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Saintfield News

ISSUE 15

WINTER 2017

Christmas Fair To Launch Festive Season

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Preparations for the ever popular Saintfield Christmas Fair are now almost complete.

The Events committee of the SDA have been hard at work finalising arrangements for the Fair which will be held on Main Street as usual on Friday 1st December from 6.30pm until 9.00pm.

Main Street will be closed to vehicular traffic from 6.00pm until the close of the Fair, so motorists need to take note of this and plan their routes on the day accordingly.

Santa will travel down Main Street on his sleigh pulled by two of his reindeer and arrive outside the Orange Hall at 7.00pm. He will switch on the Christmas tree lights and stay a while to pose for photos with the children before strolling along the street distributing sweets to the children.

There will be lots of attractions for the kiddies, including the popular miniature steam train and

children's roundabout. Older children will enjoy the Last Person Standing and Assault course games.

For the adults, there will be stalls to browse and of course many of the shops will remain open for late night shopping.

participation and a unique style of comedy. Not to be missed!

Fortunately, the Fire Service will be in attendance at the Fair to put Logy out in the event of any mishap with his fire act! The PSNI will also be there with a police car on show, so you had better behave.

The Fair promises to be an evening of fun and good cheer, so make a note in your diary and bring the whole family along for a good evening out and a healthy helping of Christmas cheer.

The SDA is grateful to all the

traders and businesses in the village and surrounds who have contributed financially to making the Fair a reality every year. Also a big thank you to all the volunteers who freely give their time to present this community event.

Remember to check out our website discoversaintfield.com and our Facebook page for the latest news. See you at the Fair!



Logy on Fire will be performing at The Fair

There will be school choirs from St. Mary's, Academy and Saintfield High schools to get everyone in the Christmas spirit.

A special attraction this year is "Logy on Fire". Logy is one of the top fire performers in Northern Ireland. The bearded Belfast based international street performer presents an interactive, high skilled family friendly show with plenty of audience

Chair's Viewpoint



Ian Murray
Chair of Saintfield
Development
Association

I am almost six months into the position of Chair of the Saintfield Development Association and what an exciting time it has been. Successful cycling events, successful planting events and significant progress on the Community Centre are just a few of the projects undertaken on behalf of all residents. I will leave my colleagues to fill you in on all these good news stories.

Any other highlights? Yes, our schoolchildren! The pupils of St. Mary's Primary School,

Academy Primary School and Saintfield High School have all been involved in projects with the SDA and this is to be welcomed. My thanks to the respective Principals - Catherine Downey, Stephen Moore and Sarah - Lucy Hynds for their support and I look forward to it continuing in the New Year.

My wish for 2018 is that we can see the development of a 'Young Saintfield' Committee so that our young people can become more involved in the development of their village.

The village is their future and they are, in turn, the village's future.

I hope I will have the opportunity of meeting as many of you as possible at our Christmas Fair on Friday 1st December.

I wish all Saintfield residents a Happy Christmas and a healthy and prosperous New Year.

If you have any issues you would like raised I can be contacted by email at editor@discoversaintfield.co.uk

New Garden Feature in Saintfield



A community working together has resulted in an attractive new garden feature in the Queen's Park suburb of Saintfield.

The planting was to create a wildlife border for bugs, bees, hoverflies and butterflies and provide a haven of nectar-rich flowers in a free draining sunny spot, ideal for attracting insects.

The Green committee of the Saintfield Development Association was successful in obtaining a grant from the Live Here,

Love Here campaign of the Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful initiative. This funded the plants from Saintfield Nurseries, who also gave advice on the ornamental flowering plants.

The Saintfield Community Estates Partnership, acting for the residents, involved the Northern Ireland Housing Executive in the project.

They helped to draw up the plans for the garden and provided the site in Queen's Park and all the hard landscaping.

The garden comprises a paved pathway, two pergolas for climbing plants, a bench encompassed by two wooden retainers and a flower and shrub bed.

