



# BMN - NEWSLETTER

**COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION for BELVOIR, MILLTOWN & NEWTOWNBREDA**

## COMMUNITY GROUP PRAISED FOR TAKING THE LEAD IN DRUGS CLEAN UP INITIATIVE

Representatives of the Community Association acting on telephone information visited the communal hallway area of Greenwood Lodge, Belvoir and were shocked to discover that the NIE electrical box was being used as a storage area for drugs paraphernalia.



*Full story and more photo's inside:*

.....

## PETER PAN PANTO PEOPLE PICKED

Residents both young and old were fortunate enough to have been chosen to attend this years Grand Opera House performance of Peter Pan. Tickets were donated by the LSP in conjunction with Castlereagh Borough Council.

The Association was given the opportunity to send ten members of the community to this years Xmas Panto, when Janice Cherry from the LSP



came up trump's with tickets. It didn't take long for volunteers to find ten worthy candidates for what promised to be a great night out.

The committee decided to send five young members of our community to accompany five elders, though at this stage we don't know who'll be looking after who !

## COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION HAND OVER PERSONAL ATTACK ALARMS TO RESIDENTS

**CRIME IS ON THE INCREASE** - So everyone keeps telling us. But what can we do? This Community Association decided to tackle the issue head on, as unfortunately our own areas have not gone without their share of such problems.

Since it's inaugural meeting the Community Association have carried out enquiries within the area and asked for public opinion on ways you believe security concerns might be better addressed and how you might be made to feel safer in the community. Most of the concerns raised, especially by women and elderly residents, was the inability to walk the streets after dark and feel safe in ones own home.

Whilst the Association feels that safety in our community is an issue to be addressed by the whole community, we approached various agencies including the PSNI, to seek their assistance in tackling the problem. Darren Curtis from the Community Safety Partnership, provided the Community Association with a number of personal attack alarms for distribution among the community, with the promise of more to come.

Community Association Secretary Barry Wilson, in recent weeks has handed over a number of these alarms to some of our elderly residents in the very sincere hope that certainly in the short term they may provide a small degree of protection and allow them to leave their homes.

| IN THIS EDITION                                  | PAGE |
|--|------|
| Mission Statement                                | 2    |
| Opening Address                                  |      |
| Youth Club/Football Trip                         | 3    |
| Paraphernalia find/UUP Statement                 | 4    |
| Play Park for Breda<br>Dog Fouling— Unacceptable | 5    |
| Illegal dumping                                  | 6    |
| Graffiti, sign of urban decay                    | 7    |
| Acknowledgements                                 | 8    |

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

**“The Community Association for Belvoir, Milltown & Newtownbreda** will work vigorously to challenge the causes and conditions which create social, economic and welfare problems in our community. We will strive to achieve real and sustainable benefit by enhancing the quality of life through a range of services and advice and, most of all, create avenues and opportunities that allow people to help themselves”.

### **Our Vision**

“That the right of all sections in our community should reach their full potential and that it be honoured as an essential contribution to economic and social regeneration”.

### **Secretary's Message**

It is with considerable pride and satisfaction that I am able to write this message to you on behalf of the management committee of our newly formed Community Association.

Since our inaugural meeting on the 24th October 2006 and in what is a very short space of time, we have gone from strength to strength, which hopefully this Newsletter will bear witness too. Whilst articles included bear testimony to just some of our problems and I am glad to say we have much to report and we, in conjunction with a variety of agencies are currently addressing most of them. With some articles we hope that embarrassment, especially in relation to illegal dumping and dog fouling will prove effective before we have to name and shame. Anti-social behaviour has also been a bone of contention, an issue we highlighted on BBC Radio and again in the local press. We have worked with and spoken to young people in a sincere effort to make them more aware of how exactly such issues effects residents and we hope to date we have brought residents some peace, and according to the PSNI, calls to them reporting anti-social behaviour have dropped considerably since we picked up this particular mantle.

