, staffed by a Provost, ten Prebendaries, and a clerk, placing Crail among a small number of important collegiate churches in Scotland.

Crail's international connections were further demonstrated in 1520 with the acquisition of a church bell from Holland, highlighting the burgh's trading links with the Low Countries. This bell was replaced in 1614.

The Scottish Reformation brought profound change. In 1559, John Knox preached in Crail Church during the turbulent months that saw the overthrow of the old Catholic order. The collegiate establishment was formally dissolved in 1587 when James VI granted the church, its revenues, and associated properties to the Burgh of Crail for the support of the reformed church, a college, and a hospital. This transfer reflects the wider redirection of ecclesiastical wealth to civic and Protestant purposes in post-Reformation Scotland.

Seventeenth-century records provide insight into changing religious practice and governance. In 1611 the kirk session discouraged burials beneath the church floor, reflecting evolving attitudes to public health and the use of sacred space. In 1648 James Sharp, later Archbishop of St Andrews, was appointed minister at Crail, linking the parish to the wider national struggles between Presbyterian and Episcopalian forms of church government.

*Continued on Page 2*



## Crail Matters Past Issues

The Editors have decided to remove the listing of back issues from the Crail Matters website as a security precaution. If any reader wants a backcopy of any issue, please contact the Editors at [crailmatters@gmail.com](mailto:crailmatters@gmail.com)



From the eighteenth century onwards, Crail Church functioned as a parish kirk within the established Presbyterian tradition. Although the Burgh of Crail retained certain historic rights and responsibilities following the Reformation settlement, the legal framework governing church property continued to evolve. The most significant change came in the twentieth century with legislation clarifying the ownership and trusteeship of ecclesiastical buildings.

Under the Church of Scotland (Property and Endowments) Acts and related legislation following the union of the Free Church and the Church of Scotland in 1929, ownership of parish church buildings was vested in the General Trustees of the Church of Scotland. This legislation regularised property arrangements across Scotland, transferring ownership from historic burghal or local bodies to the national church while ensuring continued use for worship and community purposes. As a result, Crail Church formally became the property of the Church of Scotland, held in trust on behalf of the congregation and the wider church. This is the current situation.

In the later twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, Crail Church has continued to adapt to changing patterns of worship and community life, while remaining a central landmark in the town. Whilst it stands today not only as an active place of worship within the Church of Scotland, but also as a tangible record of Crail's medieval origins, Reformation upheavals, and modern ecclesiastical governance, its role has been challenged by the proposal by the Church of Scotland to sell it. Whilst its long history encapsulates the enduring relationship between faith, community, and place in Scotland, its current position similarly illustrates the challenges faced by the church in a changing world. The proposed sale of the Kirk offers a unique opportunity for the community to preserve for future generations this very significant building.

#### **Wonderful progress - 14th January 2026**

We are pleased to report a combination of offline payments of £2,400 and Crowdfunding payments of £10,951 which with Gift Aid brings the total to more than £13,000 . Thank you for supporting this project. An Open Day has been arranged for Saturday 31 Jan. to give you opportunity to comment, offer ideas, etc. Please encourage your friends, family, and neighbours to participate in the Open Day and to make one last push to reach the target with 15 days to go.

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/crail-kirks-future>

## **Kirk Open Day**

**Saturday 31st January**

**10:30 to 12:30**

Get to know Crail Kirk and its heritage.  
Help to plan Crail Kirk's Future within our unique community.

There will be:

Talks  
Exhibitions  
Tours  
Recitals

Contribute to Crail Kirk's Future by submitting your thoughts and ideas.

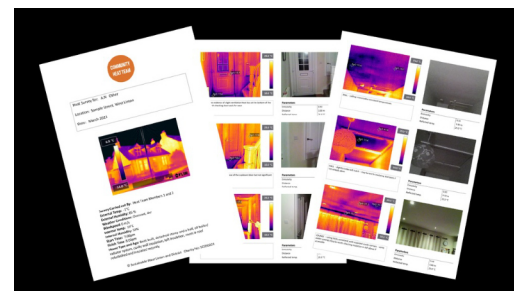
#### **RBS Mobile Bank Changes.**

The mobile bank will now visit Marketgate North on Tuesdays between 11.00 and 11.30.

## Crail Community Heat Team (CCHeaT)

### Thermal survey offer

Crail Community Partnership have established CCHeaT to provide Crail residents with heat surveys of their property as a means of helping you improve the energy efficiency of your house. We use an infrared camera to detect areas of internal heat loss and show you where your house might be losing heat in different ways. This knowledge will enable you to take action to reduce your heat loss, save money, stay warm, comfortable and healthy in your home and reduce CO2 emissions.



