

Edinburgh Branch

September 2026 Newsletter



Contributions to the newsletter or the website are welcome. Please send anything to:
communications@edinburghparkinsons.org

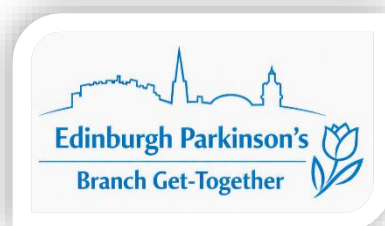
News in Brief

Some snippets of news we feel important are outlined below:

Our New 'Season' Starts Soon

You hopefully got our Tri-fold leaflet in the post early in August. It lists all the activities we have and support groups, cafés, and sources for information

Our first [Branch Get-Together](#) is on Wednesday 9th September from 2–4pm at Lifecare Centre, Stockbridge. Our first guest speaker is Felicity Aitken.



Felicity is a specialist Neurological/Elderly Rehab Physiotherapist. She worked as a senior physiotherapist in the NHS for several years, specialising in stroke rehabilitation, orthopaedic rehab after surgery, falls prevention, rehab in the community, maintaining function and independence. All of which is entirely relevant to people with Parkinson's.

Venue Change Reminder: Singing 4 Fun

As luck would have it, within a couple of weeks of sending out the Branch Tri-Fold leaflet with details of all our activities, the amalgamation of Marchmont St Giles' and Reid Memorial congregations that led to Blackford and Grange Parish Church has meant they withdrew the room that we have used for many years.

So, thanks to Olivia the Branch Secretary, a new venue was secured for the start of the new season which started on 1st September. Our new venue will be the Small Hall at Liberton Kirk Centre, 28 Kirkgate, Edinburgh EH16 6RY. The day and time are the same: Tuesdays from 2 – 4pm.

You can find more details on the [Singing 4 Fun webpage](#). New people are always welcome. If you want more details, feel free to email Olivia: secretary@edinburghparkinsons.org.

Side by Side with Parkinson's Course

We highlighted this really helpful course in the July newsletter, and there are still some places available. It would be really helpful if we could get additional people.

When: First session is on Monday 19th October 2026

Time : 2-4 pm (Tea/coffee available on arrival)

Venue: Small Hall at Liberton Kirk Centre, 28 Kirkgate, Edinburgh EH16 6RY

Course contents:

- 19th October: Introduction Session and Parkinson's Local Adviser Natalie Blair
- 26th October: Parkinson's Nurse Specialist Melanie Arthurs
- 2nd November: NHS Bladder and Bowel Nurse Team
- 9th November: Jeanne- Marie Lee from Vocal (who provide support and practical guidance for carers)
- 16th November: Clare Telford, Speech & Language Therapist
- 23rd November: Pamper/Me Time with Fiona Gardiner

For more information or to register a place, please contact Anne Hood:
annehood@edinburghparkinsons.org



Please also note that after this course, there is an active Carer Support Group that takes place on the last Wednesday of each month, from 10.30- 12.30. Please see details at the [Carers Support Group](#) webpage.

Coffee Morning to Raise Funds for the Branch

Blackhall St Columba's Church is holding a craft coffee morning on Saturday 26th Sept from 10am-Noon, in aid of Edinburgh Branch.

There are some exciting items for sale, including designer jewellery and items made of wood and glass. And of course there are bound to be delicious goodies to purchase. The venue for the coffee morning is the church, which is based on Columba Rd, Edinburgh EH4 3QU (corner of Hillhouse Rd and Columba Rd).

We are grateful to the church as they have chosen us to be recipients of their fundraising charity initiatives for 2026. We have mentioned already that part of their aspirations is that we host a new social café to cover NW Edinburgh.

Craft Coffee Morning
At Blackhall St. Columba's Church
Held by the Watch Committee in aid of:

 **Parkinson's UK**
Edinburgh Branch

Saturday 26th September 2026
Adults: £5.00 Over 5s: £1.00 Under 5s: Free
10am – 12 Noon



On sale will be items made of wood, glass, designer jewellery, home baking, jams and other produce.

Please help us raise money to provide a well needed meeting place for those with Parkinson's Disease in North West Edinburgh.



Quality Of Life (QoL) Group

After a short break, the QoL Group will resume on Thursday, 3rd September. This is a group for People with Parkinson's only.



