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Saintfield News

ISSUE 28

WINTER 2023

Christmas Is Coming!



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The popular Saintfield Christmas Fair will be held on Main Street from 6.30pm to 8.30pm on Friday 1st December.

Main Street will be closed to traffic from 6.00pm to 9.00pm to provide a safe environment for those attending.

Santa Claus and his elf helper will switch on the Christmas lights on the tree outside the Orange Hall to signal the start of the festive season. Two of his reindeer will be there so the children can have their photo taken with them.

It is hoped that many of the shops will remain open for late night shopping and The Saintfield Market will be open, offering a wide range of goods.

There will be attractions for the youngsters and lots of

music up and down the street, including the Cahard Flute Band, a fairground organ and a violin ensemble, among others.

Mark Kent and his Sound System will provide music and announcements.

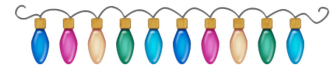
The Star Wars Storm Troopers patrolling will be a great photo opportunity for the youngsters.

The volunteers of the Saintfield Community Association put much time and effort into planning and staging the fair, which is made possible through the generous financial support of Saintfield's traders and businesses.

Bring all the family along to enjoy some early Christmas shopping and soak up the festive atmosphere at Saintfield's largest community event.



Chair's Viewpoint



Martyn Todd
Chair of Saintfield
Community
Association

*"Usage of the
[Saintfield Community]
Centre continues
to grow"*

The lead article in the last edition of Saintfield News was about the plans for a youth club to be based in the community centre. Its launch has been a great success, with 120 young people joining the two age group sessions on Saturday afternoons. Brendan Burns took the lead on this and has brought together a very strong team of 12 skilled and experienced leaders, plus three youth leaders. He has also brought in over £10,000 worth of grants to make the youth club a very special experience for its members. Well done Brendan and team!

I am delighted to see the community centre being used by so many new young people.

Usage of the Centre continues to grow, with Saintfield High School pupils now using it on a nearly daily basis. The revenues generated by the additional usage have allowed the SCA Operations Team, chaired by Graham Erskine, to employ Kristine Doyle as the

centre, especially at weekends for birthday parties and other family events.

The last edition of Saintfield News also highlighted the work of the SCA Greens with lots of great photos.

The judges of Ulster in Bloom were also clearly impressed by the good work of Lawrence Murphy and all the Greens volunteers as they awarded them another prize - third place in the large village

category, from nearly 40 entries in this category. This is the fifth award for SCA Greens in the last five years, which is excellent. With a little more help from you all next year, perhaps this very good result could be exceeded.



Monday morning's Chair Based Exercise class in the Main Hall of Saintfield Community Centre

new Centre Coordinator - welcome to the team, Kristine. She will hopefully be joined by a few part-time Centre Attendants to spread the load from the shoulders of the volunteers on this team, who have put in many hours over the summer to increase the availability of the

Application In For Delivery Phase Funding Of Community Park



The National Lottery Heritage Fund awarded a grant of £135,000 in March 2022 for the first phase of turning the Windmill Field into a community heritage park. This grant was to fund all the survey work on the field and buildings, including an ecological assessment, bat survey, condition survey and drainage assessment.

The funding also covered preparing a final design, a conservation plan and an interpretation plan - what heritage stories to tell and how to tell them. This work has been carried out by a team of specialist consultants, led by Paul McMahon of d-on consultants. The final plan for the park took on board feedback from the public consultations held earlier this year.

The Heritage Fund has now reviewed all the progress of this phase and the many detailed documents it has produced. Following the review, the Heritage Fund has given approval for SCA to apply for the next phase of the grant, the delivery phase. If this application is successful, this grant is likely to be over £900,000, which, added to David Moffett's generous second donation of £78,500, will be enough to provide an excellent park for the residents of Saintfield and the surrounding area.

The deadline for this application is mid-November and the Heritage Fund needs three months to make a decision. If the grant is awarded, the work should start in the spring of 2024 and be completed in late 2025.

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Ops Team Named Finalists In Prestigious Awards



Saintfield Community Association's Operations Team reached the finals of a prestigious award recognising their contributions to the village.

The team were short-listed for the Social Enterprise NI awards, but lost out to Carrick Greengrocers in the final.

One of the team members, David McMinn, played a key role in getting the community centre up and running after it was signed off by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

Before the centre could be put into use numerous snags with the heating, ventilating and electrical systems came to light, and were taken on by David who has a background in

engineering and project management in Howden Sirocco.