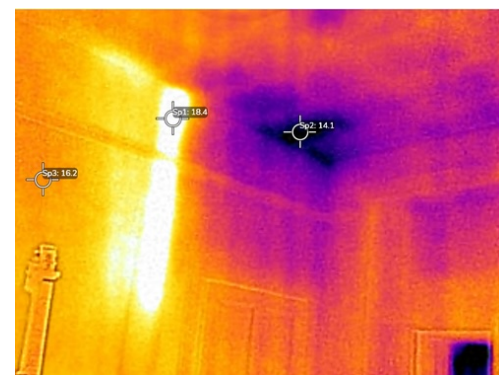
The survey can identify a range of heat loss issues including draughts, missing and/or poor insulation, damp & cold spots and poor seals around doors and windows etc. Some of these issues can be rectified easily for example by fitting better new seals around doors & windows, some will need more specialist follow-up. Overall, our aims are to help you save money, stay warmer and reduce CO2 emissions.

The survey process will take about 1hr or so. On arrival the Heat Team volunteers will take some external and internal measurements of temperature, humidity and wind speed. They will then begin to take a series of images with the thermal camera. It is totally up to you which areas of the house you want us to look at, and you'll be welcome to try using the thermal camera yourself during the visit.



Our visit needs to be on a cold, dry calm evening and after dark, as we require a significant temperature difference between the inside and outside to be able to “see” heat loss. This means that if the weather is unseasonably warm, very wet or windy we may need to contact you to re-arrange. Apologies in advance if we need to do this - It's something outside our control!

After the survey the Heat Team will send you a .pdf report containing the thermographic images from the survey and any potential issues identified. You can then think about dealing with these yourself or contact Home Energy Scotland for any further technical investigations or funding questions.



**To request a survey** (normally on a mid-week evening after dark) please text “THERMAL SURVEY” to 07502 282385. You'll get a call back from a member of the Heat Team – they will introduce themselves, take some details and arrange a suitable day & time for a visit to survey your home.

**If you'd like to volunteer as a member** of the Heat Team please text “VOLUNTEER” to 07502 282385. Training will be provided.



### Scotrail Issues Alternative Travel Plan During Fife Electrification Project

There will be **no train service between Inverkeithing and Edinburgh from Saturday for over a week** due to railway electrification works between Haymarket and Dalmeny. There will be limited train service on Fife side heading north, as well as

replacement buses between Inverkeithing and Edinburgh Gateway/Haymarket. Full announcement can be read at:  
<https://www.scotrail.co.uk/>



# Crail Folk Club

At the time of writing the Burns Night at Crail Folk Club on 22nd January has only 2 tickets left so you know what to do!!

So, we'll turn our attention to the first guest night on 5th February. Our guests are the Paper Sparrows.



**Folk trio Paper Sparrows’ sound centres on their distinctive twin-acoustic guitar style, finger-picking alongside harmonies and double bass.**

*"There’s a real emotional depth going on here plus an undeniably rich songwriting craft that can be heard throughout the sterling performances, all of which bodes well for the future of this Edinburgh-based acoustic three-piece."* SHINDIG! MAGAZINE

Edinburgh’s David Hershaw, Ross Fairbairn and Colin Morris first got together in 2015. Fast-forward a year or three and their debut album, *Hiding Away From The Light*, should have been released in 2020, but circumstances rather got in the way so it finally appeared in June 2023. It’s a classy mix of acoustic folk/pop with its ten songs all credited jointly to the trio. If you’re looking for influences, Fairbairn suggests: “60s folk revival, especially the slightly experimental stuff – Bert Jansch, John Martyn – plus Beatles-type production. We think of the album as sort of folk music with a bit of a sort of 60s beat at times.” There is general nodding and assent. It’s clear that Paper Sparrows are three friends enjoying themselves making music together.

The three bandmates’ friendship and humour, in addition to their musicianship and catalogue of great songs, make them a must-see live act that will live long in the memory.

Paper Sparrows have been picking up friends across the UK in the past few years, and have played shows such as Celtic Connections, Ely Folk Festival, Edinburgh Fringe, Folk East, Assembly Fringe Festival, Glasgow Americana, and Big Burns Supper amongst others. They have opened for acts like The Shee and The Often Herd.

A fun start to our year.



Someone let the plug out  
Mike Connor



Winter aconite. Spring is on its way!  
Gordon Baxter

The Visitor Levy is a local charge that Scottish councils can implement under the Visitor Levy (Scotland) Act 2024, applied to overnight stays in visitor accommodation. The levy rate, a percentage of accommodation cost, varies with stay prices. In Fife, revenue from the levy would fund visitor-benefiting projects, such as tourism infrastructure, attractions, events, and community projects, aligning with the Fife Tourism Strategy 2023–2030. Estimates for potential revenue in Fife range from approximately £1.47 million at 1% to £10.27 million at 7%. Fife Council is currently consulting with stakeholders, considering a flat-rate option to simplify administration. The levy could be introduced as early as 2028, following a further consultation process.

