



November 2023 NEWSLETTER

# Breathe Easy Fife



The Queen's Award  
for Voluntary Service

The MBE for volunteer groups



It won't be long before Christmas is here.

We don't have any meetings in December, and this is because many of you have various parties and social events on. We always have our Xmas party in January and this year it is on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup>. We are taking names and menu choices at the meetings so if you aren't going to be at this month's meetings you need to phone if you want to attend the party so that we find out what you want to eat. The cost of the party which includes your 2-course dinner and entertainment is £15 per person and this should be paid at the November meeting.

## Struggling with feeling SAD?



SAD stands for seasonal affective disorder and is sometimes described as "winter depression" or the "winter blues." SAD can start to kick in around autumn as the days become shorter, and symptoms include low mood, being less active, and sleeping more.

If the short, dark days and chilly weather are getting you down, here are some tips to getting you feeling like yourself again...

### 💡 Get more light

Get outside as often as you can. Although winter weather can be challenging at times, Scotland can be especially beautiful in the winter months. If you have to be indoors, try sitting close to a window during daylight hours. Consider investing in a light box, which produces a very bright light and can be useful in treating SAD.

### 🥗 Eat well

Winter blues can make you crave sugary foods and carbohydrates such as chocolate, pasta and bread. Avoid eating only stodge and include plenty of fresh fruit and veg into your diet for an energy boost.

### 🚴 Get active

Regular physical activity can improve your general mood, self-confidence, sleep quality, both your energy and stress levels. If you head outside to exercise you'll get the added benefit of getting some daylight too.

Do you have any other tips to keep yourself happy during the winter months? 😊

## Sending our thoughts to members

Get well wishes to members who have been unwell this past month and hope you are now feeling better.

Helen Hailstones Steve Bewley  
Fiona MacSporran Isa Clark  
Kathleen Dyke Violet Wright  
Betty Sylvester Ann Stewart  
Carol Robertson Christine Aitkenhead  
Jennifer Wilkinson Kathleen McIntosh



## Does anyone need this 4-wheeled walker?

It has a shopping bag and seat and looks nearly new so if you are in need of one then let me know as it has generously been donated.



**Remember** if you do any Christmas shopping online, to register with Easyfundraising so that we get donations from them each time you shop. Use this link

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/bekirkcaldy> or



the QR code to go direct to our funding page. The funding page states Breathe Easy Kirkcaldy but this is just because we have had it for years, however the donations go to Breathe Easy Fife and we use them for things such as Xmas party etc.

Believe you can and you're half way there.

Some of you know Pam our Committee Coordinator and I asked her to share her story of a project she has been involved in.

At a Breathe Easy meeting last year I was interviewed by the Communications Officer for Asthma + Lung UK about living with COPD, for an article that appeared in the Courier. I was then invited to take part in the 'Talking Heads' project that Glasgow Science Centre were developing for the University of Glasgow's School of Health and Wellbeing, to raise awareness of the research they are involved with addressing some of the greatest health challenges. So earlier this year I travelled to Glasgow where I was filmed talking about my COPD journey, the impact it has on my life, managing the condition, the importance of support and any advice I could offer others and of course Breathe Easy got a big mention as a vital part of my support network.

'Talking Heads' are interactive video screens looking at the work behind the research through different perspectives which visitors can watch and listen to using headphones. Designed as part of an extensive mixed media installation, the result is a slightly larger than life interactive video screen where you can watch and listen to me talking about COPD. I recently took my family to see the exhibition and there's me in living colour, quite a weird experience to see and hear yourself talking and moving on screen !! They loved it and I congratulate the team on making me look and sound very professional.



The installation is fascinating, a public engagement space on the ground floor of the School of Health and Wellbeing in the west end of Glasgow, that's open to the public 8am - 5pm Monday - Friday, there's a coffee shop and entry is free of charge. With touch screens, heaps of information on all sorts of health issues in Glasgow and around the world and many other interactive displays. It's a fascinating place and a great place to visit for adults and children alike.

