

Groomsport Village Newsletter



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Groomsport Village Association A.G.M.

The Annual General Meeting of the Groomsport Village Association is on Thursday 24th October 2013; 7:30pm at Groomsport Boathouse.

All Groomsport residents are welcome to attend the A.G.M.

The GVA have 20 (10 pairs) free tickets to give away at the meeting:

"The Swan Songs of Strauss" by the Ulster Orchestra, at the Ulster Hall

Sun 27th October 7.45pm, compliments of "Ulster Bank Festival at Queens"

Groomsport Christmas Tree Lights Switch-on

Groomsport Christmas Tree Lights will be switched on by the Mayor at the Presbyterian Church, Main Street, Groomsport, 6:30pm on Friday 29th November with Christmas Carols, accompanied by the Symington Memorial Silver Band. Santa Claus will also be making an appearance, so please bring the family along for an enjoyable community event.



Planning Success for Groomsport Village: 12 - 14 Bangor Road

Some residents will have received a letter from Planning Service advising that planning permission has been granted for the most recent application for this site.

Hopefully this marks the end of what must be the longest-running planning dispute in the village in recent times.

The dispute started five years ago when the Developer submitted a scheme to replace the bungalows on this site. This caused outrage in the village and the Village Association commenced a campaign to ensure that the site would be developed in an appropriate manner.

Last year the Planners decided Planning Permission should be granted to what was then the Developer's current application. The Council requested that an Office Meeting be set up to allow the issues to be discussed. As a result of the meeting, at which the Association played a leading role in opposing the application, the Planners reversed their decision and decided to refuse permission.

The application which has now received planning permission is a much more acceptable version of the one which was rejected last year.

In particular:-

- The number of apartments has been reduced from eight to six
- The two buildings in which the apartments are located have been reduced in height by about 1.5 metres
- The buildings have been set back further from the road than was previously proposed.

The Association is content that the approved scheme is much preferable to all those that went before and that the outcome represents a significant success for the village.

Thanks again to all those who helped us achieve this outcome.

Groomsport Family Fun Day 10th August 2013



Picture courtesy of Spectator Newspapers

The "Groomsport Family Fun" Day in August was organised by Groomsport residents Sharon Cummings and Brian McBride, assisted by family, friends, and neighbours.

Groomsport Village Association, North Down Borough Council, and our local traders all supported the event, which we hope will be the first of many for the local community.

More than 50 children and their parents were entertained with Arts and Crafts activities, Face Painting, Balloon Modelling, Cookie Decorating, and Mask Making.

Local artist Maria Mitchell helped the children with shell and stone painting.

Outdoor Activities included: A Treasure Hunt for families around the village, Bouncy Castle, Coconut Shy, Hoopla Stall, Giant Parachute, and Golf!

Our thanks to everyone who contributed, and volunteered to help make it a great day, especially local traders: Gabby's Fish & Chips, Spar, Neill & Co. Wines, Golf Professional Gareth Graham, Cottage Kitchen, and the Stables Restaurant for their generous support.

If you want to help with future events, please contact us via the GVA website www.groomsport.info



Time to make a Noise!

The Spectator newspaper reports that North Down Borough Council plans to cut £900 from the budget for the annual Groomsport Fireworks Display.

The Fireworks Display is a very popular event for residents and visitors alike, and both children and adults look forward to the music & fireworks event each year.

The Council will be "re-examining" their decision before a final decision is made at the end of October.

If you want help save the fireworks display in Groomsport, contact the council immediately to express your concerns.

Write to the Town Clerk: Mr Trevor Polley

Address: Town Hall, The Castle, Bangor, BT20 4BT. Email: Trevor.polley@northdown.gov.uk

Groomsport Village Remembrance Parade



Sunday 3rd November at 2.45pm.

The procession will leave from the Parish Hall to the War Memorial, at 2.30pm.

The Groomsport Village War Memorial

The Groomsport Village Association believes that the War Memorial is a very important feature of the village and that it should be properly respected and maintained as a fitting tribute to those who served and died in the World Wars. Given that the Memorial currently sits in a beautiful location overlooking the harbour, we believe that nothing should be done that will take away from the beauty and simplicity of the setting, or interrupt the views from Main Street to the harbour.

We are also of the view that, in times of austerity, any works carried out should be seen to represent good value for money.

A few months ago you may have received a leaflet from the Groomsport Remembrance Committee (GRC). This leaflet indicated that they wanted to carry out certain works at the War Memorial and asked for your support in this matter.

Who are the GRC?

The GRC was set up some years ago with the sole objective of organising the annual Remembrance Service in the Village. This current exercise clearly goes well beyond this remit.

What are they attempting to do?

GRC are currently seeking public funding for a scheme which would:

- Introduce railings around the Memorial.
- Introduce hedges around and behind the Memorial.
- Create a plateau some 23 metres wide in front of the Memorial. This will necessitate significant earthworks with depths of up to 1.5 metres (5 feet) of filling to the north-west side of the Memorial.

What support do they have for their proposals?

Earlier this year Groomsport residents had the opportunity to provide inputs to the Village Plan. The Consultants advise us that none of the residents expressed the view that changes should be made to the Memorial.

To the best of our knowledge the GRC has not disclosed the outcome of their consultation exercise, but have claimed that the response indicated 88% support from the village. Our understanding is that 50 comments were returned out of the 550 leaflets distributed. Given the GRC's 88% approval claim, this would mean 44 supportive returns and 6 unsupportive. These results suggest that they have the support of 8% of village residents.

