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# Saintfield News

ISSUE 7

SPRING 2015

## The Square Officially Opened

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

	PAGE
Chair's Viewpoint	2
Development Update	3
Christmas Fair Breakdown	3
May Cycle Ride	4
Saintfield Wins Award	4
Container Planting Demonstration	4
Editor's Letter	5
Will You Get Involved	5
Saintfield Heritage Society	6
Diary Dates	6

Councillor Billy Walker, Chairman of Down District Council, hosted the opening of the upgraded Saintfield Square on Friday 20th March. Barbara Graham, Chair of the Saintfield Development Association was in attendance together with members of the SDA committee.

Welcomed to the opening were Margaret Quinn, the project development manager for Down District Council, Councillors

Terry Andrews, William Dick and Robert Burgess, together with Strangford MP Jim Shannon; Mark Christie of the Down Rural Area Partnership and John Dumigan, the outgoing chief executive of Down District Council.

Gerry Lowe, former Chair of the

SDA put in a brief appearance and it was under his watch that the original scheme was conceived. Members of the Saintfield Steering Group also attended.

in excess of £100 000, has had an impact on the environment of the whole village and it is hoped that it will inspire further improvements to maintain the village as a pleasant place to visit.



After several weeks of disruption on Main Street for both traders and residents, the lower part of the street has now been resurfaced. Visitors to the village will now have a more pleasant environment to enjoy their

shopping experience with a wide variety of welcoming shops to browse.

It is hoped to make the most of the improvements to the village by again entering the "Ulster in Bloom" competition, building on the helpful feedback from the organisers.

The SDA is grateful to the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Down District Council and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive for their investment in Saintfield Square.

This high quality upgrade in the centre of Saintfield, which cost

## Mike Snowden Talk

The Green committee of the SDA have arranged for Mike Snowden to give a public talk on "The restoration of an 18th century formal walled garden".

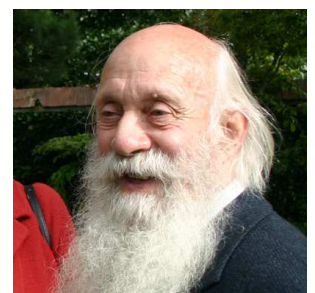
The talk will take place in the Saintfield Sports Club on Thursday 4th June at 7.30pm.

The entry fee is £6 and this

includes light refreshments.

The garden which is the subject of his talk is in the Erddig National Trust in North Wales. Mike is a popular speaker and his talk last year was well supported, so get there early! Everyone is welcome.

Proceeds in aid of SDA "Ulster in Bloom" projects.



# Chair's Viewpoint



**Barbara Graham**  
Chair of Saintfield  
Development  
Association

*“Our plans  
for Belfast  
Road and  
Crossgar will  
be unveiled  
shortly”*

As detailed in our front page article, the SDA is pleased to see the completion of the Saintfield Square project, which should give the town a real boost.

The Village Landscape master plan is now reaching completion and is bringing together a really well thought out consistent plan ranging from walks and rights of way through street furniture, wetlands, environmentally valuable areas, prominent neglected verges, the car park etc.

We are particularly pleased that Down District Council have already acted with us to plant a row of lime trees at Fair View. These, together with the proposed under planting and adjacent hanging basket stands will have a great impact for years to come and will enhance the approach to Saintfield from Ballynahinch and Lisburn.

Our plans for Belfast Road and Crossgar Road will be unveiled shortly when the landscape report is completed. We hope that the SDA can take on proposed individual projects one at a time and build towards achieving much improved approaches along the main roads into Saintfield. We have received much help and encouragement from the Roads Service and Council officials who have undertaken to help in various ways.

### **Rowallane Credit Union Building**

The SDA would like to

congratulate Brian Graham and the Rowallane Credit Union on the completion of their project in Main Street. This was a huge task to take on. It looks beautiful and gives Main Street a huge lift. We wish them well for their future success. Perhaps this project will encourage someone to take on the McRobert's building which we understand is now on the market.

developments as they happen.

### **Funding**

These are uncertain times for funding as we all know. The new Council have implemented a new system for supporting local events such as the Christmas Lights and festivities. All funds have to be bid for and we have no way of knowing at the moment

whether the funds which Down Council historically granted to support us, will be available. This makes future planning difficult and places more pressure on us to raise funds. We will see what happens.

All in all we are pleased with our current progress

on most fronts and press on, confident that a way can be found to overcome the many hurdles we encounter.

