

NEW FERRY RAG

The Newsletter for your Community

Issue 42: December 2018

See our website

www.newferryonline.org.uk

Christmas
Gifts

Local
Produce

Mulled
Wine

Free
Parking



New Ferry CHRISTMAS MARKETS

Saturday 8th December 2018

Christmas gifts, crafts and other stalls in Bebington Road precinct
10am till 4pm (including choirs and entertainment)

BEBINGTON ROAD, NEW FERRY, WIRRAL CH62 5BE

Traditional Christmas Farmers' Market in New Ferry Village Hall
9am till 1pm (locally sourced food produce)

NEW FERRY VILLAGE HALL, GROVE STREET, NEW FERRY, WIRRAL CH62 5AZ

Santa's Grotto inside the Phabulous Community Hub 10am till 3pm
(also available on 24th November, 1st December & 15th December)

PHABULOUS COMMUNITY CHARITY HUB, 100 NEW CHESTER ROAD, NEW FERRY CH62 5AG



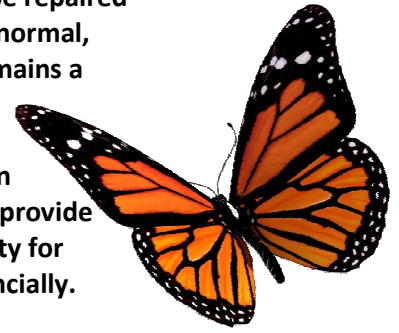
More details on www.newferryonline.org.uk

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With the end of 2018 approaching, most residents who had to leave their homes to be repaired have now been moving back. The homes of Port Sunlight Village are getting back to normal, but normality for our long suffering businesses (particularly those in the precinct) remains a long way off.

We know that people prefer to shop at the bigger stores elsewhere on Wirral, but can we make a plea that whenever you can, please use your local shops. The businesses provide much needed local employment for people, and there are some within our community for whom a trip to Asda for top up shopping is not a practicality either physically or financially.



SUPPORT OUR LOCAL SHOPS (and come to our Christmas Markets, Farmers' Market and Santa's Grotto inside the PHAB Community Hub on Saturday 8th December!)

#LoveNewFerry



REMAINING DONATED FUNDS TO BENEFIT LOCAL BUSINESSES

Over 60% of the monies donated to the New Ferry Town Team following the explosion has now been shared out to mostly residents affected by the disaster. The funding was administered through New Beginnings, New Ferry who were on the ground, based in New Ferry and who provided welcome support to so many people facing rehoming and temporary rehousing issues, financial stress, depression, etc. People were helped to pay bills and replace essential items where insurance companies were slow to respond or where residents found themselves in difficulties through no fault of their own.

In addition, the funds were and are continuing to pay Wirral MIND to provide counselling support for victims of the explosion and its aftermath who have been suffering from depression, but who could not access help quickly enough through the usual NHS channels.

If you still need counselling and have not yet asked for it, please ring them on 0151 200 0514 or email them at counselling@wirralmind.org.uk

At a recent emergency Town Team meeting, a decision was reached to use the remaining £7,000 to support traders who continue to suffer financial loss since the explosion. Footfall is still down by over 50% in the Precinct since before the disaster; some traders have had to use savings or borrow money to make repairs where insurers have dithered, and with takings so low, there are some businesses near to bankruptcy.

The remaining funds will be offered to businesses who were trading at the time of the explosion and who have suffered financial or material impact as a direct result of it. This includes those who have not been able to get recompense from their insurance company or landlord, or have not already received financial assistance from the Town Team and are in need of financial assistance now.

The funding will be administered by the independent body Community Action Wirral who will distribute the money fairly between those who need it. Businesses will be contacted about this in the coming weeks, with details of how to apply.

COMMUNITY CLEAN-UPS



Community volunteers have been out making a difference in New Ferry by carrying out a series of clean ups.

New Ferry residents teamed with volunteers from Port Sunlight River Park, Involve North West and the Community Payback Team to clean several streets in the town in the run-up to 5th November as part of 'Operation Banger'. Over 5 tonnes of rubbish were collected, including fly-tipped furniture, white goods, timber and other household items. They were assisted through a partnership involving Merseyside Police, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, and the Safer Wirral Hub.

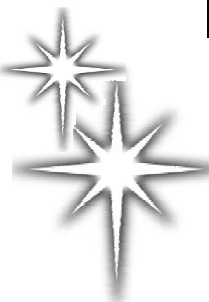
There have also been clean-ups by a second team of volunteers who tackled New Ferry's precinct in Bebington Road. 12 residents turned up for the first session on Sunday 30th September, whilst 30 came on Sunday 28th October to complete the precinct along its length from Griffiths to Money Matters. As well as dumped rubbish, they also cleaned up slippery moss from some of the pavings. Many thanks to everyone involved, and especially Ann Grimes for putting soup and butties on in the Pub during and after the sessions.