The children of St. Mary's Primary School constructed a "bug hotel" for the garden to encourage insects; and pupils from Academy School assisted with the planting.

SDA volunteers planted up the garden and will care for the flowers, while local residents will look after the borders and regularly water the plants. Special thanks are due to Vincent Newell, a resident of Queen's Park, and Beth Lunney of Saintfield Nurseries, for their valued assistance with the project.

The garden was officially opened in September by Nicola Fitzsimons, Community Development Officer with Live Here Love Here at a small ceremony attended by those involved.

The garden will provide an area of colour and tranquility in Queen's Park and will help to beautify the area.

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Community Centre Site Open Days

Everybody who lives in or near Saintfield has driven or walked past the site of the new community centre, but until recently, very few people had visited the site and even fewer had seen inside the three large buildings there.

The Community Centre Working Group and Saintfield Development Association persuaded Newry, Mourne and Down Council that the time was right to invite local people to see the site and buildings and learn what is to be developed there for the community. SDA applied to the Big Lottery Celebrate fund and was awarded £1500 to run such an event and NMD Council staff helped with the preparation and planning of the event, held on the afternoons of Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th October.

The SDA Events Committee organised volunteers to marshal the event and arranged for a variety of attractions for visiting young



L to R: Cllr. Harry Harvey, Cllr. Roisin Mulgrew, Damian Scarlett, Cllr. Terry Andrews, Cllr. Billy Walker and Ian Murray.

people to enjoy. The committee also organised local bands and coffee, food and ice-cream vendors to be there as well.

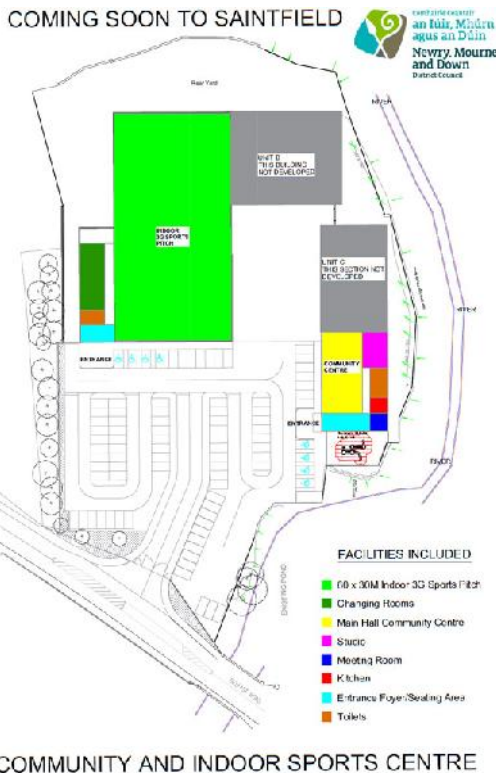
Community, church, school and sports groups were invited to take a stall at the event to let visitors know what they had to offer. Twelve groups, covering all these categories, attended, as did the Rowallane

District Electoral Area coordinator Ellen Brennan, the NMD person responsible for liaising with the Rowallane area. The event was formally opened by the Chair of Newry, Mourne and Down Council, Councillor Roisin Mulgrew, who was welcomed to Saintfield by Ian Murray, Chair of SDA. After the opening speeches, Damian Scarlett, the chair of the community centre working group, led Cllr Mulgrew on a tour of the premises and explained how the composition of the centre was envisaged.

Over the two days, nearly 400 people of all ages and interests attended. All were very positively surprised by the size of the buildings and their potential, as well as with the plans for the development of the facility.

The other benefit of the open days was to give residents an assurance that the community centre would indeed become a reality.

Timescale Guide For Community Centre



The tentative schedule for the construction of the community centre is as follows:-

- The plans have been submitted to the planning authority and approval is expected early next year.
- Tender documents are being drafted and will be issued once planning approval is obtained.
- A contractor will be appointed following procurement (possibly January 2018).
- A design team will prepare the scheme and this will be submitted for Building Control approval (possibly May 2018).
- Draft costings and a Bill of Quantities will then be prepared for review/amendment
- Followed by the anticipated commencement of on-site works in July/August 2018.

