

NEW FERRY RAG

The Newsletter for your Community

Issue 43: March 2019

See our website

www.newferryonline.org.uk

and find us on Facebook "NewFerryOnline"



"Into the Light"

Emerging from the darkness into a new and brighter future

Lantern parade, choirs and poetry readings by lantern light

HOSTED BY RADIO MERSEYSIDE PRESENTER ROGER PHILLIPS

Monday 25th March 2019
6.45pm - 7.45pm

**NEW FERRY PRECINCT, BEBINGTON ROAD,
AND ON THE FORMER BOWLING GREEN,
BOUNDARY ROAD, PORT SUNLIGHT**

All welcome



NEW FERRY EASTER POP-UP MARKET

Saturday 20th April 2019, 10am - 4pm

New Ferry Precinct, Bebington Road, New Ferry, Wirral CH62 5BE

Find out more at www.newferryonline.org.uk

We have TWO events coming up in the next few weeks, both of which are designed to lift our spirits and keep our community at the forefront of everyone's minds.

"INTO THE LIGHT" is an event organised by Wirral Borough Council and the New Ferry Community Land Trust to mark the second anniversary of the explosion on 25th March. This is a chance for the community to come together to demonstrate to the rest of the UK that we remain a strong community where people support each other. Our event looks forward to the brighter future that New Ferry is going to have once the various regeneration projects get underway in the coming weeks.

The event will feature the choirs from Grove Street School and Church Drive School, the Wirral Sign Choir, and poetry readings. The Bebington Sovereign Majorettes will form part of the lantern parade that will meet outside the Carpet Shop in the precinct from 6.30pm. The parade will then begin marching down the precinct at 6.45pm to the bowling green on Boundary Road/Circular Drive where the choirs will all sing from 7pm. The event should finish around 7.45pm.

On Saturday 20th April we will be hosting an EASTER POP-UP MARKET in the precinct. Come along to buy cakes, gifts and other items that will be on sale from 10am till 4pm.

PORT SUNLIGHT RIVER PARK HERITAGE CENTRE TO OPEN

Port Sunlight River Park's new Heritage Centre will be opening on **Tuesday 2nd April** for World Autism Awareness Day. Family activities will take place from 1pm to 3.30pm. The mayor will officially open the centre at 2pm.

The centre, which will be managed on behalf of the Land Trust, by project partners North-West charity Autism Together, will have a significant impact on what is already a hugely popular site, which currently attracts 50,000 visitors a year.

The project has been made possible following a £450,000 Heritage Lottery Fund grant.

For years, our community has waited to see investment happen in our district centre. After all the plans and consultations, that investment is FINALLY about to start happening. Over the next 18 months, we are about to see over £2.45 million of public money spent on our community, with more than double that from the private sector to follow it. Here are the details of what IS GOING TO HAPPEN.

£450,000 HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS TO NEW CHESTER ROAD



The Council's highways team are due to start on a major scheme of works along New Chester Road. A contractor has been appointed and the works will be starting in May and run for approximately 13 weeks. .

The £450,000 package of measures are aimed primarily at improving safety along New Chester Road from Bolton Road East roundabout to Earl Street. This will include the removal of the two existing puffin crossings (north of New Ferry Road and Grove St), replaced by improved controlled pedestrian crossings, to provide more convenient and safer access to the local shops and for children walking to school. Works will also include the addition of dedicated cycle lanes, upgrading public footways and carriageway resurfacing.

All this has been made possible due to the award of grant funding from Liverpool City Region's Sustainable Transport Enhancements Package Scheme (STEP), and has been allocated to be used on specific highway projects such as this. This means that the Council cannot take the money and use it for other projects - including sorting out our precinct (which they are still working on trying to get funding for).

Naturally there will be some minor disruption during the period of works. The Council and its appointed contractor will liaise with residents and local businesses to ensure any disruption is kept to a minimum.

£1.3 MILLION ACQUISITIONS STRATEGY

In order to speed up the regeneration of New Ferry's District Centre, so many individually privately owned land and buildings will need to be acquired. The scale of the regeneration proposals means that individual owners cannot possibly do this on their own, so their properties need to be acquired so that one developer can more easily build a whole block as one single development.

This is to happen on the following sites:

- 48-72 Bebington Road which includes the former Griffiths Butcher and Pie Shop all the way down to just before the empty Print Here shop. This will allow the construction of a replacement block of buildings; and
- 104-124 New Chester Road from New Ferry News & Booze as far as the old Martial Arts Shop at the entrance to the car park. This will allow for new apartments to be built with some houses on part of the car park behind.

The Council has earmarked a maximum £1.3 million to be spent compensating owners of these properties. Those who have businesses currently operating will be given assistance to help them relocate to alternative premises.

£5 MILLION+ REBUILDING PROGRAMME - THOSE PLANS!



At the end of January, the Council revealed the latest plans for the rebuilding of New Ferry's centre. All three options presented were heavily reliant on the provision of new housing, and even included building on most (and in one option all of) the Woodhead Street car park.

Whilst some people welcomed these proposals, others were less satisfied. Many of the traders in the precinct were concerned about the loss of so much of the car park where they and their customers park. Others felt that with no new retail space being built to replace that which was lost as a result of the explosion, the plans would do nothing to attract shoppers to come back to New Ferry, or indeed new ones to consider coming at all.

As a compromise, in consultation with the New Ferry Traders Association and the New Ferry Community Land Trust, we drew up and presented to the Council a fourth option plan which included ground floor retail space in some of the blocks (similar to the example in the picture above). The Council passed this proposal on to their consultants for their opinion. The results will be revealed in the coming weeks.