Going forward into 2019, the clean ups will be the last Sunday in the month (from 10am) on Sunday 30th December 2018, Sunday 27th January and Sunday 24th February 2019.

Please turn up for an hour if you would like to join in. Meet outside the Cleveland Public House.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS THANKS

Our thanks go to **Stewart Finch** and **AJ** who have spent the last few weeks fixing up the christmas lights (paid for from money raised by our Festival in September), and to **NW Construction** who have put the lights up for us for the second year running (organised by **Simon Crabtree**).



THE GOVERNMENT RESPONDS AND LETS NEW FERRY DOWN AGAIN!



On 5th September, a delegation of community representatives for New Ferry (above) travelled to the House of Commons in London to have a face-to-face meeting with the Communities Secretary, James Brokenshire. They took with them a detailed report into the impact of the explosion written by Marion Grundy Ridewood, and attached to it were a series of personal impact statements written by over 60 people whose lives had been (and largely remain) affected by the disaster. The meeting was brokered by our MP, Alison McGovern.

The minister listened intently to Marion's presentation which contained previously unpublished facts and figures about the effects of the explosion, but with an emphasis on the longer-lasting emotional cost which often gets overlooked by the media when reporting on such incidents.

After weeks of waiting, on 21st November, the minister responded and - yet again - dashed our community's hopes. In his letter to a furious Alison McGovern, he reiterated his predecessor's stance (Jake Berry) that the disaster "was too small for the government to get involved in", whilst also laying blame at the Council for not having responded with information that would have allowed them to apply for the "Bellwin funding" (additional money which the government can give to help disasters). The Council have refuted the claims in the letter and the issue has now been unfairly (for New Ferry and its suffering community) been turned into a political football with the government using it as an excuse to criticise our Labour-controlled Council.

We will not be giving up, and together, our community will be working to continue the fight for fairness whilst we have to sit back and watch the government helping out Salisbury and Belfast following incidents there. This is one of the worst examples, ever, of what the North-South divide really means for communities in the North.

In the meantime, the New Ferry Town Team, Traders Association and New Ferry Residents Association are supporting the formation of a Community Land Trust which has its own plans to help the regeneration efforts. (See opposite).

Help for those claiming on their insurance

One of the things we raised with the minister was that some insurance companies have been slow to pay out. As a response to this, the Council has offered to step in and help residents, property owners and businesses directly affected by the New Ferry explosion in March 2017. Insurance claims should have been paid by now. But if not, Wirral Council officers are willing and able to try and support you, and with your written permission, will contact your insurance company and/or the Association of British Insurers to see if repair work can be accelerated.

If you need help dealing with your insurers, please contact David Ball either by email (davidball@wirral.gov.uk) or ring 0151 606 2000 and ask to be put through to him.



NEW COMMUNITY LAND TRUST BEING SET UP TO DRIVE REGENERATION IN THE DISTRICT CENTRE

Assuming that the sites flattened by the explosion will be redeveloped in the next year or so with a mixture of insurance payouts and private sector developer interest, a group of community volunteers have banded together to form the New Ferry Community Land Trust.

Community Land Trusts (CLTs) are a form of community-led housing/development, set up and run by ordinary local people to develop and manage homes as well as other assets important to that community, like community enterprises, food growing or workspaces. CLTs act as long-term stewards of housing, ensuring that it remains genuinely affordable - based on what people actually earn in their area - not just for now, but for every future occupier. Above all, CLTs empower local communities to come together to solve the challenges facing them. And New Ferry DOES have challenges!!

The New Ferry Community Land Trust is aiming to target the empty properties in the district centre - several of which have been empty and semi-derelict for some years even before the explosion. Similar to a registered charity, the CLT will be able to apply for funding to help them acquire vacant properties which they will be able to renovate either for housing, or a mix of housing on upper floors with potential retail or community space on the ground floor. They will also focus on tidying up the district centre, and organising events such as the upcoming Christmas Street Market which aim to encourage footfall into New Ferry's businesses, and the clean-ups mentioned on Page 2.

The initiative will be supported (but not run by) the Council. CLTs need several people to help run them. **LOCAL PEOPLE LIKE YOU**, so it will be inviting residents and business people within our community to take part in shaping the future of New Ferry by getting involved and becoming Members.

A **public community meeting** to discuss New Ferry's CLT will be held on **Monday 14th January 2019** at 7pm at St Mark's Church Hall. Everyone is invited to attend to find out more, and you will be invited to become a Member.



Many of you will by now be aware that New Beginnings, New Ferry has recently ceased to operate. The award-winning team of hard-working volunteers led by Lisa, Barbara and Val had been at the forefront of offering help and support to those affected by the explosion in March 2017, had distributed the donated monies to victims, and offered a much needed shoulder for people to cry on in their hours/days of desperation. On behalf of the community, we would like to thank the team for their hard efforts and wish them well as they put their own lives back together and move on to projects new.

