

RALSTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Christmas Newsletter

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Merry Christmas!

The last few months have mostly been dominated by the Kelburne Hockey Club's application to transfer Ralston Community Sports Centre to them. I would urge you to keep an eye on Facebook and our website for updates.

In terms of business as usual:

- We have organised some ground repairs at the community centre swing park, with work taking place early next year.
- The most recent lighting issue at St Mirren has been ongoing for 3 years, and affects residents who live nearby. This may now slightly closer to resolution.
- Renfrewshire Council will be transporting some planters to 3 locations along Glasgow Road, as part of our Ralston in Bloom proposal.

Thanks to all those who have contributed to this newsletter. With a special thank you to volunteers at St Marks Church, who delivered it along with their Christmas cards.

We hope that you and your families enjoy the festive period.

Allan Thompson, Chair of the Community Council

Paisley East Youth Panel

Are you aged between 12-25 years old and interested in being part of a youth decision-making panel for the Paisley East area? Then why not join the Youth Panel?

The panel will initially look at the existing Celebrating Renfrewshire applications. Then we want to give you a voice on wider issues in your area.

For more information:
communityplanning@renfrewshire.gov.uk



THE CORNER SHOP VOTED INDEPENDENT RETAILER OF THE YEAR

By Stephen Houston,
reprinted from Daily Record

A former hairdresser and community support worker who bought a shop at the height of lockdown has just popped open the champagne. Dionne Abbott is celebrating after her Ralston business was voted Renfrewshire's Independent Retailer of the Year at Scotland's Business Awards. The 51-year-old puts her success squarely at positioning The Corner Shop at the heart of the community.



Dionne also revealed buying the shop was also not on her radar. She was egged on by her 13-year-old son Louis after a chance comment by the previous owner.

Dionne has lived in Ralston since she was a child and knew the Penilee Road shop well.

She said: "The previous owner said he was selling up and Louis said we should buy it. "I laughed at the time and said 'Louis, as if'. But eight months later I got the keys. I have known the shop since I was three and never dreamed I would own it one day".

She slipped behind the counter a month after the covid lockdown, straight into a frenzy for toilet rolls and eggs. Family and friends weighed in, painting and providing support. Dionne said: "It was hectic and I just had to throw myself into it, running about daft to be honest".

"We had to think what people needed during this uncharted time. I have to say the customers have been 100 per cent loyal and we never ran out of loo roll."

She dug deep, helped by her 19-year-old university student daughter Lilly-Jo. And what she didn't know about retailing, she learned rather quickly. The shop was transformed from dark and dingy to a bright, light space that has helped people feel more secure. Dionne said: "It is not just the shop as it stands today to me, it is about memories of growing up in Ralston."

The enterprise is open 7am-7pm seven days a week and is thriving as the hub of Ralston. New lines were introduced, including a helium balloon service, and the younger members of staff keep her right on current trends. Dionne said: "We can't believe how much we have achieved, the sheer determination, dedication and love that has gone in to making the local newsagents the heart of our community is immense."

One of The Corner Shop customers had called it "a local treasure." And Allan Thompson, chairman of Ralston Community Council, said: "The Community Council have already recognised The Corner Shop has been much improved recently under new ownership. We appreciate it has become integral in the life's of many residents. It was a god-send to many doing lockdown and we are delighted that it has now been nationally recognised."

CHRISTMAS EVENTS AT ST MARK'S

Christmas is a special time of year and is celebrated in many ways, why not come and celebrate it with us? Our Christmas Services are open to all.

Sunday 5 December	11:00am	Communion
Sunday 12 December	11:00am	Gift Service
Sunday 19 December	11:00am	Nativity
Friday 24 December	6:45pm	Carol Singing in church
	7:00pm	Christmas Eve Service
	11:15pm	Carol Singing in church
	11:30pm	Watch-night Service
Saturday 25 December	10:30am	Christmas Day Service
Sunday 26 December	11:00am	Boxing Day Service
Sunday 2 January	11:00am	New Year Service



RALSTON PRIMARY PARENT COUNCIL

Due to current guidelines, we aren't able to hold our beloved Christmas Fayre this year. However we still have a few Christmas fundraising activities to help support Ralston Primary School.

- **Christmas Trees** (in a variety of types and sizes!)
- **Christmas Sweeties** (£2 each cone! Great as a wee treat)
- **Christmas Raffle** (50p per ticket with amazing prizes!)