- In April 2025 Fife Council Cabinet Committee agreed to start a period of public consultation.
  - [View Cabinet Committee Minutes](#)
- **Consultation extended:** Early engagement running from 3rd November 2025 has now been extended to 31st January 2026 to include additional questions on a potential flat-rate levy option (in addition to percentage-based options).
- Online information sessions: online sessions will be held in January to explain levy options, including the flat-rate approach, and provide opportunities for questions. Please see below for details.
- A report on the consultation outcomes is expected to be considered by Council committee in 2026.
- If the decision is taken to introduce a levy there will be a further 12-week statutory consultation process on what the levy scheme would look like followed by an 18-month implementation period.
- The earliest a levy scheme could be introduced in Fife would be in 2028.

### Share Your Views

You can share your views on the proposed Visitor Levy through Fife Council’s online consultation on Citizen Space. The survey is open to residents, businesses, and visitors and only takes a few minutes to complete. Your feedback will help shape how any future levy could work in Fife.

Please note we have now included a question in the consultation around a flat fee option. If you have completed the consultation already you can now complete the additional question without having to complete the entire survey again.

<https://haveyoursay.fife.gov.uk/place/update-fife-visitor-levy-early-engagement-survey/consultation/subpage.2025-10-22.4201811115/>

### CRAIL HOSPITAL CAR SERVICE

**Do you ever need transport to/from a medical appointment?**

If you unable to drive yourself or can’t use public transport then CHOCS can help. Just call

**01333 451165**

### Mobile Library

The mobile library is in Crail FORTNIGHTLY on Thursdays from 10am to 10:45am, parked in St Andrews Road near the school.

### Report potholes or pavement faults

If you are aware of any potholes or pavement faults, you can report them to Fife Council using this link - <https://bit.ly/3EbiwSP>





The cafe will be welcoming everyone again  
from Wednesday 14th January 2026



## Come and visit our **Book & Jigsaw "Café"**

on  
**Wednesdays 2pm—4pm**  
in

**Kilrenny Church Lounge**

Browse, borrow or buy books

(we have a large selection!)

Share a Jigsaw

(we've lots of those too!)

Meet and make friends

Light refreshments tea/coffee,

Home-baking, biscuits—£1.00

## Kingsbarns Burns Supper



Some hae meat and canna eat  
And some wad eat that want it  
But we hae meat and we can eat  
Sae let the Lord be thankit

**Saturday 17th January**

**Kingsbarns Memorial Hall**

at 7.00 pm

**Good food, music, poetry and song**

**BYOB Raffle**

Tickets £10 from the church, the Inn at  
Kingsbarns, the Fabrik Shop in Crail and from  
Elibby 01334 880387



**CRAIL**  
Community  
Larder

[www.crailcommunitylarder.org.uk](http://www.crailcommunitylarder.org.uk)

The Crail Community Larder is a local non-profit trying to  
alleviate poverty within the area.

We are committed to give all children free fun and  
educational stay and plays each month to ensure all  
children have access to experiences they may not have  
been able to

Services we provide:

Essential baby items	Essential Food Drops
Five Benefit Check Level 1	Christmas Food Hampers
Free Monthly childrens stay and plays and much more	

For more information please visit our website



## MUM, BABY AND TODDLER GROUP

A LOVELY SPACE FOR LITTLE ONES TO  
PLAY, EXPLORE, AND MAKE FRIENDS -  
AND JUST AS VALUABLE FOR PARENTS  
TO CONNECT AND HAVE A CUPPA  
TOGETHER

**TOWN HALL, CRAIL EVERY  
WEDNESDAY 10.00AM -  
11.30AM**

**£2 PER CHILD (£1 EACH  
ADDITIONAL SIBLING)**

**PLEASE COME AND SUPPORT US!**

# RURAL

## ART EXHIBITION

**DATE:** 2ND MARCH  
**TIME:** 10.30AM - 12.30PM  
**VENUE:** BALCOMIE LINKS HOTEL,  
CRAIL

RAISING AWARENESS OF THE RURAL PREMIUM-  
THE UNJUST ADDITIONAL COSTS OF LIVING IN A  
RURAL AREA

FEATURING WORKS FROM THE RURAL VOICE  
PANEL, CRAIL COMMUNITY LARDER AND CUPAR  
YOUTH CAFE



### Information About the Exhibition

This exhibition showcases the artwork featured at the recent Rural Poverty Conference, including pieces and videos created by the Rural Voice Panel, Crail Community Larder and Cupar Youth Café. The theme, “**The Rural Premium,**” explores the unjust additional costs of living in rural areas and shares powerful lived experiences of people in North East Fife on low incomes.