It must be stressed that the timings above are provisional and would be affected by any unforeseen matters or events.

Some extensive site works are to be completed as part of this project which will include changes to the main entrance for vehicular access, the removal of boundary walls and gates, cutting back and pruning of trees and the removal of a lot of overgrown vegetation.

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Stay Safe And Secure This Festive Season

KEEP YOUR CHRISTMAS PRESENTS SAFE

You have bought your Christmas presents. Are they in the car? Under the tree? Sitting in plain view beside a window?

Don't make it easy for the burglar. Keep them out of sight, and make sure before you go to bed or leave the house, even for a short period, that all doors and windows are locked.

If you are out shopping with the car, anything inside should be kept in the boot or out of sight of passers-by. Opportunist thieves will strike if you give them an opportunity.

GOING OUT? DON'T LET THE BURGLAR IN!

Householders should make it as difficult as possible for burglars to target their home and property. Thieves are well aware that houses will be laden with presents and electrical goods at this time of the year so it is important to keep these items well out of sight and properly concealed.

No one wants to wake up on Christmas morning with no presents to give or receive because an unlocked door or open window made their home an easy target.

Do not publicise that you are going out or away on a trip on social media sites. And when you go out to work, socialise or even

nip to the shop just for five minutes it is worthwhile going through the following checklist:

- Did I lock all the doors?
- Did I close and lock all the windows?
- Is the garage door secure?
- Did I leave a light on?
- If I go out will the house look unoccupied?
- Can valuable items be seen through the windows?
- Should I close the blinds/curtains or ask a neighbour to keep an eye on my house?
- All valuables, including jewellery, should be indelibly marked with the house number and post code so that items will be more difficult to sell. Jewellery should be properly valued and itemised for insurance purposes, photographed against a ruler for easy identification and placed in a safe, secured to the fabric of the building.
- When the house is empty use timer switches to activate lights, TV or radio, avoid carrying cash, never walk home alone and always use the Quick Check Scheme to verify a callers identity 0800 013 22 90.

STAY SAFE DURING THE CHRISTMAS PARTY SEASON

Here are some personal safety tips for the festive season:

- Plan your journey home in advance. If using a taxi, make sure it is reputable, as illegal taxis are uninsured and potentially very dangerous. Never accept a lift with a stranger or someone you do not know very well.

- When out and about stay alert to your surroundings. If something doesn't feel right, it probably isn't. Trust your instincts; they are there to protect you.

- Never accept a drink from someone you don't know. If you are drinking alcohol, know your limits, as both alcohol and drugs stop you being in control and can cause you to make bad choices.

- If you think your drink has been spiked, contact a friend, relation or seek help from a responsible member of staff in the pub or club.

HAVING A DRINK OVER THE CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR HOLIDAYS?

- Will you be driving to see friends, relatives, Christmas parties, school nativity plays? Don't mix the two. Drinking and driving wrecks lives. Just one drink can impair your ability to control your vehicle.

- Leave the car at home. Appoint a designated driver. Use public transport. Driving under the influence of drink or drugs could destroy your Christmas and have a long lasting negative impact on you and those around you.

DON'T TAKE THE RISK!



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Editor's Letter



Brian Gamble
Editor of
Saintfield News

This issue of Saintfield News marks the 15th edition of the newsletter. How time flies!

Launched in 2013 by the Communications committee of the SDA, the quarterly newsletter is intended to be a means of informing local residents and businesses of what the SDA is doing to support and promote the infrastructure, appearance and events in Saintfield.

The newsletter is edited by yours truly and the desktop publishing is done by Ian Mack, with the hand distribution to residents organised by the tireless Vivien Lovell and her team of volunteers.