What comes next?

Should GRC secure public funding for their proposals, North Down Borough Council has stated that it will seek the views of the village as part of a consultation exercise.

The Village Association believe that the current proposals are unacceptable.

We will keep Groomsport residents informed of any developments in the matter.



Preparing your Home for Winter

Yet again we hear that energy prices are going to rise!
Here are some ways to reduce energy costs:



1. Switch energy provider – Airtricity, Energia, Power NI and Budget are suppliers to compare costs with.
2. Pay your energy bills by direct debit – energy providers will offer a discount for payment by monthly instalments.
3. Pay as You Go meters – this method makes you aware of how much you are using with the added benefit of a discounted rate.
4. Switch from oil to mains gas – it has been estimated that you can save 20%+ over oil heating. Grants may be available.
5. Energy saving lamps – don't wait until your light bulbs expire. You can save £45 of energy over the lifetime of an energy saving lamp.
6. Insulation – insulating your immersion tank, loft and walls guarantees good savings
7. Insulate your windows – Clingfilm – like film secured to single glazed windows can reduce heat lost. Available from hardware/DIY stores.
8. Turn the thermostat down – dropping your home temperature by one degree can save £65 per yr.
9. The Warm Homes Scheme (www.warm-homes.com) is available to assist with insulation of homes for those on low incomes.

Heating Oil Purchase Scheme: The **GVA** is exploring the possibility of buying oil in bulk for Groomsport residents. We already have some households interested, but we need more to start the scheme. Savings are made because of increases in delivery efficiency.

If you are interested in getting more information (this does not commit you to anything), please go to the GVA website **www.groomsport.info** and leave your own email address, name, phone number and the size of your tank.

Impartial Energy Advice

The Housing Executive and local Councils are continuing to provide funding to Bryson Energy, the Energy Agency for Northern Ireland, to ensure that householders have full access to local, free and impartial energy advice.

Give their expert advisors a call on free phone **0800 1422 865** for help on simple and effective actions to take in your home. Bryson Energy can also provide you with information on how to access cash backs, grants and offers you may be entitled to. www.brysonenergy.org/advice.html

Check out these websites: www.thecarbontrust.co.uk, www.energysavingtrust.org.uk



Groomsport Harbour, by Frank Fitzsimons. Oil on board. Artists Estate

Courtesy: North Down Borough Council

Frank Fitzsimons, painting under the brush name "Franfit", was born in County Antrim, Northern Ireland in the 1930s and grew up in Bangor County Down. He painted alongside Maurice C. Wilks and Dennis Thornton during the early years at Bangor Art Club



Groomsport Community Events

DAY	TIME	WEEK	EVENT	VENUE
Monday	Afternoon	All	Patchwork Club	Boathouse
Monday	Evening	2nd & 4th	Chattering Needles	Parish Halls
Monday	Evening	All	Bridge Club	Boathouse
Monday	Evening	3rd	Mothers Union	Parish Halls
Monday	Evening		Karate Club	Parish Halls
Monday	7 – 8pm	All	Junior Boys Brigade	Walter Nelson Hall
Monday	Evening	2nd & 4th	Presbyterian Women's Ass.	Walter Nelson Hall
Monday	Evening	1st	Rotary (Women)	Stables
Tuesday	Morning		Probus (Men)	Stables
Tuesday	Afternoon		U3A Art Group	Boathouse
Tuesday	Evening		Brownies	Parish Halls
Tuesday	Evening		Rainbows	Parish Halls
Tuesday	Evening	2nd	Gardening Club	Parish Halls
Tuesday	Evening		Ladies Leisure Group	Walter Nelson Hall
Tuesday	Evening		North Down Advanced Motorists	Boathouse
Wednesday	Morning		Ards Art Club	Boathouse
Wednesday	Morning		Badminton Club	Walter Nelson Hall
Wednesday	Morning		Mums and Tots	Evangelical Pres. Church
Wednesday	Morning	1st	Probus (Women)	Stables
Wednesday	Afternoon		Patchwork Club	Boathouse
Wednesday	Afternoon		Scrabble Club	Parish Halls
Wednesday	Evening		Bowling Club	Walter Nelson Hall
Wednesday	Evening		Cockle Island Boat Club	Boathouse
Wednesday	Evening		Karate Club	Parish Halls
Thursday	Morning		Arts and Craft Club	Walter Nelson Hall
Thursday	Morning		Hadden Art Club	Boathouse
Thursday	Afternoon		Evergreens	Parish Halls
Thursday	Evening	1st	Bangor Amateur Radio Club	Boathouse
Thursday	Evening	2nd & 4th	Bangor Art Club	Parish Halls
Thursday	Evening	Last	Bangor Trefoil Guild	Boathouse
Thursday	Evening		Chess Club	Parish Halls
Thursday	Evening		Choir	Presbyterian Church
Thursday	Evening		Rotary (Men)	Stables
Thursday	Evening		Youth Fellowship	Parish Halls
Friday	Evening		Youth Club	Evangelical Pres. Church

This is a complete list of regular activities in Groomsport each week/month – unless you have more!
All events listed are subject to change.

Please contact us with any additional information, updates, and pictures for possible inclusion in future Groomsport Village Newsletters. Contact: www.groomsport.info

Send your Groomsport news & pictures to: www.groomsport.info