The team worked closely with Council staff and the contractors who supplied the various services

In addition they have been able to source funding to add battery packs to the photo-voltaic cells on the community centre roof, thus lowering the running costs of the centre.

David has also been a key member of the project team negotiating with the Council to convert the remaining warehouse on the community centre site into additional community space.

The team's many hours of input are all voluntary and unpaid, as are all the other hours contributed by the other members of the

SCA Teams and Board.

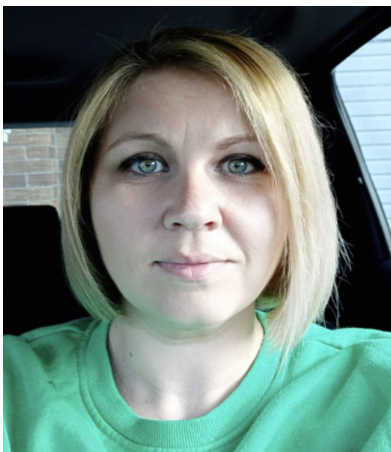
The SCA would like to congratulate the Operations Team on becoming a finalist in the Social Enterprise NI Awards and thank them for all their hard work.



Chair of SCA Martyn Todd (centre) with David McMinn, Brendan Burns, Emma Duncan and David Greer

in the community centre. Through David's careful analysis of the problems and diplomatic liaison with all concerned, they managed to identify the causes of all the problems and have them corrected.

Kristine Doyle Appointed As Community Centre Coordinator As Usage Rises



Newly appointed Community Centre Coordinator Kristine Doyle

Thanks to an increase in usage at Saintfield Community Centre, Kristine Doyle has been appointed as the Community Centre Coordinator responsible for the day to day management of the facility.

Kristine is supported by Centre attendants Peter Martin and Luke Gibb, who cover most of the weekend demands, with other volunteers supporting as required. Further additions to the staff are to be announced in the coming weeks.

The use of the Community Centre continues to grow year on year with a forecast 65% increase in booked hours between 2022 and 2023.

Activities are held every day and evening across the facility, with a significant usage at weekends with birthday parties and other social activities.

Meanwhile, Saintfield High School continue to

use the 3G pitch for PE and we are pleased to be able to accommodate pupils at lunchtime as the school uses our facility as an extension of their own resources.

There are now seven weekly Spin Bike classes at various times from early morning to evenings to suit individual requirements.

Agreement to extend the community centre with an additional 8,000 sq ft of floor space through a 25-year lease is nearing completion with Newry Mourne & Down District Council.

For further information on activities visit

www.saintfieldcommunitycentre.co.uk

or call in to speak to Kristine at community centre reception any weekday morning.

SCA has been able to publish this edition of **Saintfield News** thanks to sponsorship by:

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A Roaring Success For Saintfield

Brendan Burns, the initiator of the Saintfield Youth Club project, writes:

On the 9th of September, we opened our doors for the first time at the Community Centre for our Community Youth Club.

We had heard on the grapevine of parent chats at the school gates about the enthusiastic response to the first non-denominational youth club in the village since before COVID, but nothing could have prepared us for the huge support we received on registration night.

Our club is split into our Junior sessions that include P1-5 and the Senior session catering for P6-Y10 in secondary school.

Our registration night ended with more than 60 members registered for both sessions with a substantial waiting list for the junior session - a tremendous start to the Youth Club, and this would only continue over our first half term.

The parents were introduced to the Spond app which allows them to register their young people for each weekend and we have averaged around 50 members each week for both sessions.

Our sessions have taken advantage of the fantastic facilities at the Community Centre. The main hall hosts the crafting tables and the board games along with Air Hockey and Fussball. We have Badminton and Basketball under the canopy and Football, Dodgeball and other wide games in the 3G pitch.

Our studio is where our Sensory

Room has been created. With an aim to cater for as many needs within our young community, we applied for a grant from the Newry, Mourne and Down Council and with the guidance of Learning Space in Belfast, we created a space that caters for any child who requires a space that helps them regulate their feelings to the environment.

It is a calming room with audio, visual, proprioceptive and olfactory stimuli providing as many different regulatory processes as we can cram into a single room. The bean bags and dark tent offer



quiet relaxing opportunities for small groups to come in and relax.

The first half term has been a resounding success, with repeated attendance our measuring stick. But this would not be possible without the support of our volunteer leaders.

We have, at the time of publication, a team of 12 leaders, who offer their time and support generously. We are hugely grateful for all their efforts, and I especially would like to mention our youth leaders.

