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The Work Begins!

By the time this issue is published, the planned work on upgrading The Square should have begun.

The contractors have been appointed and work was due to start in early July. The pavements will be replaced, the road surface renewed and new street lighting and street furniture installed.

The Roads Service is also due to begin the refurbishment of lower Main Street towards the end of July and are expected to take about six weeks to complete the work. This means there will be an overlap of about a week or two during which the two contractors will be on site at the same time.

The Main Street work will be from the traffic lights on the

Belfast Road up to the pedestrian crossing at the bank corner. The focus of the work is the road carriageway, which will require complete



reconstruction to take away the hump in the middle of the road. This will require re-doing the main sewer which runs down the street, as well as the drains. All the existing granite kerbs and gullies will be retained. BT have been asked to provide ducting to go under the new

carriageway so that all the telephone wires, currently crossing the street overhead, can be put underground at a later time, hopefully when the pavements are being done.

The Roads Service will lay a temporary asphalt surface on the pavements. It is hoped that as soon as the new council starts operating in April 2015 there will be a project to put in good quality paving, suitable for a conservation area.

While the work is going on it is likely that there will only be one way traffic allowed going down the hill, with a diversion in place for traffic wanting to go up Main Street.

The upper half of Main Street will be a separate project, probably completed in the summer of 2015.

Saintfield In Bloom 365

Thanks to the wonderful generosity of local businesses and churches and some fundraising, we are, this year, able to increase the number of railing planters and tubs.

The Down District Council and the Green Saintfield Committee have agreed on planting schemes which should complement each other. Many of the businesses and landlords have entered into the spirit of the competition and are working very hard to bring colour to our Main Street and beyond.

Our fund-raising evening, with Mike Snowden, former Head

Gardener at Rowallane Gardens giving a presentation on "Restoration of a Walled Garden" along with some slides of the work of the previous Saintfield in Bloom, was a great success with people coming from all over to attend.

One of the ladies, Helly Johnston, from Strangford, a member of the Knit & Natter group that meets in the Library, grew many plants from seed for us to sell and this helped swell the coffers. We are very grateful to both Helly and her husband.

The committee is delighted that

Property One, the management company for The Mill development, have agreed to sponsor floral window boxes on their properties fronting Lisburn Road, one of the main roads into the village.

The window boxes were supplied by Saintfield Nurseries and the SDA is very appreciative of the support from these two companies for their floral initiative.

The committee hope that our community and our visitors will enjoy the flowers as much as we have enjoyed the planning.

Chair's Viewpoint



Barbara Graham
Chair of Saintfield
Development
Association

*"We now have
to ... use our
talents and
experience to
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identified
goals."*

Having been given the honour of succeeding Martyn Todd as Chair of the SDA, I need to take an overview of where the Association is at present and how we can best progress.

Martyn was a very dynamic Chair who introduced and promoted many projects, so I feel we now have to focus on the projects in hand and use our talents and experience to achieve our identified goals.

I come to the post from the Infrastructure Committee, where we worked closely with political representatives, public bodies, and potential funders.

We try to attract inward investment and promote our village. There has been a lot of

on-going effort to progress projects which have a gestation period of years rather than months. Martyn and his team are now taking care of this responsibility.

injection of new blood to bolster our pool of talent with their energy and experience.

The SDA has a strong base of loyal and hard working

members as well as a network of friends who support our events and assist with the various functions and duties of the Association.

We are also able to call on them to draw on their advice and benefit from their expertise and

experience.

During my year in office, the SDA will continue to promote, develop and preserve the social, economic and heritage aspects of Saintfield and I trust that you will all support us in our efforts.



Barbara fundraising on the Green Saintfield stall at the Summer Fair

I am fortunate in being supported by a great team of people who comprise the experienced and capable sub-committees who devote a great deal of time and effort (all unpaid) to the affairs of the SDA.

We have recently welcomed an

Profile of Barbara Graham

Barbara Graham was elected Chair of the Saintfield Development Association at it's Annual General Meeting in May, taking over the reins from Martyn Todd.