The Association operates an emergency response service and we have distributed a mobile phone number which is monitored 24/7. If you feel anxious about a situation which may be happening close to your home, or if you are the victim of anti social behaviour, you can call the number in complete confidence. No one will call at your home if you do not request them to. No one will ask you for your name, if you choose to give it that is fine it will be taken in confidence. We do not wish to replace the Police in dealing with matters of crime within our community, and we would urge anyone who is a victim of crime to inform the PSNI on every occasion, we are merely trying to offer a service which will help those in our community realise the quality of life we feel they have earned and rightly deserve, namely to be able to live in peace and without fear as they walk the streets of our areas.

We are here to work for all members of our community. There are no application forms to be filled in nor does a committee sit to judge a persons entitlement to be a part of our Association. All we ask is that you share the same values and goals for our community. If, after reading our mission statement and vision, you would like to know more about our work or feel you would like to get involved with what we are trying to do, then please get in touch. We look forward to working alongside other like minded people and groups, such as Brian Dunwoody and the Belvoir Christian Association, in making our community a place for all to be not only proud of but also one that everyone wants to be part of.

My personal thanks go to M Copeland & M McGimpsey MLA's of the UUP, who have been invaluable in helping us, and without whose commitment to grass roots groups like ourselves we would have found it very difficult to have got as far as we have. Thanks to Corpus Christie Services based in Ballymurphy for their assistance with our Youth Team Projects and to Paul Carland and all the staff of the NIHE who have been unequalled in their support of our efforts and we cannot thank them enough, we hope to continue our close working relationship which we have forged with them thus far.

In closing I would like to again thank all those who have helped us get of the ground and become a force which is here to stay. We will be holding a public meeting at the end of January 2007 and would ask that as many as possible attend and finally on behalf of all in the Association, we wish you all a happy Xmas and a very peaceful 2007.

## YOUTH CLUB AND FOOTBALL TRIP

The Association concluded that in order to actively address the youth issues in the area, certainly in the short term that a place, and/or central meeting area was required. We needed somewhere that would tempt our young people in from the closing cold and wet nights and ideally into where we as an Association could gain their trust and attempt to extract from them ideas that could benefit us all and to which we could pursue on their behalf for what was in effect their area. Representatives approached members of a local band and asked them for temporary use of their practise hall in Milltown, to which they agreed to us using on Tue, Thur & Fridays. That was the first big step, the next having the equipment available to keep them occupied, but thanks to the band and a few generous parents we soon took possession of a pool table, an assortment of board games and a dart board, not a lot we'll agree, but we have to start somewhere, and to be honest the availability of shelter from the elements brought more of a smile to most of their faces.

As the club gathered momentum and appeared to go from strength to strength we gave all of the young people an opportunity to put forward ideas to the volunteers, as to what exactly they felt was lacking in the area and how we as an Association could help. Most of the older members of the club and in the 13-17 yr old bracket spoke of their love of football and how much they would enjoy travelling as a group to watch a football match, somewhere where most had never been. Volunteers took the idea to the Committee and it was decided to make an attempt to source tickets to a football match. The Association was very pleased to announce to the same young people that through and with the help of Shaws Bridge Rangers Supporters Club we secured seventeen tickets to the Glasgow Rangers v Kilmarnock game due to take place on 26th November 2006.

### THE TRIP ITSELF

*Sunday 26th November was an early start for seventeen lucky kids travelling to see Glasgow Rangers play Kilmarnock at Ibrox park, Glasgow. Thankfully no-one slept in and all made it for the 6.00am start in order to make the HSS sailing from Belfast-Stranraer and the onward journey by minibus to Glasgow, a journey which to most was their first ever.*