We really appreciate your support, please email Gaby for more information about these fundraising activities: gabriela.francescoli@gmail.com



ST MIRREN FLOODLIGHTS

Consultants have recently measured the light levels in properties affected by the floodlights at St Mirren's training ground.

The Council are reviewing the consultants' report, which will form the basis of discussions with St Mirren to resolve the lighting issues.

They will contact residents afterwards to confirm the outcomes and the next steps.

MENTAL HEALTH

Good mental health has been so important in the past year, consider how to:

- **Connect with people**, family, friends, neighbours. If you can't get out the house then pull a chair to the window and see passers-by and dog walkers.
- **When at home with family**, switch off the TV, chat or play a board game.
- **When you're at work**, take your breaks and have lunch with a colleague.

Be active

It's great for both your physical health and your mental wellbeing. Setting yourself goals and achieving them raises confidence and self esteem, boosting your mood.

You could:

- start to walk, jog, run, cycle, swim or dance
- go to the gym or exercise from home using YouTube yoga or exercise classes.

Be Kind

Giving and kindness can help improve your mental wellbeing by:

- giving you a feeling of purpose and self-worth
- helping you connect with other people.

It could be small acts of kindness towards other people, or getting involved in a local charity.

Some of the things you could try include:

- say thank you to someone for the things they do
- ask people how they are and really listening to their answer
- spend some time with friends/relatives who need support or company
- volunteer in your community.

Learn something new

Research shows that learning new skills can also improve your mental wellbeing by:

- helping you to build a sense of purpose
- helping you to connect with others

Even if you feel like you don't have enough time, or you don't need to learn new things, there are lots of different ways to bring learning into your life. Check our Events Calendar for things you could get involved in, like the Art Group:

www.ralstoncommunitycouncil.org/events

Some of the things you could try include:

- learning to cook something new
- taking on a new responsibility at work
- work on a DIY project
- consider an online course
- new hobbies that challenge you

Be present

Paying more attention to the present moment can improve your mental wellbeing.

Some people call this 'mindfulness'. Mindfulness can help you enjoy life more and understand yourself better. It can positively change the way you feel and how you approach challenges.

NEWS FROM RALSTON SKILLS



Ralston Skills has become part of the fabric in our community. Some even describe it as a local community institution. Started around 1990 by locals Billy Davies and Martin Anderson, it has enabled thousands of children and young people of all abilities to enjoy themselves playing sport with their friends and neighbours on a Saturday morning at what is now the Ralston Community Sports Centre.

It has touched the lives of hundreds of families in the area, and we are already playing football with the next generation.

The first 20 years of Skills took place in the old Grammar Sports Ground, as it was, which had fallen into disuse. The wonderful art deco pavilion was boarded up and the previous tennis courts, football/cricket/rugby pitches etc were just a large area of grass. Skills wanted to put the grass area to good use so, after a charity football match to raise funds; equipment was bought and stored in an outside cupboard at Ralston Primary School.

The Skills model is a self-sustaining one. Coaches are mainly drawn from the parents/carers of the children attending Skills, making it a true community sports group. And all coaches give freely of their time.

All children are encouraged to participate. There is not an ability test to pass or otherwise. Children get a chance to develop skills and over the years we have included many sports such as rugby, basketball, cricket, athletics, handball as well as football.

In 2007 we campaigned, with many others, to stop St Mirren taking over area for its training ground. The astro turf pitch has been a wonderful resource after decades on grass. We can play in heavy rain and in temperatures up to minus 5. This is of great benefit to the children. It's estimated that there are over 1000 children per week using the facilities at Ralston.

Today we have 3 adult coaches in their twenties who played in Skills as children. Currently we have two third years (at secondary school) helping out who also played with us as children. This shows the bonds that are built at Skills - we aren't just about sport and wellbeing, we are about friendship, about bringing generations together and we like to see ourselves as a family- the Skills family and, once you are in the family you are in it for life even if you don't directly participate in it currently.

Ralston Community Sports Centre is our community's only remaining public green space. It is a great asset, and we believe it should remain a publicly owned facility for our community so that future generations can continue to benefit.

THE HISTORY OF RALSTON COMMUNITY SPORTS CENTRE

Up until about 30 years ago, the playing fields were used solely by Paisley Grammar School. However the pavilion deteriorated so much, that the school stopped using it.