Pam Channer  
BEF Committee Co-ordinator

It is health that is real wealth  
and not pieces of gold or silver  
Now that we are older we see  
things differently.....



- \* Going out is good.....Coming home is better !
- \* You forget names.... But it's okay because other people forgot they even knew you !!!
- \* You sleep better on a lounge chair with the TV blaring than in bed. It's called pre-sleep.
- \* You miss the days when everything worked with just an 'on' 'off' switch
- \* You use more 4 lettered words..."what" "when"
- \* What used to be freckles are now liver spots.
- \* Everybody whispers.
- \* You realise that you are never going to be really good at anything.
- \* You have 3 sizes of clothes in your wardrobe... 2 of which you will never wear again.
- \* But old is good in some things; old songs, old movies, and best of all old friends

Stay well old friend.

We had our Dunfermline group visiting the Lady Haig poppy factory last week so will have photos of their visit in the next newsletter.

Remembrance day this year is  
Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> November



A huge Thank You  
to Lundin Links  
Community Choir

We have been very fortunate for the support, kindness and donations from the choir over the years and we have just received a gift of £500 from them. The support they have given over the years has been a huge help to develop Breathe Easy and we are really grateful for their kindness.

The choir is having an open rehearsal evening on 12<sup>th</sup> December where anyone who wants to pop in and hear them are very welcome.

Don't fret if you run out of medication! 

Some local pharmacies can provide a supply to bridge the gap until your next prescription.

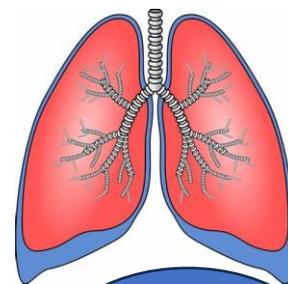
Sometime later becomes never. DO IT NOW.

## What is breathlessness?

Getting out of breath is normal. It's a natural response when your body needs more oxygen and energy when you do something that requires physical effort. Getting out of breath when we exercise is a positive reaction and part of keeping our bodies fit and strong.

But some people get out of breath whether or not they're physically exerting themselves. They unexpectedly find it difficult or uncomfortable to breathe and may feel they can't control their breathing.

Sometimes this kind of breathlessness is long term and people experience it most days. This long-term breathlessness is known as chronic breathlessness. It develops gradually and lasts for weeks, months or years. Sometimes people also cough, bring up phlegm or wheeze.



Some people think that chronic means 'bad'. But it actually means 'long-term'.

Breathlessness is a symptom.

There are many possible underlying causes. But the main causes are:

lung conditions      anxiety      heart conditions      being unfit.

If you get breathless on a regular basis, you might have been diagnosed with one of these causes. Often there's more than one. And others can develop over time.

## Obstructive and restrictive lung conditions

Obstructive or restrictive lung diseases both cause breathlessness, but they result from different processes in your lungs:

- obstruction refers to how quickly you can move air in and out
- restriction refers to the total amount of air you can get into your lungs

If a healthy person takes a big breath in and then blows out as hard, they will be able to get over 70% of the air out of their lungs in one second.

In **obstructive lung disease**, such as COPD, asthma, or bronchiectasis, it takes longer to empty your lungs. <sup>1</sup> slower because the disease makes your airways narrower or lungs less elastic. Because breathing out is slower, the person may need to breathe in again before they have emptied their lungs. This makes breathing uncomfortable.

In **restrictive conditions**, you cannot fill your lungs with air because your lungs are restricted from fully expanding. This happens when the lungs themselves are stiff or because there is a problem with the chest wall or breathing muscles. The most common restrictive lung conditions are interstitial lung disease, such as IPF, others are obesity or a curved spine.

Some people find it difficult to breathe because they have lots of phlegm in their airways. This happens with lung conditions such as bronchiectasis. If you have lots of sputum, clearing your sputum may help you feel less out of breath.

