

Bingo was nearly a full house!



by Robert Pearson

Over recent years bingo halls have closed all across Edinburgh. Many reasons for that spring to mind especially the introduction of the national smoking ban in certain premises.

North Edinburgh's nearest bingo hall in West Granton closed many years ago. At its peak you would see many people queuing outside waiting to be first in to get their preferred seats, and after the closure, the area was left without any bingo facilities at all.

Well this all changed last month when Muirhouse resident, Jackie Brown, (Big Jackie) heard of a new and exciting opportunity. Inspiring Scotland's programme Link Up was in the area to work with individuals and groups. Jackie and a few others met up with Link Up development worker, Julie Crawford, and plans were set in motion for a re-launch of bingo in North Edinburgh.

The Reporter asked Jackie why she thought the reintroduction of bingo is a good idea for Muirhouse and North Edinburgh

She said:-"Since the closure of the bingo hall in Granton years ago, it has been sadly missed by many. We would all go to the bingo and enjoy the game, along with a good chin wag with everyone. When I heard of Link Up I immediately thought we could benefit from this. Julie, the Link Up worker, has been fantastic and made this all possible, given lots of advice and support. I really hope that we can continue to sustain our new bingo and that it runs for many years to come."

Development worker, Julie Crawford, said:-“This fantastic idea of Jackie’s has only been made possible thanks to Inspiring Scotland and their Link Up programme working very closely with Jackie and Muirhouse Millennium Community Centre. I was delighted to see the first bingo game take place last month. Jackie is very passionate about Muirhouse, and will do everything possible to make this venture sustainable.”



On the evening it was a nervous wait for the first bingo session to come round. Often events are arranged in Muirhouse and the take up is not particularly good. Well, there was no need to be nervous, as a fantastic turnout of 29 people came

to the Community Centre to have their first game of bingo in years.

'Eyes down and ready for your first number' was called, the excitement was clear in the hall, these ladies were at home enjoying bingo in the heart of Muirhouse. "Bingo!" There was the first winner. Jackie had done it. People of Muirhouse and North Edinburgh really were playing bingo! Soon, it was the interval, and there was a positive vibe about the centre as the women laughed and chatted with one another.

Due to the fantastic success of the first bingo, Jackie is pleased to confirm that bingo is here to stay – well at least for the time being. She really hopes to welcome even more people this month.

Jackie and all the ladies who attended last month's bingo would like to thank all the staff at Muirhouse Millennium Community Centre, as without their support the event would not have been possible.

Link Up Muirhouse is delivered by Muirhouse Youth Development Group in partnership with, and with funding from, Inspiring Scotland. Inspiring Scotland's Link Up programme is supported by the CashBack for Communities programme. CashBack for Communities is a Scottish Government programme which takes funds recovered from the proceeds of crime and invests them into free activities and programmes for people across Scotland.

Next Bingo night is: 24th October 2012

For more information: 07928 116 375