In the late 1990s a campaign began to raise funds to refurbish the pavilion and restore the playing fields for community use. The campaign was led by the Councillor for Ralston, Nan MacGregor, and over £3 million was committed in grants from the Lottery and others, as well as funds from Renfrewshire Council.

However early in 2007, Renfrewshire Council announced their intention to lease the playing fields to St Mirren FC, which was met with significant local opposition. Following the local election there was a political change in the composition of the Council through an SNP and Liberal Democrat coalition. A condition of this coalition was that the playing fields should remain for community use.



Following refurbishment in 2010, Ralston Community Sports Centre was opened providing an all-weather football pitch, gym, fitness classes, access for the local primary school and continuing access for other local activities like Ralston Skills.

In 2015, Renfrewshire Leisure announced that the Sports Centre would be closing daytimes Monday to Friday. Once again significant opposition resulted in the daytime opening being retained, but with reduced activities on offer.

RALSTON IN BLOOM

We have three planters gifted from Renfrewshire Council. These will be located at the Ralston General Store, the Corner Shop and at the junction of Tylney Road and Glasgow Road.



We intend to grow low maintenance plants and bulbs, and possibly some summer annuals. The planters will need occasional attention to maintain their appearance. We would like some volunteers willing to assist us. If you would like to help, please email admin@ralstoncommunitycouncil.org reference – Ralston in Bloom.

We would like to have many planters all along Glasgow Road, from Barshaw Park to the Glasgow boundary, to greatly enhance our area. While we have received a grant to get this started, it requires further investment to get more planters, if you would like to financially support this project or volunteer to help maintain the planters, please get in touch.

KELBURNE HOCKEY CLUB'S COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER (CAT)

Our summer edition included details of the club's CAT, highlighting what they hope to bring to our community should the application be successful. The most immediate concern of many in our community was the loss of football facilities. Despite many meetings over the summer, this concern was unresolved when the club submitted their application, and this still hasn't changed.

The club arranged a virtual meeting for our community on the 29th of September, to present in person their proposal for our Community Sports Centre. The points raised and responded to were then put on our Facebook page and website.

We also presented these at our public meeting on 4 October, where the Community Council could hear the views and opinions of our community. At the end of the night a 'show of hands' indicated that of the 100 plus residents present, almost everyone was opposed to the application. A summary of these meetings are available on the Ralston Community Council Facebook page and website.

Since our meeting we have been advised that the application has not yet been considered, because it first must be validated as part of the process. If it is not validated, the application may not proceed; if it is validated, we will be advised of this, and the steps required to object. We will immediately communicate with the community either way.

Separately to this, a resident lodged a petition at Renfrewshire Council's petitions board on 8 November. The petition details are being considered, many of the points are similar to those raised in our public meeting. The Council's Legal Representative explained that the petitions board is a separate process to the CAT process. However the points raised by the resident are now being considered by relevant parties.

We are also meeting Renfrewshire Leisure (RLL), who run the Sports Centre, to find out when the facility is going to open and what their plans are in terms of opening hours, usage, and maintenance. We want to see the asset fully utilised, because it's become very clear just how much our community value the Community Sports Centre.

We all would like to work alongside RLL to maximise the full potential of our Pavilion and all its outdoor space.

Finally, if we have to go down the route of objecting to the CAT application, we will communicate this with you, and call a meeting as soon as possible. This will ensure we have a consistent approach and work within the guidelines and time frames of the process for objecting/ petitioning (referred to as 'responses').

If you have any questions, please email us at admin@ralstoncommunitycouncil.org

RALSTON AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Ralston is a large suburb with considerable potential to contribute to reducing global warming. There are large stretches of green belt: Ralston Sports Centre, Ralston Golf Course, Honeybog Hill and adjacent Barshaw Park. Our houses, built mainly in the 1930s, were furnished with generous sized gardens. All these are home to expanses of trees, grassed areas, shrubs and flowers which absorb harmful CO2 gas and help prevent global warming.

In recent years, however, there has been a trend to pave over large sections of our gardens to cut down on maintenance. While this looks neat and is often an attractive solution for an ageing population, it does significantly reduce the capacity of our gardens to absorb CO2.

Residents will have noticed that there have been more frequent episodes of prolonged torrential rain in recent years. This is largely caused by climate change, with warmer seas adding more water to rain clouds.

These torrential showers can overload the area's drains and lead to water coursing into residents' drives and gardens with subsequent flooding.

