

# A Listening Ear

Spreading Friendship Across Dumfries & Galloway

Welcome to the Spring 2026 edition of our newsletter!



We're excited to share what we've been up to at **A Listening Ear** and how we're continuing to grow and support communities across Dumfries and Galloway.

As our community continues to grow, we'd love your help spreading the word. Invite your friends and colleagues to subscribe by dropping us a note at [hello@alistening-ear.org](mailto:hello@alistening-ear.org).

Thinking of volunteering or supporting our work? Whether you're considering becoming a befriender, applying to be a trustee, referring someone to our services, or making a donation – everything you need is just a click away at [www.a-listening-ear.org](http://www.a-listening-ear.org).

*Your ALE Team*

It was all change at the end of August when Susan Ribbens, our outgoing Project Manager left us for pastures new. We'd like to thank Susan for her time at A Listening Ear and extend a very warm welcome to our amazing new Project Manager Morag Letson



## Morag - Project Manager

Since starting with ALE Morag has brought a wealth of project management experience and knowledge in health and social care!

Morag's warm and engaging personality has made her a firm favourite with staff and volunteers alike!



### Message from Morag Letson - Project Manager

Hi

I am really excited to be managing this fantastic project. I have a long career in social care and more than a decade in a senior management .

In my leisure time I enjoy a wide range of music. Everything from opera and 60s music to country and of course the wonderful pipe band music Scotland is famous for. My husband and I have two grown up children and a very beautiful dog who encourages us onto the local beaches at every opportunity. **Morag**

Spring 2026

## Highlights

All Change!

Friendly Cup

Death Cafe and The Last Chapter Cafe

Glasgow Kilt Walk

United Nations International Day of Friendship



We'd love to hear from you. Your stories, content, and ideas for this newsletter are most welcome!  
[hello@listening-ear.org](mailto:hello@listening-ear.org)



# VCO Jim Brodie

Welcome

Soon after Morag joined us we were lucky enough to gain the services of our new Volunteer Coordinator Jim Brodie, Jim brings with him a wealth of experience in third sector organisations and is already making his mark here at ALE - and his IT skills are much sought after already!

## Message from Jim Brodie Volunteer Coordinator West



My experience includes many years in the third sector in D&G, both volunteering and as a member of staff. Starting out though, I had a long stint as a research academic at various universities around the UK and abroad, before settling down in D&G.

My wife and I live on a smallholding, where we grow all our own fruit and vegetables and love the outdoors



## Friendly Cups

Friendly Cups are a great way of bringing our volunteers and befriendees together to share refreshments and have a bit of a natter!

Did you know we have events happening all over the region? On the first Wednesday and last Friday of each month join us at the North West Castle in Stranraer from 10.30am until noon. Volunteers are also invited on the first Friday of each month to the Belted Galloway Cafe in Newton Stewart again from 10.30am until 12noon.

Recently our VCO for the East of the Region Caroline hosted an event at Nithsdale Mills in Dumfries where she played Bingo with the tenants as you can see a good time was had by all!





# Death Cafe Burnfoot Lodge

We were delighted to join Burnfoot residential care home on 9th Feb-26 for their recent Death Café, a friendly and informative session that brought together families, friends and professionals - including a local funeral director, solicitor, church minister and NHS Public Health Improvement Practitioner Ruth Grieve.

One of our service users and a volunteer befriender came along, and it was a warm, relaxed space where people could ask questions, share experiences and chat openly about topics that can often feel difficult

We're excited to be working with Ruth Grieve to bring similar events to our own service users, volunteers, and their families - helping to keep these supportive conversations going.

## THE LAST CHAPTER CAFE

Following on from the event at Burnfoot we are delighted to announce that in collaboration with Loreburn Housing we are hosting a Last Chapter Cafe at Nithsdale Mills

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 2pm

Open to all Tenants of Loreburn, ALE Volunteers and any family members

## Do you fancy a walk?

We are looking for people to take part in the walk whilst raising much needed funds for us?

To register to take part in the Kilt Walk on behalf of ALE or if you want to sponsor someone who is already planning to walk please follow this link and choose A Listening Ear as you're charity - Thank you

Glasgow Kiltwalk 2026



# United Nations International Day of Friendship 30<sup>th</sup> July 2026

After the success of our celebrations last year we are busy in the background organising events to celebrate this throughout Dumfries and Galloway

Alongside this we will be seeking nominations for the Liz Arkless Friendship Awards - do you know someone in our region who has gone above and beyond when you've needed them most? If you'd like to nominate anyone you can do so by getting in touch at [hello@alistinging-ear.org](mailto:hello@alistinging-ear.org)