We warmly invite you to attend one of these sessions and encourage those you support to come along. Your participation matters—there will be an opportunity to share feedback on issues you believe should be addressed in the next Rural Poverty Plan, currently being developed in collaboration with the Rural Voice Panel.

Keep an eye on posts on [Our North East Fife | Facebook](#) which will be promoting the exhibition; more dates may be added depending on venues and staff capacity.



**SPRING 2026**

## WE'RE BACK

 **Restarts 2nd Feb**  
**Crail Kirk Hall 7.30pm**

 **All welcome**   
 

### EAST NEUK OF FIFE PROBUS CLUB

All retired people are invited to our  
fortnightly meetings  
held at Coastline Community Church,  
Session Street, Pittenweem  
starting with refreshments from 10.00am  
and the meeting at 10.30am

**Next meeting Tuesday 20 January**

**Waid Academy**  
**Scott Duncan**



# CAMBO Snowdrop Festival

Sun 25 Jan - Sun 15 March

Gardens open  
10am - 5pm daily

Guided walks  
Specialist talks  
Live music  
Family events  
Estate tours



for more info  
and to book, visit  
[www.cambogardens.org.uk/whats-on/](http://www.cambogardens.org.uk/whats-on/)



CAMBO  
Snowdrop  
Festival

Live music from  
**Cambo Kitchen**

**Adam Ross &  
Gillian Fleetwood**  
Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> Jan

**Beth Malcolm**  
Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> Feb

**Finn Anderson**  
Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> Feb

**Peaks**  
Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> Mar

**Matt Carmichael**  
Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> Mar

**Siobhan Wilson**  
Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> Mar

**Sir Peter and  
the Snowdrops**  
Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> Mar

Cambo House, Kingsbarns, St Andrews, KY16 8QD



**Tickets on  
Eventbrite**  
Search for  
'Cambo Estate'

## A Peaceful Winter Evening in Crail

The harbour breathes in pewter light,  
boats stitched to water with silver rope.  
Windows glow like held candles  
against the early fall of night.

The sea lies hushed, a folded letter,  
its words unread beneath the stars.  
Gulls settle their white arguments,  
and the tide learns to whisper.

From the kirk's old stones to the rim of shore,  
peace gathers, unannounced and sure.  
Crail holds the dark like a warm wool coat,  
and winter listens—content, still.

*Anon*





## FREE Courses in Anstruther

Numeracy    Communication    Literacy  
Basic Computing    Employability

Small group and individual attention from the tutor.



Courses run on **Mondays** in Anstruther Learning Centre - just 2 hours per week. Classes available in other locations and on other days, in NE Fife.

Join at any time and work at your own pace.



Work towards SQA qualifications in Numeracy, Communication, Literacy, Employability and ICT (Information and Communication Technology).



If you're interested, phone or text Fiona on 07711390864 or Nicki on 07872677907

## Pocket Garden Design Competition



**Pupils invited to design a miniature sustainable garden inspired by fresh water.**

The 10<sup>th</sup> annual Pocket Garden Design Competition - which aims to connect children with their food and nature - has been launched by environmental charity, Keep Scotland Beautiful.

As we are a country with more than 125,000 km of rivers and streams (that's enough to go round the Earth three times) and over 30,000 freshwater lochs it is fitting that the 2026 competition has a new theme, '*fresh water*', to inspire pupils' designs.

In partnership with the Garden for Life Forum, Keep Scotland Beautiful is inviting nursery and school pupils, aged three to 18, to design a garden which includes food for people, is good for wildlife and reuses something while focusing on the integral role. So, whether in its liquid, solid ice or water vapour state children and young people are being invited to base their pocket garden designs on the vital element.

In recognition of a decade of the Pocket Garden Competition entrants are also being invited to include the number 10 in designs alongside edible plants, reused items and plants that attract wildlife.

The young designers of the best entries will be invited to build and grow their pocket garden at school before filming or photographing it to be displayed as part of an online interactive showcase garden in June where people will be able to vote for their favourite.



**Eve Keepax, Education and Learning Officer at Keep Scotland Beautiful**, said, "We're pleased to announce our tenth Pocket Garden Design Competition with a celebratory 10<sup>th</sup> birthday and new fresh water theme. We're excited to see how the theme inspires pupils' imaginations.