There are two things you can do to mitigate this effect. If you plan to have large paved areas in the garden, ensure that the design allows for an area where rain water can be absorbed, and, second, compensate a little by introducing several large potted plants, the more and the bigger the better!



These measures will not only help protect your property, but will prevent water running off it and overloading the drainage system. Research also suggests that a green environment is good for our sense of well-being, as well as helping bio-diversity.

Ralston responded positively to Renfrewshire Council's initiative last year to identify strips of land that could be set aside to encourage wild flower development. By encouraging and nurturing green spaces in our gardens, we could go further and add our own local contribution to increasing biodiversity and complementing COP26.

So the message is: Go green, Ralston, and help save the planet!

More suggestions about steps you can take to combat climate change, can be found on the Imperial College London website: www.imperial.ac.uk/stories/climate-action/.

EVENTS IN RALSTON

A calendar detailing the many activities taking place in Ralston was added to the community council website two years ago.

Many, if not all, of these activities were postponed or cancelled because of the Covid lockdown. But, with restrictions easing, some of these activities have now restarted and others should be running again soon.

We are keen to update our calendar. If you have any information about clubs, activities or events that have restarted or are due to restart soon (for adults or children), please let us know by emailing web@ralstoncommunitycouncil.org.



RIBBON TREE ORNAMENT

Crafters of all ages will enjoy making a scrap ribbon Christmas tree ornament to gift or keep this holiday season.

Instructions

- Tie the scraps of ribbon down the twig or cinnamon stick.
- For best results, bunch the ribbons close together.
- The ribbons will bend and slightly overlap, so gently tug them into place until you are satisfied with their placement.
- Use sharp scissors to trim the ribbon scraps into the shape of a Christmas tree.
- If desired, melt the edges of the ribbons with a lighter so the ribbon doesn't fray.
- Hot glue or tie a loop of twine to the top of the tree.
- If desired, top the tree with a wooden star or yellow button.

Source: www.firefliesandmudpies.com



What you will need:

- Straight twigs or cinnamon sticks (15cm)
- Ribbons
- Twine
- Scissors
- Wooden star or yellow button (optional)
- Hot glue gun (optional)
- Lighter (optional)

NEWS FROM FRIENDS OF BARSHAW PARK

JINGLE BELL FUN RUN

The Jingle Bell Fun Run is back! Register at: www.entrycentral.com/Jingle-Bell-Run

On **Sunday 5 December** there are two races set within the scenic Barshaw Park:

- A 3k run at 11am open to all aged 8 and over (£5 for 8-17's and £7 18+), and
- A 1k run at 12pm open to any age, including those in buggies (£4.50 for all ages).

Christmas medals are awarded to all finishers, plus prizes for the best costumes! Entrants also get a free miniature railway ride, face-painting and entertainment.

Friends of Barshaw Park will also be there, selling calendars, Christmas cards, hand made wreaths and decorations. These are also available for sale in Wheatley's Cafe.

JUNIOR PARKRUN

The Parkrun organisers are getting ready to start the junior parkrun again. It will take place every Sunday morning in Barshaw Park at 9am.

It is a 2k route and for children aged 4 to 14 years, and is free.

We need volunteers to be marshals and help set up and tidy up before and after the run. You can help as often or as infrequently as you wish

To volunteer or for more information contact: barshawjuniors@parkrun.com

Follow us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/barshawfriends>

COMMUNITY GARDEN

We've had encouraging support for the development of the donkey paddock as a community garden.

The aim of the garden would be to:

- provide opportunities for local residents to grow their own fruit, vegetables and flowers;
- work with other charities/local groups to educate on healthy foods and how to grow your own;
- deliver nature based therapy courses to improve physical and mental health and well being;
- improve the environment and incorporate a wildlife area to encourage wildflowers, bees and wildlife.

The layout of the garden would in time include a hedgerow within the perimeter fence, raised beds, flower growing area, green house, pergola, seating area and the existing shed. The garden would be worked during the day and locked when not in use.

The Defence Gardens charity will deliver Gardening Therapy sessions. Residents can also reserve space for growing, delivering gardening lessons etc.

If you have any comments, concerns or advice, please contact us at: barshaw.communitygarden@gmail.com

NATURE CORNER

We'd love to hear your ideas for how we could redevelop the overgrown Nature Corner. You can contact us at: barshaw.naturecorner@gmail.com



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7 DAYS A WEEK
07923 933541



Christmas Tree, & Plant Sale



Saturday 4th Dec From 10am

Door Wreaths, Tubs Winter Bedding
as before but with
Tea, Coffee, Crafts and Cakes

Come along, enjoy yourself, support the church and your community

On the Church Lawns

Glasgow Road
Opposite Penilee Road

COVID19 measures will be in place
masks and social distancing advised.