Vivien is always looking for willing hands to help with the

deliveries, so if you would like to assist by delivering some copies in your neighbourhood, please contact editor@discoversaintfield.co.uk

It is not an onerous task every few months and you will meet your neighbours and possibly make new friends!

We have 2000 copies of the newsletter printed and these costs are covered by the sponsors who advertise in each issue, for whose support we are very grateful. Please support them as they support the community.

It was suggested at a recent SDA general meeting that we should promote local clubs, associations and societies in the publication. This would give

them an opportunity to tell residents what they are about and perhaps attract new members.

We think this is an excellent idea and would welcome submissions for consideration, which may be e-mailed to the editor at the address above.

Saintfield News is your local newsletter, so if you have any issues which you feel need to be highlighted, please let us know about them.

Most readers will have access to the internet and Saintfield News is available to read online at our website discoversaintfield.com and you can also keep in touch through our Facebook page, [Discover Saintfield](#).

School's Green Initiative

Saintfield High School has partnered with the Green committee of the SDA in a welcome development to involve young people in community projects.

The committee approached the school Principal, Sarah-Lucy Hynds, to see if their Occupational Studies Horticultural Course class would be willing to assist the committee to maintain the flower bed in front of the school on Belfast Road.

A meeting was then arranged between the course teacher, Lynda Jackson and Muriel Massey, Lily Henderson and Denis Conn of the SDA Green committee at which it was agreed that the class would be happy to do so and in addition would help to tend the Memorial Garden on Comber Street.

The class has been supplied with 15 Hi-Viz vests imprinted with the school name, together with a supply of gardening gloves to protect young hands.

The cooperation of school pupils with a community project is to be commended and will help them to develop as responsible citizens in the future.

Saintfield Heritage Society

Thursday 11th January

Talk: Birds of Strangford Lough

Speaker: Dr Bob Browne, OBE, an internationally renowned conservation expert and former Director of the RSPB for NI, is uniquely qualified to talk on this subject.

Thursday 8th February

Talk: The Story of Coffee

Speaker: Robert Bell, Managing Director of Ireland's oldest independent tea and coffee merchants, will tell how coffee made its way to Europe by the 17th century and became, in the words of Thomas Jefferson, "the favourite drink of the civilized world".

Thursday 8th March

Talk: Sir James Martin: Ejection Seat Pioneer

Speaker: Ernie Cromie BEM, the well-known aviation historian and author, will tell us about this famous engineer from Crossgar whose invention has saved the lives of thousands of aviators.

All meetings are held in the Woodrow Room of Saintfield Parish Church Hall at 8:00pm.

Visitors are welcome to attend.


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The fifth Pedal the Peninsula cycle ride took place in September.

Organised by the Events committee of the SDA, the ride attracted a field of 125 riders of varying ability, from the club cyclist to the social pedaller.

The event is gaining in popularity as a well run and marshalled ride, where cyclists can enjoy the outing in safety and enjoy the County Down countryside.

The entry fee included the ferry fare as well as refreshments half way and at the finish, for which the committee is grateful to Massey's Butchery, Maxol Spar and the Rowallane Inn for their continued support.

The funds raised will go towards providing entertainment at the Saintfield Christmas Fair and to support other SDA community projects.

Lights Out!

In our last issue, we advised that the SDA intended to dip into their financial reserves and buy new, up to date Christmas lights to brighten up Main Street and The Square for this festive season.

However, with time running out, the preferred supplier was unable to manufacture and deliver the chosen design and instead offered a number of different options. None of the affordable alternatives were considered by the selection committee as suitable for the rural ambiance of Saintfield.

For this reason, as well as the considerable cost involved (around £6,000), it was decided to defer the purchase to next year when an unhurried and considered decision on a new design could be made. After all, we will have to live with any choice for a number of years to come.

Fortunately, two volunteers offered to repaint the existing light figurines to give them an extended lease of life for this festive season. Janice McHenry and Fiona Watters have spent much time with paint and brushes and have done a great job on them.

The SDA motto in action - "Saintfield People Working For Saintfield People".



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