### **Events Committee**

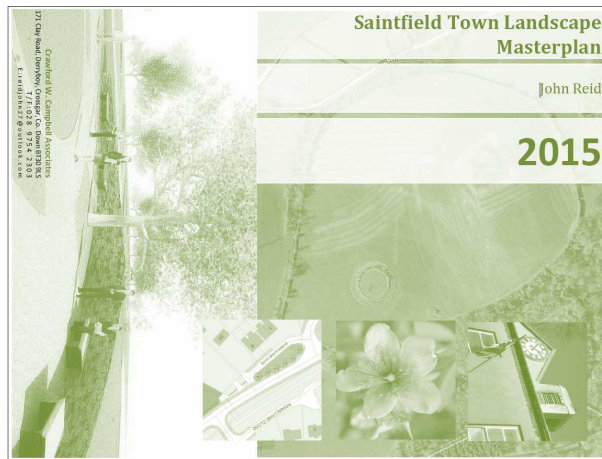
Ian Mack has stepped down as Chair of the Events Committee, at least for the time being and his role has been taken up by Bob Pollock. Bob has already scheduled a full calendar of events for this year and we thank him and wish him and his committee every success.

### **Active Saintfield**

The SDA continue to work tirelessly with our "Active Saintfield" group, Newry, Mourne and Down Council, Lottery Space and Place, and Sport NI on our projects to improve and promote our sport and exercise facilities. We will keep you posted on any future

I would like to thank our loyal committee members who work tirelessly to make Saintfield a better place to live, work and play. I would also like to encourage others – anyone who feels they could help or has an interest in any aspect of contributing to Village life, to contact us through our web site or through the Editor of this newsletter. Contact details are elsewhere in this newsletter.

We welcome everyone and try to ensure that involvement is enjoyable and interesting as well as worth while. Please help us!



*The soon to be released Town Landscape Masterplan*

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# Cycle Ride Planned For May



The events committee of the SDA is staging another of its very popular cycle rides on Sunday 10th May.

The ride will start at the Downpatrick Street car park in Saintfield at 9.30am and the route will be over a distance of about 30 miles through scenic countryside, terminating at The Rowallane Inn.

The entry fee is £10 per head which includes refreshments. Registration

and advance payment can be made via the Saintfield Development Association website

[discoversaintfield.com](http://discoversaintfield.com)

Alternatively payment can be made on the day at the starting point from 8.30am.

The ride is suitable for all categories of cyclists and the route will be marshalled and clearly signposted.

# Saintfield Wins Award



The Saintfield Development Association won the Environmental Improvement section of the "Down Your Street" awards.

Down Your Street is Down District Council's scheme to assist community groups like Saintfield Development Association in looking after local areas. Saintfield Development Association

has received 'clean-up kits' which contain everything needed to get everyone involved.

Members of the SDA Green committee attended the awards presentation ceremony in February at which Councillor Billy Walker, chairman of Down District Council, officiated.

"Down  
Your  
Street  
Award"

# Container Planting Demonstration At Saintfield Garden Centre



The Green Committee of the SDA in conjunction with Beth Lunney, will be holding a container planting demonstration at Saintfield Garden Centre on Saturday 25th April.

Beth Lunney will demonstrate the planting at 11.30am and 2.30pm and the first container planted will be a raffle prize.

Refreshments will be available, with

proceeds in aid of Saintfield's floral displays for the "Ulster in Bloom 2015" competition. There will also be free face painting for the kiddies.

The Saintfield Development Association are extremely grateful to Saintfield Garden Centre, who have been enthusiastic supporters of our floral endeavours in the town.

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# Editor's Letter



**Brian Gamble**  
Editor of  
Saintfield News

Saintfield has the reputation of being a safe place to live and work, with a relatively low rate of crime.

I thought it would be an interesting exercise to have a look at the PSNI crime records for the Saintfield area to see if the facts supported this assumption.

The most recent statistics I could access were for January this year. They reveal that 22 crimes were reported in that month, of which only a few were what might be called major.

Anti-social behaviour accounted for nine of the 22

offences, nearly half of all incidents. This might underline the need for our delayed community centre!

Three burglaries were reported, together with three incidents of violence / sexual offences and two of criminal damage / arson. The figures were completed with four "other" thefts and one "other" crime.

However, in recent weeks I have heard of at least two break-ins to local shops and a vehicle theft from Comber Road. No doubt if true these will be recorded in future PSNI statistics.

I have a view, shared by others,

that the perpetrators of the burglaries and thefts are not residents of our village but itinerant criminals who perhaps see Saintfield as a soft target.