CHRISTMAS CHURCH SERVICES & EVENTS

St Mark's - Carols by Candlelight on Sunday 16th December at 4pm. Children's Nativity on Sunday 23rd at 10.30am - come dressed as a character in the nativity. Christmas Day Service at 10am.

St John's RC -

The Great New Ferry Christmas Dinner - donations needed

Some of our community will be giving up their Christmas Day at home to volunteer their time running a Christmas Dinner at St Mark's Church Hall for those less fortunate who would otherwise be lonely over the festive period or unable to provide for their families because of sanctioning or financial hardship.

HOW YOU CAN HELP! As the food bank will be closed over the Christmas period, we would like to be able to offer small hampers of food on the day to those who need them. We are appealing for anyone to donate unopened gifts, bath sets, non perishable foods, nappies, sanitary towels toilet rolls, washing powder or other items. If you can help and would like to donate, please bring your donations to Money Matters at 1 Bebington Road by Saturday 22nd December.



Charity begins at home, and we want to help those in New Ferry and Port Sunlight less fortunate than ourselves. Please help us to do so.

Local businesses encouraged to be included in the New Ferry Business Directory

You will all have seen the New Ferry Business Directory which the Town Team kindly paid for out of some of the donated monies; and we hope you find it useful. It was delivered to all households in New Ferry and Port Sunlight earlier this year.

We are aware that despite our best efforts, there are still some businesses based in New Ferry and Port Sunlight who have not stepped forward to be included.

Your listing in the directory is **FREE**. Although we don't have any funding at the moment to reprint the directory, you can still be listed in the online version.

Please visit www.newferryonline.org.uk to see the most up-to-date version of the business listings and to apply to be included on it if you are based in New Ferry or Port Sunlight Village. Alternatively, you can write to us at the address shown below.



GALLIER HOUSE ARRIVES IN NEW FERRY TO HELP PREVENT SUICIDES

In 2018, Gallier House C.I.C - a local non profit organisation dedicated to the prevention of suicide - set up The Martin Gallier Project to offer funded Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training to families/carers/friends of an individual at risk. The project receives no government funding and runs solely on the generosity of donors and proceeds from the Gallier House shop located at 157 New Chester Road, New Ferry, CH62 4RB. The shop sells one of a kind pieces of bespoke furniture along with arts, crafts and photography supplied by local artisans.

Gallier House C.I.C hosts a number of creative workshops aimed at those suffering from social isolation, poor mental health, or bereavement. By January 2019 the project will offer bereavement by suicide support groups and by summer 2019 a drop in service for those considering suicide.

If you would like to know more or need our help and support, come and visit us or ring us on 07983740366. You can also visit our website at www.gallierhouse.co.uk

USEFUL INFORMATION & NOTICES:

New Ferry Village Hall & Windsor Close Community Centre

New Ferry Village Hall has a wide variety of sporting activities taking place including table tennis, badminton, majorettes, football, roller derby, karate, walking football, walking netball, indoor bowls and fitness classes for the over 50's.

The Hall is also used for more sedate groups such as a craft group and an AA support group.

Windsor Close is "home" to several bingo groups, Hard of Hearing, Widows, a weekly luncheon club, a fitness class, karate and Rainbows.

There is also a Baby stay and play session once a week.

Both venues are available to hire for one off events such as children's parties.

For more information on any of these activities please contact Margaret on **0151 643 1393**.

Wirral Farmers' Market

**SATURDAY 8TH DECEMBER
9.00 AM - 1.00 PM, NEW FERRY VILLAGE HALL**

Our Christmas Market is an ideal opportunity to buy treats for your family and friends, such as home made chocolates, delicious home made preserves, home made pates and different flavoured liqueurs. We have 25 stalls all selling traditional farm food including vegetables, meats, cheeses, breads, eggs, olives, fish, poultry and honey.

Grove Street Primary School Choir will be singing at 10.00 am to put us all in a festive mood and local scouts will be selling Christmas Scout Post stamps alongside their home made decorations.

Father Christmas will be visiting to hand out stockings filled with fruit to visiting children, whilst our cafe will be open for drinks and breakfast.

- The next markets will be held on:
- **Saturday 12th January 2019**
 - **Saturday 9th February 2019**
 - **Saturday 9th March 2019**

Find out more at www.wirralfarmersmarket.org.uk

New Ferry Residents Association consists of local residents and business people. We work together with officers from Wirral Borough Council, local councillors and our Member of Parliament in order to improve New Ferry. We are a non-political organisation (although the government's current indifference to our community's plight is stretching our non-political stance to the absolute limit!)

If you have any community based problem which you think we can help you with, please contact us by writing to:
New Ferry Residents Association, c/o New Ferry Village Hall, Longfellow Drive, New Ferry, Wirral, Merseyside CH62 5AZ
Website: www.newferryonline.org.uk