"Schools tell us that their pupils love taking part in this competition and it's a great way to bring learning for sustainability alive. It's also a brilliant way to connect children with their food and nature while creating opportunities for pupils to collaborate and work with the wider school community.

"We can't wait to see the 2026 entries and learn more about the connections between our precious fresh water and the schools who enter."

Educators who are considering taking part are invited view a competition overview training video to find out more: <https://www.KeepScotlandBeautiful.org/pocket-garden/training/>

Pocket Garden Design Competition aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal Four, Learning for Sustainability and is run as part of our Climate Action Schools framework. It gives pupils and educators a creative focus to becoming a sustainable learning setting, STEM skills, and alignment with the Curriculum for Excellence, while learning more about the climate and nature emergencies.

Last year, the charity received more than 130 entries to the competition from 18 local authority areas, with the work of 32 finalists being displayed in a digital online showcase.

Designs must be submitted no later than Friday 20 February 2026 online at <https://www.KeepScotlandBeautiful.org/pocket-garden/submit-your-design/>

Further information and inspiration from past years can be found at: [www.KeepScotlandBeautiful.org/pocketgarden](https://www.KeepScotlandBeautiful.org/pocketgarden)



# Mindfulness and Movement

## *Qigong with Kate*



Gentle Qigong with adaptations for *all fitness levels*  
(*can be done seated*)

Relax and improve *wellbeing* through *movement, breath,*  
and *mindfulness*



Starts Monday 5th January 2026

Mondays, 10.00–11.00 am

£10 per class • First class free

[qigongwithkate@gmail.com](mailto:qigongwithkate@gmail.com)

07889 465307

### Location

Crail Community Hall

St. Andrews Rd.

KY10 3UH







## Roadworks on Burnside, Cupar.

Fife Council will be resurfacing Burnside North, Bank Street and Upper Dalgairn, from Front Lebanon junction to the north of Adamson Hospital, from Wednesday 4 February to Sunday 8 February 2026. Burnside North and Bank Street are main roads to Adamson Healthcare Campus. These works will have an impact on traffic flow and possibly cause delays – if you have appointments, please give yourself additional travel time.

<https://fifecouncil-newsroom.prgloo.com/news/roadworks-on-burnside-cupar>

Temporary traffic lights and road closures will be used to manage the traffic and keep both road workers and the travelling public safe. Access will be maintained for residents as well as access for emergency services at all times. Bus services will be affected by these works. For more bus information please contact Stagecoach on 01592 645680 or visit [www.stagecoachbus.com](http://www.stagecoachbus.com).



## Recycling walking aids or equipment

You can recycle walking aids and other equipment given to you following treatment or a stay in hospital, at Fife Council Recycling centres.

### What walking aids and equipment can I return?

- Walking Frames
- Crutches
- Sticks
- Bath Aids
- Toilet Aids
- Chairs
- Trolleys

When you or your relative no longer require this equipment, you will be able to return it to a local Recycling Centre. The equipment can then be refurbished and used again if it is in good condition. A reused walking aid is 87% lower in carbon emissions than a new walking aid. 98% of returned walking aids can be refurbished and reused. By handing in your walking stick, you can help someone else to get back on their feet and reduce your carbon footprint.

*Pittenweem Charles Street – open Tuesday, Fridays and Saturdays*  
*St Andrews Largo Road – open every day except Tuesday and Friday.*



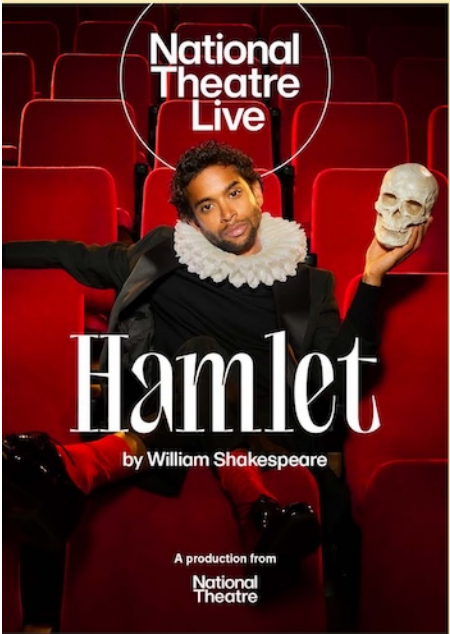


If you are a regular reader of the column – first of all thank you. This column is an opinion piece which reflects my perspective or argument. It may be of course that this column could be written by artificial intelligence (AI). How would you know? Better grammar? Having AI do the heavy lifting would certainly save time rather than researching topics and fact checking. The growth of AI and the opportunities across social media to spread misinformation, lies and distortions are a worry. I think it important that any journalism is true to facts. The problem is that there are in our society a growing number of powerful interests that through subtle and not-so-subtle means endeavour to erode confidence in the structures of our society and suppress freedom of expression and promote wider scepticism. All the media have a role in up keeping the public interest. That of course is a tricky one – to determine what is the public interest in the first place. The National Union of Journalists has a list of what it considers to be in the public interest. One is about protecting public health and safety, and the list also includes freedom of expression.