She and her family have lived just outside Saintfield for over 30 years and this is the first time she has ventured into community service in the

village. An architect by profession, Barbara's career has seen her involved in many areas of architecture, including social housing and planning, hospitals, sheltered accommodation, commercial development and restoration projects.

Her career and a full family life have left her little time for

other interests until two years ago when she joined the SDA and has been involved with the Infrastructure Committee which has made use of her talents.

Barbara believes Saintfield to be a special place and is pleased to have been given the opportunity to utilise her skills for the benefit of all residents.

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Reflections On My Year As Chair by Martyn Todd

When I was appointed chair of the SDA, my first priority was to agree some objectives for the year with the Coordinating Committee. We came up with the following:

1. to build on the great goodwill in the association
2. to recruit new members to assist with various projects
3. to improve communication within the association and to the residents and traders of Saintfield.

I think that the Events Committee and the Green Saintfield Committee have definitely built on the goodwill of the association. The Christmas Fair was the best for many years. The new Harfest musical weekend involved churches, schools, pubs, restaurants, shops and cafes as well as sports clubs. The summer fair and fun run was successful and two new cycle events were added to the calendar, bringing additional funds to SDA and bringing visitors to spend money in Saintfield. Other fund-raising events such as the pub quizzes and a night at the Tudor cinema were also well supported.

The floral displays on the Main Street and on the approaches to Saintfield were very much appreciated by residents and visitors alike and were publicly recognised by Ulster in Bloom awarding Saintfield the "Most Improved" award in 2013. The efforts of a few stalwarts from the Green Saintfield committee in keeping the village litter free last year were appreciated by so many residents that there were 36 volunteers at this year's Big Spring Clean Up.

Another example of great goodwill was the public consultation we organised for the new community centre - we had over 900 questionnaires returned, a phenomenal response, which was commended in the leader column of The Down Recorder.

So the goodwill within and towards the Saintfield Development Association continues to grow.

As all community groups and voluntary organisations know, it is difficult these days to recruit new members. Everybody has very busy lives. During the year the SDA has invited new members at general committee meetings, on

the discoversaintfield website and in Saintfield News. Although these invitations resulted in a few new recruits, we needed more people to share the work of the committees and so applied for a grant for recruitment. We got a grant from AIVC and used it to organise an open night to explain all our projects under way and to invite new volunteers. This was very successful and we now have nearly 60 members, most of whom are helping out at events and with the floral displays, if they are not on committees.

As any organisation grows and initiates more new projects, communication becomes more important, but more difficult at the same time. Our Communications Committee has improved our communications with the community with four editions of Saintfield News, printed with sponsorship from local businesses and delivered door to door by committee members. This has kept people up to date with developments and up-coming events.

During the year we have also strengthened our links with all the sports clubs, churches and schools in the vicinity.

Winning awards in the "Ulster in Bloom" competition was a major achievement and the Green Saintfield Committee, including Saintfield in Bloom 365, deserve praise for their vision and hard work.

The purchase, by Down District Council, of a site for a new community centre for Saintfield is another huge step forward for Saintfield. The SDA (or STRC as it was then) started to push for a community centre seven years ago, when the then chair, Gerry Lowe, made a presentation to the Council. At times during this seven years many would have given up hope, but steady persistence by committee members eventually paid off.

The third main achievement I want to mention is the winning of a grant to fund the preparation of a heritage development plan for Saintfield. This is now completed and recommends a number of possible projects to develop the heritage of Saintfield for the benefit of residents and local businesses. This plan is already paying off as six listed buildings

have agreed to participate in European Heritage Open Day in September. SDA is working with the NI Tourist Board, NI Environment Agency and the Heritage Lottery Fund to see which of these recommendations to take forward first.

The final main achievement to mention is the upgrade to The Square, achieved by the Infrastructure Committee. The SDA succeeded in getting nearly £100,000 from Down Rural Area Partnership for this project and Down District Council and the Housing Executive have both added to this.

The work is due to start in July and to be completed by September this year. The Square should then be a much more attractive focal point for visitors and events.