We need to be on our guard against becoming complacent with regard to safety and security issues.

Make sure you remain vigilant and keep your property secure, be aware of suspicious activity and keep an eye out for your neighbours.

We all need to play our part to ensure that Saintfield maintains its reputation as a peaceful and safe village.

## Will You Get Involved?

The late president John F. Kennedy of the United States said in his inauguration speech in January 1961 "Ask not what your country can do for you — ask what you can do for your country."

These words are valid in most walks of life. Many people are quite happy to sit back and complain about all manner of things which make them unhappy or dissatisfied as they go about their daily lives. They point fingers at others and criticise. They are the naysayers of life who often take pleasure in the failures of others and say "I told you so" when things don't go as planned.

Then there are those who are determined to make a difference – to improve the quality of life for themselves as well as their neighbours and fellow citizens. They become involved in the affairs of their community, using their talents and ideas

as well as giving up some of their time to change things for the better.



The Saintfield Development Association believes that the population of our village comprises more of the latter than the former and is appealing for these folk to step forward and join our band of volunteers working to improve our village.

If you have experience or an interest in finance, event management, gardening, landscaping, sourcing grants and funds, public relations, dealing with councils and

statutory bodies or any relevant skill or interest, we would love to have you join one of our committees. Perhaps you don't have much experience but just want to lend a hand – we would welcome your help. The more helping hands we have on board, the less the burden on everyone else.

You will have seen some of the projects and developments the SDA has achieved in and around the village, as well as the events we stage each year. You could be a part of this and take pride in seeing the improvements you will have helped to implement. You will also make a lot of new friends and be a member of a team working to improve our village for residents and traders alike.

For more information you can visit our website [discoversaintfield.com](http://discoversaintfield.com) or for a more personal approach, phone the editor, Brian Gamble on 07760334234 for a run down on how you could become involved. Get involved now!

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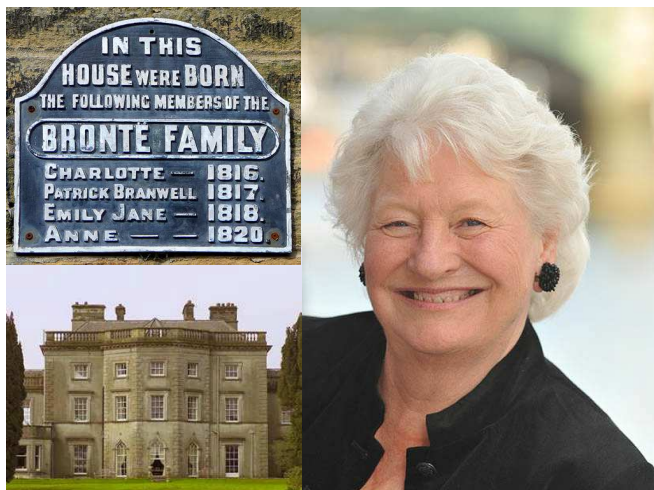
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The programme of talks in the Saintfield Heritage Society is coming to an end for this year with the final talk on Thursday 9th April, as usual in the Woodrow Room of Saintfield Parish Church Hall at 8:00pm. The speaker, Dr Robert Logan, is Chairman of the Irish Brontë Society and so is uniquely qualified for the subject of his talk, "The Brontës in Ireland". He will examine the extent to which the famous Brontë sisters were influenced by their father's Ulster connections.

The Society's Annual Dinner this year will be on Thursday 7th May at 7:30pm in La Mon Hotel. The guest speaker will be Dame Mary Peters.

The Society's Annual Outing will be on Saturday 6th June and will be to the home of the Montgomery family since 1607, Grey Abbey House and gardens, overlooking Strangford Lough.



All these events are open to non-members as guests, so if you are interested in going, contact any member of the Society.

## Diary Dates



**18th April**

**SDA stall at Indoor Boot Sale:  
Second Saintfield Presbyterian Church  
at 9:00am**

**25th April**

**Planting demonstration by Beth Lunney:  
Saintfield Garden Centre  
at 11.30am and 2.30pm**

**10th May**

**SDA Social Cycle Ride:  
Downpatrick Street car park  
at 9.30am. Entry fee £10**

**23rd May**

**Big Spring Clean litter pick:  
from Second Saintfield Presbyterian church  
at 9.30am**

**4th June**

**Mike Snowden talk:  
Saintfield Sports Club  
at 7.30pm. Tickets £6**



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