Take the issue of public health. This week I got an invite to get another vaccine – this time shingles. This on top of my December flu vaccine. It is a worry that there has been an increase in vaccine sceptics with social media full of conspiracy theorists. Though the vast majority have no training in immunology or virology – all of sudden everyone is an expert. It comes down to trust. Do we trust those within the NHS who encourage us to take the vaccines? Or perhaps you take the Robert F Kennedy Jnr view (he is the USA Secretary of Health and Human Services) that “trusting experts is not a feature of science but totalitarianism and religion”<sup>1</sup>. I did a dive into the world of the sceptics. I found a website that states that the “vast majority of cancer causes are man-made, something that the medical, agricultural, and tech industries do not want you to know. Our mission is to bring you this “secret” information so that you can understand exactly what causes cancer and how to avoid it.” The website promotes various DVDs (to buy) on how we are being lied to and encourages everyone to “say no to forced vaccines.” The website has a number of experts who back it – including one Robert F Kennedy Jnr. I do not intend to give any publicity to the website. Those behind this site are not medically trained and through other social media channels spread misinformation on vaccines and other medical treatments.

I will get my jag at the end of the month.

1. *The Atlantic* – ‘The most powerful man in science’ – January 2026




# Hamlet

Trapped between duty and doubt, surrounded by power and privilege, young Prince Hamlet dares to ask the ultimate question – you know the one.

National Theatre Deputy Artistic Director, Robert Hastie (*Standing at the Sky's Edge*, *Operation Mincemeat*) directs this sharp, stylish and darkly funny reimagining.

*Olivier Award-winner Hiran Abeysekera (Life of Pi) is Hamlet in this fearless, contemporary take on Shakespeare's famous tragedy.*

**Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> January 2026 - 7.30 pm**  
**Crail Community Hall - BYOB**  
**Tickets £14**  
[www.crailcommunityhall.co.uk](http://www.crailcommunityhall.co.uk)





1 MAN (85 YEARS OLD), 5 COUNTRIES, 16 CITIES, 23 SHOWS, 6 WEEKS. WILL HE MAKE IT HOME, OR IS THIS THE END OF THE ROAD?

## JOHN CLEESE PACKS IT IN

**IN CINEMAS FROM 13 NOV (IF HE SURVIVES)**

With unique and intimate access and showing unexpected tenderness, this is a documentary about legacy, laughter, and the dignity of bowing out... however reluctantly.

Spanning six weeks on the road, the film captures Cleese unfiltered and on the move – riffing on life, fame, and the absurdity of getting old in front of thousands of fans. As he reflects on a stage career that began in 1963, the question lingers: is this the end of the road?

**Sunday, 25<sup>th</sup> January 2026 - 3.00 pm**  
**Crail Community Hall - BYOB**  
**Tickets £12**  
[www.crailcommunityhall.co.uk](http://www.crailcommunityhall.co.uk)





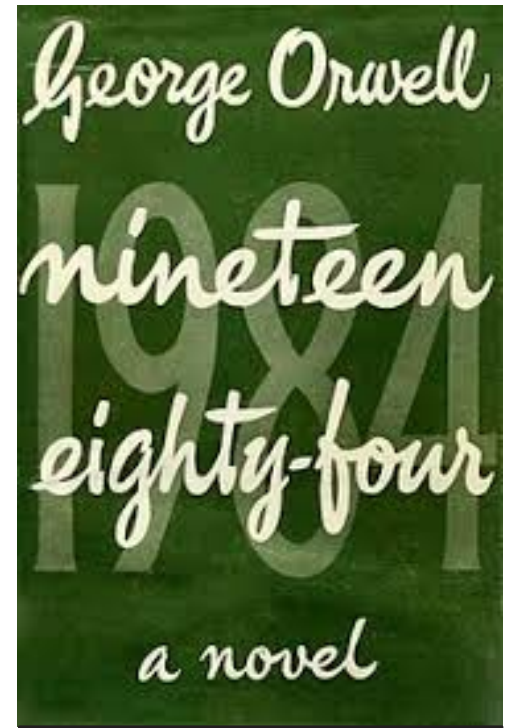
## What determines our future?

How are you enjoying National Year of Reading? Not started yet? That's not a problem: you can join in at any time, and dip in and out of it as you wish.