These vibrant young people, whether

they realise it or not, are role models for the younger people in the club. Their dedication to coming on a Saturday night should rightly be commended. The club members have had the benefit of all the leaders' enthusiasm through their love of craft, sport and just being a friendly face in a safe environment for a Saturday night.

I would like to highlight the tireless efforts of Emma Duncan, the Saintfield Community Association's Community Engagement Officer, for without her the youth club just would not run as smoothly as it does.

By the time you have read this we will have had our community party where all children, regardless of membership to the youth club, are welcome down to our facilities on the 4th of November. During this half term we will be starting our mental wellbeing programmes for both sessions, funded by a grant from the Public Health Agency (PHA).

Our aim is to have a pool table and table tennis table to add to our activities this half term and there will be more to come.

I look forward to seeing all the kids every Saturday and long may it continue. Thank you so much for all your support.

If you would be willing to offer any number of Saturdays, regardless of frequency, please email

saintfieldyc@gmail.com

to express your interest. The more help we get, the more we can guarantee the sustainability of our youth club.

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d Youth Club's First Half Term!



Greens Team Make Their Mark On Ulster In Bloom 2023

Saintfield was placed 3rd in the Large Village category in the annual Ulster in Bloom (UIB) competition. This is held each year in partnership with Translink and the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA). Its aim is to bring together people from community groups, volunteers and councils to create cleaner and greener areas for people to enjoy. This is a huge achievement for only 13 active volunteers (and we're always looking for more!).

Saintfield has been successful in the competition over the last five years; 2023 – 3rd, 2022 – 2nd plus a Youth Award, 2021 – 3rd, 2020 competition cancelled due to Covid, 2019 – Best Judges Briefing Pack Award, 2018 – 3rd (joint with Hillsborough).

This year's horticultural, community and environmental awards event was hosted at Lisburn

Civic Centre. The UIB judging panel comprised professional horticulturalists, lecturers, florists, members of Conservation Volunteers and judges from the NI Group of Flower Arranging Societies. The towns and villages are marked on the most beautiful plant and floral displays, the environmental impact achieved and, importantly, a litter-free clean and tidy village.

All 11 councils are represented by community groups caring for and improving their local spaces. Some councils give considerable support to the towns and villages represented in their council areas. Saintfield, however, relies significantly on donations from local businesses, churches and individuals showing their support and appreciation. Without this support we couldn't possibly continue our work. These contributions reflect that the whole village is pulling together to make Saintfield a village of distinction – a heartfelt thanks to all.

Winter Flowers Making Their Debut In Greens Team Displays



At the time of writing this article, the Greens Team are busy clearing planters of the summer displays and planting out the winter flowers.

Also, at this time of the year, we are working hard to keep the Main Street cleared of leaves. You can appreciate this is a task that goes on for quite a considerable time.

As well as Main Street, ongoing maintenance is scheduled for our many projects; the Memorial Garden on Comber Street, Comber Road cottage garden bed adjacent to the walkway from the main road, Ballygowan Road junction, the five Gateway Signs, the High School bed, the enclosed area beside Scentsations flower-shop, Queens Park,

Rowallane Gate, New Line, AYC beside the Credit Union, Station Road, the Cliff Face on the Lisburn Road and the Farmers' Market.

We are also planning new projects in preparation for next year's UIB competition.

The Greens Team wish to sincerely thank all our donors, sponsors, volunteers and committee. We'd also like to convey a special mention of thanks to Gavin Adair (Farmers' Market) for his huge support of the work the Greens undertake and to James Lappin of Greenbank Landscapes on the Ballygowan Road for his ongoing contribution.



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First Responders Scheme Now Covers Saintfield - Where It All Started



In January 2011 Lynda Donaldson suffered a cardiac arrest in the street in Saintfield - a traumatic experience that was to imbue her with a sense of purpose.

"Thankfully a school nurse was passing and a first aider with a defibrillator, and they had me resuscitated in minutes - a textbook rescue," she says.

Spurred by the knowledge that every second counts in cardiac arrest and the ongoing issues within the health service and ambulance response times, Lynda and her partner Graham Walsh trained with the British Heart Foundation to deliver community CPR training.

They then studied to get First Aid qualification and training qualifications and launched Avonmore Training Solutions Ltd., now the governing body for Mid Down and Lisburn District Community First Responders.

"It's our baby! we have developed and nurtured the scheme and are currently the busiest in Northern Ireland," Lynda says.