*A smooth sailing allowed the kids the opportunity to explore the HSS and avail of some of it's many eateries and fill themselves for the onward drive to Ibrox. Arriving in Ibrox the smiles on the faces of the kids told it all and as we had arrived in plenty of time before kick-off we had plenty of time to take them on a tour of the park and stadium before taking our seats. Although impressed at the size of Ibrox stadium, it didn't appear that many were turning up for today's game, that was until approx 15 minutes before the match began when from nowhere the crowds appeared and the seats were full to capacity, amazing to watch.*

*It wasn't long before the atmosphere started to envelope us all and as Rangers took to the pitch the smiles just got bigger and bigger. To see at last the football team that some of these kids had supported from afar all of their very short loves, their dreams had just been fulfilled. It wasn't long before our voices joined the rest of the crowds in cheering, chanting and inspiring our team to what turned out to be a 3-0 victory over Kilmarnock.*

*Although it was time to return home after for most was a very long day, the smiles never faded and everyone who attended expressed their desire to return again, SOON.*

***The Association would like to extend our most sincere thanks to the members of Shaws Bridge Rangers Supporters Club for donating their tickets to help us make some of our kids dreams come true and to those volunteers who played mothers for the day, Thank You All !***

## **COMMUNITY GROUP PRAISED FOR TAKING THE LEAD IN DRUGS CLEAN UP INITIATIVE — continued:....**

Drugs, drugs, drugs, how many times are we becoming increasingly more aware of this scourge that is sweeping all our communities and in some tragic cases our lives.

Despite continual public announcements and Police warnings concerning the adverse effects of drug use and the legality or more so the illegality issues surrounding it we continue to uncover evidence of what is evidently widespread abuse, especially amongst our young people. The community Association has over the past few weeks been gathering momentum and as more residents are becoming aware of and trusting the responses on the community telephone more information is being received in

relation to anti social behavior, drug use and underage drinking.



Pictured above are two items of drug paraphernalia discovered in Greenwood Lodge and subsequently handed over to Castlereagh Police can be seen quite clearly and are locally produced items made from plastic bottles and more com-

monly referred to as "BONGS", or "LUNGS". The method of construction in itself is very simple using locally available items and both are used for the inhalation of burning or burnt drugs. Although in the past weeks members of the Association have discovered such items discarded in various locations, this is the first time that a publicly accessible and communal area has been used for such.

The Community Association unreservedly denounces any form of drug use and will in every case proceed to work with local Police and other organizations to rid this scourge from within our areas.

## **UUP MLAS BACK COMMUNITY GROUP OVER DRUGS CLEAN UP INITIATIVE**

Two Ulster Unionist MLA's have today praised a local community Association for confronting illegal drugs use in their area. On Monday evening, representatives from Belvoir, Milltown and Newtownbreda Community Association went to Castlereagh police station to present officers with evidence of illegal drug use recovered from a communal area in a block of flats.

In a statement, Castlereagh Borough Councillor, and East Belfast MLA, Michael Copeland said: What was found in an area openly accessible to everyone, including children were items typically associated with Class C drug use. The community Association took the initiative and brought it to the attention of police. This is to be greatly welcomed. As a society, if we are to tackle the scourge of drugs and anti-social behaviour, a strong partnership approach between local community groups and police is to be encouraged.

He added: Police are clear where they find evidence of criminal activity, they will investigate and endeavour to put that evidence before the courts. This is part of a process whereby the community Association will work to ensure that drug users get the clear message that this type of activity will simply not be tolerated.

South Belfast MLA Michael McGimpsey said: This community group is to be praised for confronting the drugs problem in their area and in bringing it to the attention of police. The equipment and paraphernalia left behind by drug users can often be highly dangerous for anyone coming into contact with it. It is disturbing that in this case these items were found in an area which many people pass through on a daily basis.

He added: This is a very positive move which demonstrates the value of such community groups and the need to support their ongoing work. Illegal drug use is a menace to everyone who wants to live in fair and peaceful society. Any progress that can be made in tackling it must be supported. **Issued by UUP Press Office**

## **NEWTOWNBREDA CHILDRENS PARK PROPOSALS UNDERWAY**

A long running bone of contention for the residents of Newtownbreda and in particular those who live in the Breda Terrace/Woodbreda areas is the annual 11th of July bonfire.