As well as all these visible achievements there is a lot of essential work going on behind the scenes. During the year committee members have set up a Funding and Finance Committee to ensure that all monies coming into and going out of the SDA is properly accounted for. The SDA is now a company limited by guarantee and has charitable status. We have also appointed an accountant, Laura Meharry of Smyth, McIlhone MacMullan as examiner of our accounts, a role that the company provides at no cost to the SDA.

Other committee members have completed a child protection policy and a volunteer policy, all very important in today's world. Some committee members have also arranged visits to Broughshane and Gracehill community associations so that Saintfield can learn from the successes of other villages.

I would like to conclude by stressing that the total input from SDA committee members to projects for the benefit of Saintfield people amounts to thousands of hours, all provided for free. We are very fortunate to be living in a place where so many people are willing to contribute to the wellbeing of their friends and neighbours, or, as my hero Francis Hutcheson would say, providing the greatest happiness for the greatest numbers.

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On Yer Bike



Over 50 riders took part in the "Pedal the Peninsula" cycle ride staged by the Saintfield Development Association events committee at the end of April.

Starting from the Downpatrick Street car park in Saintfield, the route took the cyclists on a 55 mile ride around the Lough, finishing at The Rowallane Inn in Saintfield for refreshments.

Each finisher received a commemorative medal and there was

a draw for a hamper of cycle goodies. The riders were very complimentary about the organisation of the event and all seemed to enjoy the route and the scenery on the way.

The ride was not too strenuous and was suitable for all grades of cyclist as they could ride at their own pace.

The SDA hope to make this an annual event, so keep a lookout for the event next year.

HarFest Musical Festival



The Harfest Music Festival, which was such a great success last year, is being staged again this year from Friday 24 to Sunday 26 October.

Organised by the SDA Events Committee in conjunction with Musicians of Saintfield, the Harfest weekend will provide a feast of music across all genres in the pubs, cafes, churches and even the main street.

There will also be demonstrations and workshops on the musical theme and most events will be free of charge.

The exception will be a few formal performances where a small entry fee will be charged to cover expenses.

The majority of the musicians will be from Saintfield and the surrounding area, so make a note in your diary now and keep that weekend free to enjoy a showcase of local talent.



**"Friday 24
to
Sunday 26
October."**

Summer Fair A Washout



The Saintfield Summer Fair, held on Saturday 7th June, was a washout, thanks to persistent rain which kept people indoors as well as discouraging a number of stallholders from attending. In previous years the event has been staged at The Square in the village but this year it was decided to hold the fair at Saint Mary's Church on the Crossgar Road. It proved an ideal venue and had plenty of space and facilities for a fair of this type. The planned exhibition of "Art on The Railings" was unable to take place because of the rain, which would have

turned the oil paintings into water colours!

Those residents who did turn out seemed to enjoy the limited attractions on offer, although there were more committee members and helpers present than visitors.

It was a great shame as a lot of planning and hard work had gone into the preparations for the fair. The vagaries of the weather will always be a factor, even in summer, so the Events Committee are not disheartened and will try again next summer (if there is one!)

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Editor's Letter



Brian Gamble
Editor of
Saintfield News

It is gratifying to see the support the SDA is receiving for its events and projects. This support makes the effort in planning and staging them worthwhile.

Attendance at the recent SDA pub quiz at The White Horse and the talk by Mike Snowden, the recently retired Head Gardener at Rowallane Gardens, coupled with the good entry to the Pedal the Peninsula cycle ride and the turnout for the Litter Pick, demonstrates that Saintfield residents will give their support to local events.

Local traders and businesses are regularly canvassed for financial donations for projects

such as Saintfield in Bloom, the Christmas and Summer Fairs and various other undertakings during the year. In the main, they respond generously in the knowledge that everything we do is geared towards promoting our village, improving facilities, providing entertainment and hopefully increasing the footfall through our retail outlets.

As a non-profit organisation, the SDA is heavily reliant on support from local companies and residents to fund its ventures.

The dedicated and hard working members of the various committees give up their time and expertise to represent and promote the village.