MDLDCFR was launched in November last year as a group of coordinated volunteers who, when alerted by the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS), can attend the patient quickly if they are already in the area. The CFRs are trained by NIAS, but many already have pre hospital care knowledge and training.

"Who joins? Anyone with an interest and

time to help people in a medical emergency, which is not always the most pleasant of situations," Lynda says.

"We have a doctor, retired Emergency Medical technicians, retired Fire and Rescue Commanders, St John volunteers, First Aid trainers, qualified First Response Emergency Care, and some with little first aid knowledge or experience."

The team are trained to deal with NIAS Category 1 and category 2 calls - suspected heart attack, chest pain, cardiac arrest, diabetic issues, drowning, electrocution, seizures, difficulty breathing and choking.

When they went live a year ago, they had 20 responders. They cover a broad area from Dollingstown to Newtownbreda and have now expanded to cover Saintfield.

"It was important for us to include Saintfield as this was where it all started!" Lynda says

"We currently have an additional 10 responders in training. These new recruits buddy up for a while till they find their feet and have a review at six months in. There is always someone to help, to give advice or support.

"A few times there have been 3-4 responders having coffee in my or someone else's kitchen at midnight after a difficult call out. They attend in twos, threes or fours depending on the call, although some

of the more experienced can attend on their own.

"There will be two responders located around Temple and others in Carryduff who will cover the Saintfield area."

The team would like to recruit more responders in the future but are also appealing for fundraising support from the communities they cover.

"Every CFR has a NIAS ID card and a kit bag (value £2k) which contains a Zoll Defibrillator, blood pressure monitor, thermometer, pulse oximeter, airway management, slide sheets and Patient Report Forms (PRF) which is the documentation that NIAS use," Lynda says. "Observations and PFR can be completed by the CFR so that work is done when NIAS arrive - it gives them a head start. In the case of a very ill patient the CFR will assist the NIAS crew as directed by them."

The team have raised enough money to kit out the latest intake of responders, with three more Zoll Defibrillators needed, and Lynda would like to provide branded jackets.

"Once established, our operating costs are low - however we do need replacement pads for the defibrillators and to keep an eye on the future to build a fund to enable replacement of all equipment in around five years and uniforms in two years," she says. To find out more about MDLDCFR, visit www.middownandlisburncfr.org



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11th January: BLAIR MAYNE AND HIS S.A.S. WAR DIARIES 1941-45 – Peter Forbes

8th February: NEW DISCOVERIES FROM THE COASTAL HERITAGE LIDAR SURVEY OF THE NORTH DOWN AND STRANGFORD AREA – Colin Dunlop

14th March: THE OWLS OF NORTHERN IRELAND – Katy Bell

11th April: STEEL CHEST, NAIL IN THE BOOT AND THE BARKING DOG – Bronagh McAtasney—includes the AGM

Talks will take place on the **SECOND THURSDAY** of the month in the **STUDIO** of SAINTFIELD COMMUNITY CENTRE at 8.00 p.m.

“**Saintfield Heritage Book Eleven**” was launched recently in Saintfield Community Centre with a live video link to David Moffett in the USA who wrote the Foreword to the book. David has contributed considerable funds to SCA to enable the development of Windmill Field as a Community Park. Book Eleven is available in Hazels and Jacksons, or by post by emailing info@discoversaintfield.com.

u3a For Village On The Way In New Year



If the level of support is anything to go by, a new u3a group could be on the way for Saintfield.

A meeting held on 17 October in Saintfield Community Centre to have a new u3a for the Saintfield area attracted a lot of interest and support. u3a is for retired or semi-retired people who want to keep mentally fit and active.

“If you are looking for a new interest, a chance to meet others, make friends and keep active then you will enjoy being a member of this new u3a Group,” said Mavis Turner, the Northern Ireland u3a Trust volunteer who organised the meeting.

The u3a now has 24 groups spread throughout Northern Ireland, with more than 6,000 members enjoying a wide range of activities.

Members meet in groups on a weekly or monthly basis to pursue a wide range of interests, such as walking, book groups, learning a language, bridge

and crafts — the possibilities are endless.

“All u3as draw upon the knowledge, experience and skills of its members to organise and provide interest groups at minimal costs to members.”

More information will be made available when a date and venue has been arranged for the inaugural meeting, which is expected to take place early in 2024.

“That will be an open meeting for all those interested in becoming members and anyone who wishes more information about this new u3a,” Mavis said.

Watch out for more information about place and time at www.u3ani.info or contact

Mavis Turner **07759 275967**.



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