The group takes place monthly, on the first Thursday from 2-3.15pm at 28, Roseburn Place, EH12 5NN.

The group is currently in-person. However, it is hoped that an online option to participate will be available very soon.

For more information, please see the dedicated [QoL webpage](#).

Or contact organiser Sally: sallyrichards@edinburghparkinsons.org

Pilates at Stockbridge

Katie has returned from holiday and restarted her classes on the 25th of August. There is a slight change to the previous mixed ability classes, to better meet the needs of the participants.

Katie has now amended the classes to one improvers and one beginners' class.

Beginners: The new 3-4pm is for beginners and is a seated session. There are still some spaces, so if you are interested, the contact details are further down.

Improvers: The 2-3pm class which does include mat work is aimed at improver level. Again, there are a couple of places left in this session.

The sessions are on Tuesdays at Stockbridge Parish Church (The Young Room), 7B Saxe Coburg Street, Edinburgh, EH3 5BN.

If you would like to attend, please email: katie@edinburghparkinsons.org

Sharing a Parkinson's Diagnosis and Reducing Stigma

The Parkinson's Excellence Network are hosting their next webinar for people newly diagnosed with Parkinson's on Wednesday 16 September at 7pm.

Are you newly diagnosed with Parkinson's and wondering how to tell friends, family, or your employer? Worried about being stigmatised? If so, this webinar could be invaluable.

A panel of people living with Parkinson's and a Parkinson's specialist nurse will reflect on their experience and cover practical tips for holding tricky conversations when sharing a diagnosis.

Book your place via this link to the event on [Eventbrite](#).

You can bring along your questions for the panel or submit them in advance via the booking form (which is done through Eventbrite).



Photo Attribution: Eventbrite Listing

Bowlers Required (Crown Green, Not Cricket!)

At the August Niddrie Café it transpires a couple who go regularly are pretty good bowlers and the genesis of an idea was formed, to perhaps have a one-off tournament : Niddrie Versus the Rest of Edinburgh!

If you are interested in playing for the Rest of Edinburgh please email: annec@edinburghparkinsons.org and she will pass your details to the relevant people (the Niddrie-ites 😊).



If there is sufficient interest, we hope to squeeze in a game this year (the usual bowls season is from April to September).

Fisherrow Centre: 150th Birthday Event

The Fisherrow Centre in Musselburgh had a 150th birthday bash on 23rd August and kindly offered us a table to promote the Branch.

Special thanks to Garry Sloan who agreed to volunteer to man the table. Also Sheila Edward who went along with some Parkinson's UK leaflets, and Branch Chair Stephen and his sister went along to support as well.

As the event was in Musselburgh it was a good opportunity to make people aware of Café Niddrie, so we had some flyers printed (see pic on left).

We are keen to continue to work to reach outlying areas of Edinburgh and keep momentum going on all the existing cafés and Niddrie sometimes needs an extra push.



Details of our current three Social Cafés are on the dedicated [Café Webpage](#).

Have You Seen My Mojo?: Parkinson's Event

In 2025, Ali Blevins published her collection of poems about living with Parkinson's. At the event we hear how Ali rediscovered hope and beauty amid a life changing diagnosis. As part of this entertaining evening, Ali will share her story and be in conversation with the Makar, Peter Mackay, about her collection.

You will hear a selection of her poems alongside visuals of her amazing artwork. Dr David Breen, a neurologist specialising in Parkinson's, will share his insights. The North Berwick Songwriters will treat us to new songs inspired by Ali's poetry and written especially for this one-off event.

