

Local History

A potted history of Pitcorthie

Bounded by Brucefield and Abbeyview to the north, Duloch Park to the east, and Pitreavie to the south and west, Pitcorthie can trace its origins back to the Bronze Age.

The name is a corruption of 'Pettecorthin', from the Pictish "pett" i.e. estate, and the Gaelic "coirthe" i.e. portion of land, although it also indicates the presence of a standing stone.

Until the 1950s, the site of the Pitcorthie standing stone and its long forgotten cemetery was still 'all fields' as they say, with farms at Easter and Wester Pitcorthie eventually giving their name to the suburb that would emerge here.

The standing stone originally stood on the crest of slightly rising ground. Its modern setting is within an area paved with granite setts, adjacent to Standing Stone Walk. The monument was first scheduled in 1939, and is thought to date to between 2500 BCE and 1500 BCE.

Just 350m to the west, an altogether larger prehistoric site was located on March 31, 1972. A bulldozer

dislodged the capstone of a cist and inadvertently discovered a Bronze Age burial ground. Three cist burials were found in all, plus two cremations and one cremated burial associated with a food vessel.



Like Pitbauchlie, Pitcorthie was an early gift to Dunfermline Abbey, granted to Dunfermline by Malcolm III. The farms of Easter and Wester Pitcorthie are mentioned as far back as the mid-1500s.

Aberdour Road, the epicentre of the estate, is another ancient thoroughfare, and was once the main route between Dunfermline and Burntisland. It had two milestones along the route on either side of the road. Aside from a few cottages, Pitbauchlie House Hotel Dunfermline and its lodge, the area was relatively

rural until the turn of the 20th century. The hotel is owned and managed by the Solley family who have welcomed guests since 1970. By 1949, the magnitude of the post-war housing problem was shown by the fact that the number of applicants on the waiting-list exceeded 3,000. The Town Council then decided to acquire 240 acres of land at Pitcorthie to overcome the housing problem.

There was significant demand for new housing during the early 1960s, and three housing developers purchased land on the southern flank of the town with a view to speculative development. In April 1966, the first house in this 'new' Pitcorthie estate was sold in Cedar Grove.

The area at that time was affectionately known as 'Spam Valley', as it was quite expensive to buy houses and folk couldn't afford to pay their mortgages and make meals! An estimated 1,000 families moved into Pitcorthie over the next few years. House prices ranged from £3,395 for a three-bedroom semi-detached villa, to £4,475 for a four-bedroom detached bungalow.

Buildings of interest include the Our Lady of Lourdes Dunfermline, Canmore Primary School (built in 1975, the only school in Fife to secure five eco Green Flags), Pitcorthie Primary School (built in 1955 at a cost of £130,000, closed in 2014 and since demolished), the King Malcolm Hotel, The Barleysheaf Dunfermline and adjacent shops.



Our Lady of Lourdes Church was built at the instigation of the Rev. Monsignor Richard Delaney and was served from the mother parish of St. Margaret's, Holyrood Place, until 1964. In that year it became a parish in its own right with the appointment of Rev. John Kerrisk as the first Parish Priest.