If you've been enjoying some light-hearted works over the holiday period, perhaps you're ready for something that will make you think. My choices this week are books you may have heard about but not read; or may have read long ago; or may think are outdated and therefore irrelevant. Of course it's up to you whether you (re)read them or not. See what you ... think.

Many people will have heard of Big Brother and Room 101. They will remember them as tv shows. What were the key points? In Big Brother, contestants were watched constantly by remote surveillance, while confined in one house. What's in Room 101? "Everyone knows what's in Room 101; it's the worst thing in the world."

Both of these ideas come from George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (sometimes published as *1984*). Written mostly in 1947 and published in 1949, the book tells of a totalitarian regime where citizens are constantly monitored for possible disloyalty to the leader, Big Brother. Even thinking disloyally – "thoughtcrime" – is likely to lead to imprisonment and torture. Children report their parents for possible wrong-thinking. Two-way tv screens are everywhere. Poverty is rife, and war seems constant – but ordinary people have no way of knowing the truth of the situation, because all media are controlled, even amended, by the ruling Party. Killing those deemed disloyal is insufficient, as there is a danger that they will be thought of as martyrs. They must be made to think differently; they must be made to love Big Brother.



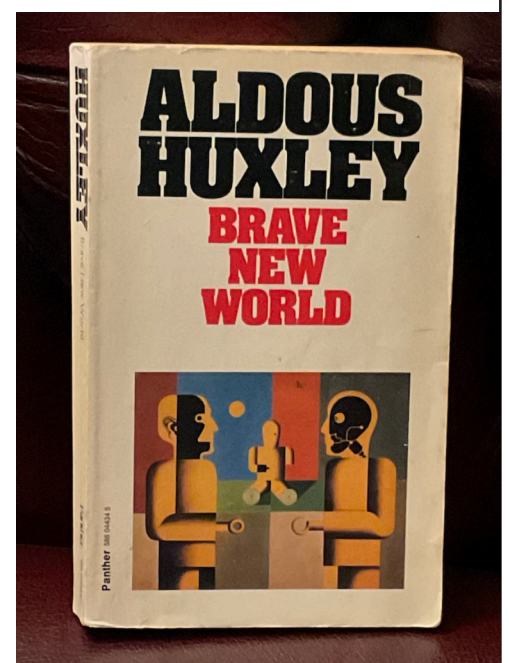
First-edition cover by Michael Kennard, published by Secker & Warburg

If you've heard the expression "brave new world" at all, it might be as part of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, but it is also the title of another novel painting a picture of humanity's possible future. Written by Aldous Huxley in 1931 and published in 1932, *Brave New World* describes a society where pleasure is the guiding principle of its citizens, all of whom are moulded and conditioned from embryo status onwards to be perfectly suited to the jobs for which they are intended. Recreation can be enhanced by drug-taking, and sensual pleasure is people's goal, not intellectual endeavour or curiosity.

Both authors were serious thinkers and writers, politically aware and interested in current and recent developments. They were aware of one another's works. Both saw their novels as warnings of how society might develop. Perhaps it's not surprising that Orwell, writing after the Second World War, should have produced the version that focuses on suffering, cruelty and man's inhumanity to man.

You might wonder what these books, written in the first half of the previous century, could possibly have to say to us, in 2026. Mainly, it's what they suggest about human nature that is of interest, and that never seems to change. The novels are of interest not so much for what we might think the writers "got wrong" as for their keen insights into what motivates human beings and how we behave towards one another. Each novel takes some human traits and projects what might come to pass if these traits are allowed free rein. Worth (re)reading? I'd say so.

**PS:** does this (from a summary of *1984*) remind you of anything? "Great Britain, now known as Airstrip One, has become a province of the totalitarian superstate Oceania, which is led by Big Brother, a dictatorial leader supported by an intense cult of personality"?





## Coastline Friendship Club



All welcome for homemade soup,  
a cuppa and a blether!

Meets every fortnight on a Friday  
11.30-1.00pm

Crail Community Hall  
(please use side entrance)

Next dates: 5 December  
16 & 30 January  
13 & 27 February



Coastline Community Church SCIO  
21 Session Street, Pittenweem  
[www.coastlinechurch.org.uk](http://www.coastlinechurch.org.uk)  
01333 312041 • Charity no. SC052258

## Crail Matters

### Revised Deadline for Submissions.

Due to increased workload, the  
deadline for submissions has been  
moved to Wednesday at 14:00.

We kindly ask all advertisers and  
contributors to adhere to this updated  
deadline.