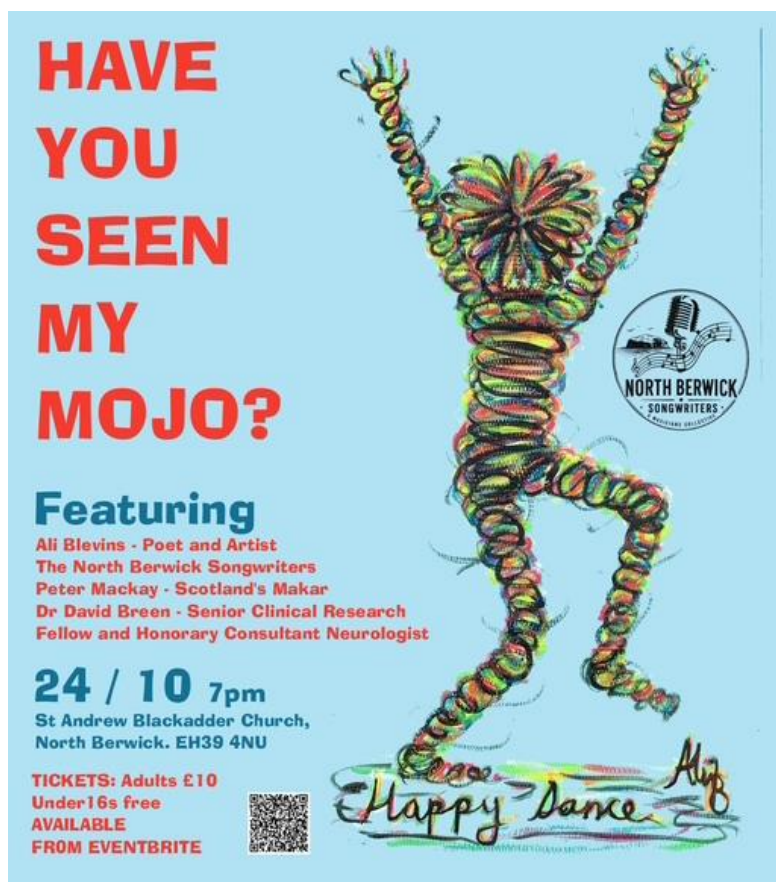
Please join Ali for this evening of song, spoken word and humour while fundraising for two local services:

They are raising money for [Leuchie House](#), who provide respite care for people with Parkinson's, and [Haddington Parkinson's Cafe](#), which is a space for people with Parkinson's in East Lothian to meet monthly, socialise and learn new things - from chair yoga to hearing from Parkinson's experts.

The event is on Saturday 24 October at 7 PM.

Venue is: St Andrew Blackadder Church, North Berwick, East Lothian.

Tickets are £10 (under 16s free).



The QR code in the image is too small, so please get your tickets via this [Eventbrite](#) link.

We wish Ali and all the contributors a wonderful evening and hope the event is a roaring success and raises lots of money for these two wonderful services.

Allowances PwP's Can Claim

At the recent Niddrie Café it was highlighted that there is some information that is not necessarily widely known and perhaps it would be useful to share a couple.

Disabled Person Council Tax Discount

You may be able to get a reduction on your Council Tax bill if you, or an adult or child living with you, is permanently disabled. This is a property-based reduction, for a property that has been adapted or had changes made that are essential and of major importance in the day to day living of the person with a disability. You get to pay one band lower Council tax, backdated to when you got the work done. If you already live in a Band A property, you receive a proportional discount instead.

Value Added Tax (VAT) Exemption

Parkinson's UK confirm that if you are disabled or have a long-term condition, you should not be charged Value Added Tax (VAT) on products designed or adapted for your personal use or use at home.



This includes: stairlifts, adjustable beds, wheelchairs, and alarms.

You also should not be charged VAT on: installations, such as the cost for installing a stairlift or a ramp, repairs, maintenance, spare parts for equipment.

Depending on your needs, you can apply for a VAT exemption by:

- asking the supplier of your equipment or services for a VAT relief form
- applying online when purchasing VAT-free items on the internet
- downloading a form to take into a shop when you make a qualifying purchase.

Find more information on VAT on the [GOV.UK website](https://www.gov.uk).

Research Opportunities

Experiences of the Parkinson's ON mobile app

Parkinson's ON is a health tracking app which has been part-funded by Parkinson's UK. A PhD student wants to find out what makes the app easy or difficult for PwPs to use. Your experiences will help design better apps for people with Parkinson's.

The researchers need 30 people with Parkinson's who own a mobile device like a tablet or smartphone with internet access. (Unfortunately, people who have used the Parkinson's ON app before or who have been diagnosed with dementia are unable to take part).

It involves completing a 15-minute online survey and using the Parkinson's ON app as much as you find useful for 1 month. You complete a 5-minute survey at the end of the month and will be invited to a 45-minute online interview with the researcher.