The forthcoming Community Centre is a case in point, where those committee members involved have spent many hours over the consultation process, planning, liaising with the relevant bodies to ensure that the centre meets the needs of the people; and to keep the project moving forward.

Many have commended the SDA for its commitment and ability to get things done. It has been held up as a good example of how a community association should function.

I believe that Saintfield people have the ethos and community spirit to make this possible and make all the effort worthwhile.

Funding & Finance

The SDA recently set up a Funding and Finance committee to control the finances of the Association, prepare budgets, as well as applying for relevant grants from which we could benefit.

The SDA is a "not for profit" organisation and any profit (or surplus) made is retained to sustain the Association's activities according to the standards of charitable status.

Funding is obtained through Grantracker, a funding database, local politicians, the County Down Rural Area Partnership and the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action.

Income is also generated through various public events and donations; and we learn from other similar bodies about their successful fund raising ventures. Local traders and businesses also

contribute through donations and support of various functions and initiatives, such as the Saintfield Christmas Fair and the Saintfield in Bloom programme.

The local independent accountancy firm of Smyth McIlhone MacMullan have agreed to audit the SDA accounts at no cost to the association, a gesture which is much appreciated.

Recruitment

Would you like to have a say in the affairs of your village and give a hand with organising the various events the SDA stage during the year? If you have a few hours to spare during the month, we would love to have you

join us. You can choose where you would best like to assist to suit your interests and talents. You will also make new friends and gain a lot of satisfaction from giving something back to the community.

For more information and an introduction to the Saintfield Development Association, please contact Joelene Poole via the e-mail address:
recruitment@discoversaintfield.co.uk

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Sunday 12th September is European Heritage Open Day and six of Saintfield's 50 listed buildings will be open to the public on that afternoon from 2pm to 5pm. Each building will have on display some artefacts from its history. The popular Walking Tour will leave from the Memorial Garden at 3pm. The buildings which will be open are:-

Saintfield Parish Church, built in 1776 and having a beautiful stained glass East Window by the world famous artist Karl Parsons. The yew trees in its entrance walk were provided by Hugh Armitage Moore of Rowallane Gardens and are still clipped in a drum shape from when they were planted.

Saintfield First Presbyterian Church, built in 1777 and largely original. There is a blue plaque to the famous moral philosopher, Francis Hutcheson, whose grandfather was the first minister of this church. Thomas Ledlie Birch, of United Irishmen renown, preached here in the 1790s.

AYC Youth Club, the original Catholic Church, built in 1787 from public subscriptions in an unusual "T" shape. The parish priest at the time was Father Daniel McDonnell, who rode to hounds with Squire Price of Saintfield Demesne.

Saintfield Second Presbyterian Church, built in 1796 by members of the First Presbyterian Church who disagreed with the radical preaching of Thomas Ledlie Birch and left to form their own church. This building has been sympathetically restored and improved in 1892 and church halls added and improved in 1980 and 2011.

Saintfield Orange Hall, built by the Price family in 1803 as a Market House and first used as a Courthouse in 1804. The clock in the roof of the building was made by the Saintfield clock maker, Samuel Spratt. The iron gates in the three archways date from 1828.

The guided **Walking Tour** will include these buildings, as well as the site of the Battle of Saintfield in 1798 and other interesting buildings and stories of Saintfield. **The Masonic Hall** will also be open and will provide refreshments at the end of the tour.

Diary Dates



4th - 7th August

Saintfield Baptist Church:
Football & Hockey 4 Christ

11th - 13th August

2nd Saintfield Presbyterian Church:
"Mega Makers" Holiday Bible Club

13th - 15th August

Saintfield Parish Church:
Youth Nights

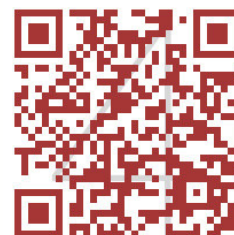
18th - 22nd August

1st Saintfield Presbyterian Church:
"Rocky's Plaice" Holiday Bible Club



Published as a Community Service by
Saintfield Development Association
DTP by Ian Mack

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