### Local Services

#### PO High Street South

Monday 1400-1545, Tuesday 1400-1545,  
Wednesday 1400-1545

#### Bank - Marketgate Crail Tuesday 1100-1130

#### Library - St Andrews Road near the School

The mobile library is in Crail FORTNIGHTLY on  
Thursdays from 10am to 10:45am parked in St  
Andrews Road near the school - next few dates are:  
January 8th and 22nd; February 5th and 19th.

POST  
OFFICE

### Crail Matters Donations

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a fantastic response, but we still need more support. If  
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## PLANNING APPLICATIONS

### Royal Burgh of Crail and District

Reference	Address	Proposal	Date Registered	Applicant	Agent	Comments Expiry Date
26/00020/CLP	Woodside Muirhead Crail Anstruther Fife KY10 3XE	Certificate of Lawfulness (proposed) for formation of retention pond	09/01/2026	Ms Audrey Macfarlane Woodside Crail Anstruther Scotland KY10 3XE	James Wright Eden Park House Eden Park Cupar Scotland KY15 4HS	

## ***The Crail Seagull has its eye on you***



Aren't we fortunate to have missed all the snow that seems to have covered most of the country recently? In case you didn't know, as we can sense the small but significant changes in air pressure that indicate a storm is on its way, I have relocated to Crail. It turns out that we seagulls are like a barometer with the amazing ability to tell the weather and move inland for shelter. It helps us survive storms. Since winter is full of changeable

weather, often on and off storms or bad pressure patches, it is more common for us to move inland during the winter.

Unfortunately, my relatives 'up north' are struggling: everywhere inland is covered in deep snow; it even reaches right down to the water's edge! I hope it doesn't last too long. Soran Xurmale, took this snap as he wondered what the youngster intended doing with it. It's a lot smaller than the apple that hit the fisherman!

The snow looks quite lovely when it's freshly fallen, but when it thaws, it leaves behind all the rubbish, and most notably all the dog poo that owners have not picked up. Come on owners, let's do better.



### **Most Holy Trinity Church, Crail**

Sunday Mass. 9.30 am

Wednesday Mass. 12 noon.

### **St John's Episcopal Church, Marygate**

#### **Pittenweem.**

11.30am St John's joins St Adrian's parish in Pittenweem Kirk for Week of Prayer for Christian Unity service

### **Coastline Community Church, Pittenweem.**

Our morning service with Sunday school starts at 10.30am every Sunday. All welcome!

<https://coastlinechurch.org.uk/> Tel. 01333 312041

### **Kilrenny Parish Church**

Sunday services are at 9.45am each week. Services are recorded, and are available on the church website, along with additional information on events.

Church Website:- <https://e-voice.org.uk/kilrenny/>

### **Kingsbarns Parish Church.**

All are welcome at this friendly village church. Sunday services are at 10.00am each week. For more information, please contact Rev. Wotherspoon. 07711 706634, [wotherspoonrig@btinternet.com](mailto:wotherspoonrig@btinternet.com)

### **Crail Parish Church**

Our interim moderator is the Revd David Scott

**From Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2026 services will continue to be at 10.00 am unless otherwise stated. Tea and coffee will be served following the service.**

#### **Services.**

**18<sup>th</sup> January**

The Revd David Scott

**25<sup>th</sup> January**

The Revd Ewen Gilchrist

**Crail Church Stamp Collections** - The Church of Scotland stamp collections will terminate at the end of February. If you have been collecting stamps over the Christmas post, please deliver them to the Church or Kirk Hall; both have letter boxes.

**Church Flower Calendar** – there are still some Sundays available for flowers donations. If you are interested in providing flowers for any Sunday, please add your name to the list in the church vestibule. If you wish further information, please speak to Ruby Mackie.

**Chatbite** – every Wednesday in the Kirk Hall from 10 – 12pm, just feel free to pop in. Still only £3, a real bargain.

**Streaming** – Sunday services are 'live' streamed as video recordings, which can be publicly accessed from our YouTube channel, or via the Crail Church website. **More information is provided on the notice posted in the church entry vestibule.**



Material for inclusion in Crail Matters should be sent to [crailmatters@gmail.com](mailto:crailmatters@gmail.com) and received on Wednesday 2.00pm for publication in Friday issue. Any views expressed in articles or Letters to the Editor are those of the author, and not of Crail Matters. We reserve the right to edit copy for length and style. Submission does not guarantee inclusion. © Crab Publishing 2026: Editorial Team: Julie Middleton, Viktoriia Medvied, Wendy Bellars, Max Taylor, Peter Salkeld. Phone contact 07557884148. We are regulated by IMPRESS, but initial complaints must be made to us. You can view our complaints procedure at [crailmatters.com](http://crailmatters.com). Address for correspondence : Crail Matters Editorial Office, Crail Town Hall, Crail KY10 3UH