Following requests from residents in this area who are directly affected by what has become an unsightly and hazardous mess it was suggested that an alternative be sought.

After some consultation it was proposed that the Association seek outside assistance in gathering ideas for the redevelopment of the area, which resulted in it being considered an ideal location for a cross generational recreation area/play park.

Plans are well underway, site surveys and feasibility studies are



nearing completion and it is hoped that adequate funding can be sourced soon.

The Association fully understands and appreciates residents

concerns and anxieties that the proposed park may be taken over and used as a focal point for anti-social behaviour/underage drinking. We can quite categorically state that this WILL NOT be allowed to happen.

The park will be designed with everyone in mind and will aim to instill a sense of community spirit bridging religious, ethnic and generational divides.

It is expected that such a professionally designed and built feature will add value and appeal to those properties adjacent to it.

## **DOG FOULING – UNDER OWNERS NOSES - NOT ACCEPTIBLE**

It's hard to believe that despite repeated health warnings, public advertisements and council reminders just how many people continue to allow their animals to foul publicly accessible areas. We should be thankful



and grateful we live on the edge of such a beautiful forest, a forest which has been designated the largest within an urban environment in Europe, in conjunction with the large open play areas, football pitches and common ground which we often take for granted. Whilst the residents of Belvoir take great pride in their

forest and environs, some are becoming increasingly frustrated by the large numbers of visitors and residents alike, which use these common areas to exercise their animals toilet habits. On what has now become regular visits these walkers/pet owners, frequently watch their animals foul not only the grass areas where young people play football at weekends, but also the public footpaths that we all have to tread. In the area of the Boys Brigade car park, one local resident has got so fed up, that she has contacted and furnished us with photographs of some of these offending visitors and their pets, in the hope that if necessary public humiliation in the form of name and shame might bring closure to this disgusting habit. We believe all those who use these facilities should be allowed to do so without the risk of tak-

ing home a little reminder of their walk in the forest, in the form of dog excrement attached to the sole of their shoe. Contained within this article are just two examples, at present



with the owners identities concealed, of just how brazen these dog lovers are when it comes to letting their animals defecate in areas designated for recreation. We hope the appropriate department within the council will take action where and when an offence takes place.

# ASSOCIATION SEEKS HELP ON ILLEGAL DUMPING FROM NIHE, COUNCIL & RESIDENTS

As our rates get higher and the cost of waste disposal every increasing, more and more unscrupulous members of our community are employing just about any methods they can to dispose of their waste. Once voted and awarded the title of “best kept large housing area, 1995 and 1996”, standards we are sorry to admit to but they have dropped and whilst on the outside all looks well it doesn’t take long and we don’t have to delve very deep to discover just exactly how bad the situation has become. On regular visits around the area, our attention has been constantly drawn to areas such as that in the Castlerobin Road and more recently Moyle Walk area where the bin situation and



apparent illegal dumping of household refuse is prevalent. The photographs attached are an example of just what was uncovered in an area behind flats in Castlerobin Road recently. Whilst the NIHE and Castlereagh Borough Council are currently assisting the Association to address the matters arising



from what residents see as the

lack of suitable refuse bins, there is no apparent excuse or explanation for the illegal dumping of the bed base, seen below.

The Association will, on every



occasion, where information is received regarding illegal dumping report the said perpetrators to the relevant authorities and would encourage residents to do likewise

## THE SHEDS

To most of us any reference to “The Sheds” would imply a safe, locked private area where we as residents keep the belongings and articles which are typically impractical to keep in the house or in this case our flats. Not in the area of Castleboy Lodge though,

instead the area as illustrated in the picture right has become not only a dumping ground but more so a “hang out” for graffiti vandals and we believe, based on local knowledge and evidence a dry, unobtrusive, private place where our young people can congregate and use illegal substances, i.e., drugs!