For more information, please read the [participant information sheet](#)

How Does New Music About Parkinson's Make You Feel?

Researchers from the University of Manchester have created new music in partnership with people with Parkinson's. They want to find out how the music makes people with and without Parkinson's feel and think.

To be eligible to participate you need access to a computer, tablet or mobile phone with video and a stable internet connection. You will complete a 45-minute online survey which will involve questions about your experience of Parkinson's, listening to short clips of music and sharing your thoughts.

Some participants will be invited to visit the University of Manchester for a 3-hour lab session, which will involve:

- Movement, thinking, and memory tests
- Completing tasks with & without music health and wellbeing services near you.

For more information, please read the [participant information sheet](#).

Book Recommendations

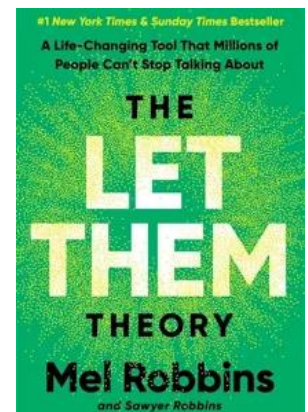
Last month we gave a recommendation for a book for carers that had been suggested to us and received positive feedback from those who had opportunity to look over the book. At the August Carer Support Group we got a couple more suggestions we thought worth sharing.

The Let Them Theory

The Let Them Theory: A Life-Changing Tool That Millions of People Can't Stop Talking About by Mel Robbins is a transformative personal growth guide that teaches readers how to detach from emotional drama, stop trying to micro-manage others, and reclaim their personal agency.

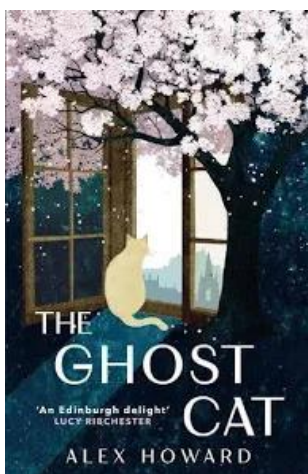
The book's central premise is that emotional burnout, anxiety, and frustration do not stem from your circumstances, but rather from the exhaustingly toxic habit of trying to control people and situations you cannot change. (Does that sound familiar to those of you in a caring role?)

By adopting the simple, two-word mantra "Let Them," you interrupt the brain's reactive stress patterns and consciously choose where your finite time and mental energy is best used.



The Ghost Cat

The Ghost Cat by Alex Howard is a charming, century-spanning historical fantasy set entirely in the heart of Edinburgh. The story follows Grimalkin, a clever marmalade cat who dies in an Edinburgh tenement flat in 1902.



Granted nine afterlife lives by a mythical feline deity, Grimalkin spends the next 120 years haunting his old Marchmont home.

As an invisible phantom, he watches the world change through two World Wars, technological revolutions, and generations of eccentric human tenants.

Heartwarming and deeply moving, it is a beautifully written love letter to time, memory, and the city of Edinburgh itself.

Edinburgh Parkinson's Lecture 2026

A reminder that the lecture tickets are still available for those either attending in person or watching the live stream. We hope as many as possible will come along for the live event. Prior to the event we provide tea, coffee, and some nibbles.

When: Tuesday 22nd September.

Time: Lecture starts at 7.15pm – doors open at 6pm

Where: Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, 11 Queen St, EH2 1JQ

Lecturer: Our guest Lecturer is Prof Miratul Muqit

Topic: The title of the lecture is: Power failure in the Brain: the mitochondrial basis of Parkinson's Disease.



Register for FREE tickets to attend [In Person](#)

Register for FREE tickets to watch [Live Online](#)

Online Boxing Classes

We ran a feature in last month's newsletter about the new online boxing classes that Craig Comrie is starting. A few of the YP's are interested but we do want to stress this activity is not only for those of working age. It is open to all.

We have added to the website under [Non-Branch Activities and Events](#) (within the regular activities section) a section which confirms full details of the classes, and how to sign up - as shown in the image below).

Non-Branch Activities and Events

Here we will list some of the activities and events that are organised by verified and reputable third-party organisations.

BOXING: NEW ONLINE CLASS



RE-CONNECT DANCE PROJECT



GLOVES UP FOR PARKINSON'S (BOXING)