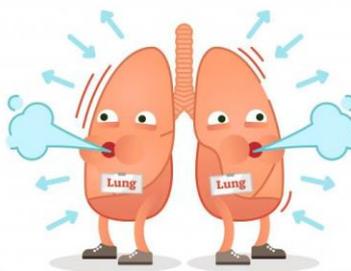
**Remember:** getting out of breath when you're active is good for you!

It's normal to get out of breath when you exercise. If you avoid activity that makes you get out of breath, this will make your breathlessness worse. Your muscles will get weaker and need more oxygen to work.

As your muscles recover after exercise, they adapt to use oxygen more efficiently. So, with regular exercise, you'll need to breathe less to do the same activity.

Over time, doing physical activity that makes you a little bit out of breath will help you feel less out of breath doing everyday activities.

Physical activity includes walking, gardening and doing housework, as well as activities like swimming, playing sport and going to a gym.



Breathlessness is also affected by the way you breathe, your lifestyle and how you think and feel about your breathing:

How you think and feel about your breathing is important. For example, a worrying thought can make you feel anxious and make you feel breathless. This could perhaps make you feel panicky and bring on physical symptoms such as a tight chest or fast breathing.

When you have a long-term lung condition, you can feel anxious. Because being anxious interacts with your physical symptoms and can increase your feelings of breathlessness, it's important to talk to your health care professional about what help is available for you.

Whether you think you can or you think you can't, you're right.

We are continuing with safety measures at meetings to keep everyone as safe as possible.

There will be hand sanitiser on each table which should be used regularly.

You can bring along your own cup for the tea/ coffee, but disposable cups will also be available – we will continue to use individual pots of milk, sugar, wrapped biscuits etc to reduced touching.

DO NOT attend the meeting if you feel unwell or have a temperature.

If anyone in your household tests positive for Covid please do not attend meetings even if you test negative.

## Levenmouth meeting

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> November

1pm – 3.30pm

Fife Renewable Innovation centre,  
Ajax way, Methil

There will be exercise with Fiona, our speaker will be Helen the Respiratory psychologist and there will be our usual chat, cuppa etc.

## Kirkcaldy meeting

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> November

1pm – 3.30pm

Templehall Community Centre,  
Beauly place, Kirkcaldy

There will be an exercise session, raffle and time to chat, our speaker will be Helen the Respiratory psychologist.

## North East Fife meeting

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November

1pm – 3pm

Scoonie Hill Community Centre  
Lamberton place, St Andrews

## Dunfermline meeting

Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> November

1pm – 3.30pm

Parkgate Community Centre, Rosyth

There will be an exercise session,  
raffle and time to chat.



### We run a 200 Club fundraiser.

The cost is £12 once a year which gives you the chance of winning a cash prize every quarter when 3 lucky numbers are chosen. More info and application forms are available at the meetings.



There is no cost to come to a meeting – we don't charge, even the cuppa is free. There is a raffle, and you can choose to buy a ticket or not.



facebook

If you haven't already 'Liked' our Facebook page use the link or search for us on the Facebook page under Breathe Easy Fife

<https://www.facebook.com/breatheeasyfife/>

Keep up to date with meetings etc and there is lots of useful information.



ASTHMA +LUNG UK  
HELPLINE

Tel - 03000 030 555  
Monday–Friday 9am-5pm

No question is too small. Call for advice whether it's about your condition, benefits, care needs or support.

If you want to volunteer at our meetings or have any thoughts or ideas for meetings, then get in touch with our committee coordinator Pam on ;  
Email- [committeebreatheeasy@yahoo.com](mailto:committeebreatheeasy@yahoo.com)  
Phone - 07900638375

**At Breathe Easy Fife we are here for you, so please get in touch if you have any questions, need information or just want a chat. Agnes – 01333 426544  
Mobile - 07730436966  
Email – [breatheeasyfife@yahoo.com](mailto:breatheeasyfife@yahoo.com)**