The Association has worked



very closely with the NIHE to get this place cleaned up and dispose of the materials which lay abandoned and allowed these persistent offenders to gather and erect makeshift “huts” for their activities. Over the course of the last two weeks members of the Association have repeatedly attended this area and found drug paraphernalia which were passed to Police for further investigation. The Association would like to thank the NIHE and particularly Pauline Beattie for her input which resulted in “The Sheds” being cleaned and the aforementioned materials disposed of in a safe manner, FOLLOW UPS, NEXT EDITION.

Fortunately and to officials delight most of those who have been regular visitors have left their signatures around the area to assist the relevant authorities to investigate their illegal behavior. The Association has

contacted local schools where information has suggested those involved attend but unfortunately to date no response has been forthcoming. Only working together will we achieve our goals and through such, the community as a whole will benefit.

## GRAFFITI, IS IT A SIGN OF URBAN DECAY ?

Today graffiti is a sign of urban decay. It has become just about everyone's eyesore. Graffiti generates fear, crime and instability. It is costly, destructive, lowers property values and sends a message that people of the community are not necessarily concerned about the appearance of their neighborhoods. It is also against the law.

Some may attempt to justify it and call it "art" but it is not, it is vandalism and criminal damage.

***"Graffiti means any unauthorized inscription, word, figure, picture, or design that is sprayed, marked, cut, posted, pasted or otherwise affixed, drawn or painted on any surface of public or private property."***

Within the area we are seeing less evidence of graffiti that pertains to religious, sectarian or paramilitary references, but there appears to be a trend toward slang referring to drugs and their usage.

Graffiti has become such an unsightly and significant threat to the appearance of our areas that we plan to start our own Graffiti deterrence programs to do the following :-

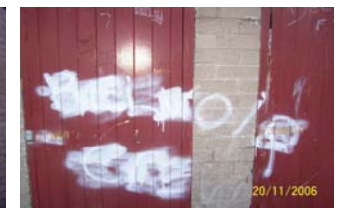
1. Educate citizens about the importance of graffiti prevention and abatement.
2. Provide communities with tools and resources to respond to graffiti vandalism.
3. Help foster partnerships that will encourage involvement from all members of the community in addressing graffiti vandalism.
4. Help communities establish anti-graffiti programs that get results, creating healthier, safer, and more liveable communities.

It is widely acknowledged that graffiti artists/vandals want to be recognised for their work and thankfully through these means we should be able to identify those responsible for such vandalism and therefore assist Police and local authorities in bringing those perpetrators to book for their actions.

Within this article we have included a small example of graffiti/vandalism, in the sincere hope that someone, somewhere will recognise the damage

that is being caused and make them realise such activities are not acceptable.

We recently informed the mother of a thirteen year old, who lives in the Breda Road area, of her sons regular spraying of buildings within the Newtown-breda, Fourwinds and Belvoir areas. We were very disappointed with her reaction and informed her that details of the incidents will be reported to the PSNI should her son continue with his actions.





The Community Association would like to offer our most sincere thanks to a number of people and groups that have offered assistance and advice and without whom we would not have been able to produce this first edition of the Newsletter and include what we believe to have been to date successful articles. Amongst those to whom we owe a big thanks are:-

- Michael Copeland MLA UUP
- Michael McGimpsey MLA UUP
- Paul Carland & Paulene Beattie (NIHE)
- Lisa Wilson (Castlereagh Borough Council)
- Bronagh Bellew (Corpus Christi Services, Ballymurphy)
- Darren Curtis (CSP)
- Janice Cherry (LSP)
- Shaws Bridge RSC

---

---

**THE CONFIDENTIAL COMMUNITY MOBILE TELEPHONE NUMBER CAN BE  
CONTACTED 24 HRS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK :-**

**07842092874**

---

---

**PRINTED COURTESY OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND HOUSING EXECUTIVE**