Regardless of which option is chosen, it is clear that the larger bulk of the new development will include new housing. Some housing developers have already expressed an interest in getting involved. It is likely that we will then see the private sector spend in excess of £5 million bringing these new homes to New Ferry. A proportion of this housing will be affordable housing which will be offered to people unable to get a toe hold on the property ladder.



NEW FERRY TO RECEIVE METRO MAYOR'S £500,000 TOWN CENTRE FUND

New Ferry is to be allocated £500,000 from Metro Mayor Steve Rotherham's Town Centre Fund. Wirral Council will administer the funding which will be used to purchase and renovate empty and derelict former shop premises in Bebington Road and along New Chester Road which do not fall within the zones covered by their £1.3 million Land Acquisitions Strategy.

The Council has nominated the New Ferry Community Land Trust (CLT) to help deliver this project. The CLT will have responsibility for identifying the long term vacant properties which need to be brought back into use, will liaise with property owners and - when having acquired them - carry out refurbishments needed.

The CLT has a constitution and a bank account now set up. It already has over 30 members made up of local traders, residents and other people who want to help the venture. Members are kept informed and invited to comment on proposals, to help with other initiatives including litter picks and community clean ups and events being held in the precinct.

Anyone who lives within New Ferry and Port Sunlight can join as a member - if you would like to join, just pop along to Money Matters at the junction of Bebington Road and New Chester Road to request an application form.

COMMUNITY CLEAN-UPS



If you care about our community, please volunteer to help with our community clean ups organised by the New Ferry Community Land Trust. We meet on the last Sunday of every month, at 10am at the Cleveland Arms Pub in Bebington Road.

However, our March 2019 clean up will be one week earlier, in order to clean up the precinct for our "Into the Light" event. It will take place at 10am on Sunday 24th March.

Afterwards, the clean-ups will return to their regular date starting from Sunday 27th April. Keep an eye on the New Ferry Online Facebook page for updates.

EXCUSE THE STINKS!!!

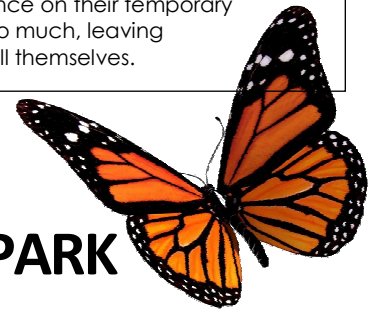
Over the last few weeks you may have noticed a foul stench occasionally hanging round the New Ferry and Port Sunlight area. This is because United Utilities are having to clean the smelly sludge tanks at their water treatment facility between Mayfields and Port Sunlight River Park. This unpleasant task has to be done every 15 years, and it is now 15 years since this was last done. United Utilities have apologised to the community for any "unpleasant smells".

The work is being done in stages, so there may be gaps of a few weeks between each tank being cleaned. The works may be continuing until June, and United Utilities have said they will do all they can to minimise the smells, but say that because of the nature of the work necessary it is not always possible to prevent some odours from escaping the complex. Better stock up on air freshner!!

COUNCIL PLEDGES £200,000 FOR VICTIMS OF THE EXPLOSION

At the Council's recent budget meeting it was announced that they intend to allocate £200,000 to help the victims of the explosion.

Several residents and businesses are still suffering from the effects of financial loss and hardship, with some still finding that their insurance companies have only been willing to help them out to a point. Victims who have had to wait for their homes to be rebuilt (as of March 2019, now 24 months after the explosion, some residents are STILL waiting to return to their homes) have had to continue paying mortgages/ rent AND insurance on their damaged properties whilst also having to pay rent and insurance on their temporary homes. Insurers will only pay so much, leaving victims to make up the shortfall themselves.



NEW FERRY BUTTERFLY PARK OPENING DAY

FREE ENTRY

SUNDAY 5th MAY 2019, 11 am - 4 pm

Guests of Honour: The Mayor of Wirral, Councillor Geoffrey Watt and The Mayoress of Wirral, Mrs Anne Watt

- New Art Trail to our 16 Artworks!
- Art and Craft tables
- Plant Sale
- Cake Sale
- Face Painting
- BBQ
- Tombola
- Spider Identification
- Smoothie Bike
- Pond Dipping
- Pollination pots
- Maypole Dancing

New Ferry Butterfly Park

Howell Rd, New Ferry, Wirral CH62 5BJ

(behind Aldi next to Bebington Station car park)

Website: www.wirralwildlife.org.uk



**Cheshire
Wildlife Trust**

Wirral Wildlife Local Group

Port Sunlight River Park / Shorefields Spring Clean

Join the Great British Spring Clean

Be part of the pick

Shorefields Spring Clean

Saturday 23rd March 10.15 to 12noon and 1-3pm

Meet at 10.15 at the steps.

Wear strong shoes or boots and bring gloves.

Contact Port Sunlight River Park Ranger on 07587550060 or river.park@autismtogether.co.uk for more information.



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 last 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.



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, and karate.

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

The next markets will be held on:

- Saturday 13th April 2019
- Saturday 11th May 2019
- Saturday 8th June 2019

Find out more at

www.wirralfarmersmarket.org.uk

Bebington Youth Club

Bebington Youth Club offers a great opportunity for young people to get together and have fun, in a warm and friendly atmosphere with fully qualified youth workers.

Please come along and see what is on offer and talk to the friendly staff. There are lots of activities such as Pool, Indoor Football, Table Tennis, Film nights, Music Room, Wii & X Box. Suggestions for any other activities are welcome.

Please feel free to visit the club. We are open Mondays, Wednesdays & Thursdays 7-10pm. The age range is for young people who are in Secondary school.

Still need counselling after the explosion?

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

This counselling support is **FREE**, and being paid for by donations made to the New Ferry Town Team following the March 2017 explosion.

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