TAKE THE STRESS OUT OF SELLING YOUR HOME

Discover how we can help you
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AND
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En Pointe Dance Academy

ESTABLISHED IN RALSTON IN 2017

Fun & friendly dance classes
for boys & girls aged 2 1/2
upwards! All classes taught
by fully qualified teachers!

Classes for all levels in Ballet,
Progressing Ballet
Technique, Jazz, Tap,
Modern, Highland & Hip Hop

Come join us in our new
state of the art dance studio
in Hillington Industrial
Estate!



If you would like to **advertise your local business** in
our Newsletter, email your details, advert and donation
pledge to admin@ralstoncommunitycouncil.org

FREE FOR THREE

Renfrewshire Council have
reintroduced the **Free for
Three** initiative, which will
see the first three hours of
parking made free in 8
town centre car parks:

Orchard Street,
Weighhouse Close, Hunter
Street (upper and lower),
Oakshaw, School Wynd
and the two car parks at
the Lagoon.



CHRISTMAS WORD FILL

3 letters

Fir

4 letters

Pine

Noel

5 letters

Bells

Party

Merry

Cedar

Lists

6 letters

Donner

St Nick

Eggnog

Advent

7 letters

Rudolph

8 letters

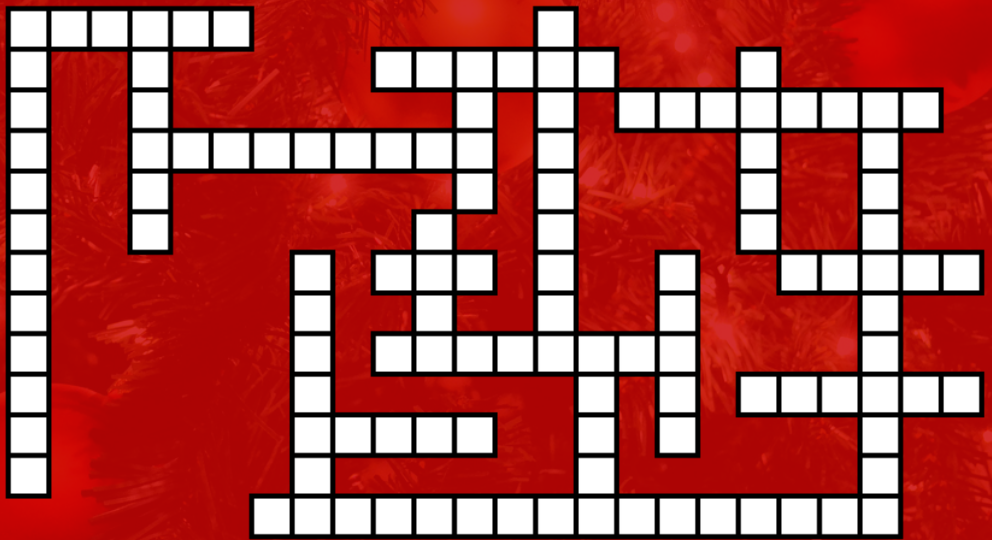
December

Yuletide

9 letters

Bethlehem

North Pole



11 letters

Decorations

12 letters

Announcement

16 Letters

Christmas cookies

YOUR ELF NAME

First letter of your name:

A = Twinkle

N = Berry

B = Bubbles

O = Rosy

C = Snowflake

P = Candy

D = Tinsel

Q = Winter

E = Merry

R = Glitter

F = Happy

S = Frosty

G = Cookie

T = Tootsie

H = Sugarplum

U = Sparky

I = Jolly

V = Bells

J = Sweetie

W = Noel

K = Sparkle

X = Aurora

L = Jingle

Y = Elfie

M = Mistletoe

Z = Jewel

Month you were born:

Jan = Sugar-Socks

Feb = Angel-Pants

Mar = Glitter-Ball

Apr = Crystal-Moon

May = Dandy-Day

Jun = Floppy-Ears

Jul = Nighty-Night

Aug = Festive-Fingers

Sep = Little-Star

Oct = McJingles

Nov = Snow-Ball

Dec = Fluffy-Bunny

