

Spring 2022

DRUMCHAPEL NEWS



THRIVING PLACES
DRUMCHAPEL



**CONGRATULATIONS
TO TEAM ACTIVATE
- EXCELLENT!**



A World in Need of Peace, Solidarity & Hope

When thinking of what is going on in the world today, immediately the images of war in Ukraine come to mind. The invasion of Ukraine is destroying a country's infrastructure, water and energy supply, people's homes, schools and even hospitals, but most of all people's lives, provoking a mass exodus of over three million people to other countries.

However, it is important to also be aware that wars are going on continually and all over the world. Lybia, Iraq, Syria, Kurdistan, Ethiopia, Palestine, Yemen, to mention a few, are all countries currently at war and, in many cases, have been for years.

Many of these countries have complex tribal structures, secular histories that have formed different cultures and traditions. It is also important to note that the UK, together with the US and NATO, have played a key part in all these wars. Some of the images we have witnessed on TV in these countries are shocking, with houses bombed, hospitals bombed, schools and nurseries bombed, children mutilated, and in some cases widespread rape, used as a weapon of war. These are all characteristics of war crimes and genocide, again confirming that wars do not solve problems, on the contrary, they create even more!

Response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis has seen European countries opening their frontiers to embrace those who have been displaced because of the war. The UK government's response has been criticised as putting bureaucracy before people, limiting who of the Ukrainian refugees can have access to the UK. In contrast, close to 100,000 families across the UK have signed up to welcome Ukrainian refugees into their homes. Another issue that the war in Ukraine has brought to light is how Europe has responded quickly and positively to welcome the Ukrainian refugees but not so in the

past when the refugees were from Iraq or Afghanistan and other countries at war for many years, with the UK actively involved in these conflicts. This has led to a discussion around possible ingrained structural racism, defined by some as a quick response to white, blue-eyed people as opposed to dark skinned people. Are we experiencing an ingrained structural racism in European countries?

On another note, even before the invasion of Ukraine, the big energy companies were announcing steep increases in our electricity and gas bills. Coupled with the war, and in many European countries the dependence on Russian gas and oil, the situation has become even worse. Many are looking to the government to subsidise people's energy bills, but there seems to be less talk about challenging the big energy companies who continue to rake in enormous amounts of profit. Shell published its profit in 2021 as \$19.3 billion compared to \$4.85 billion in the previous year. Now with the US banning any further Russian gas and oil and the UK phasing out Russian gas and oil by the end of 2022, the discussion around digging further oil wells in the North Sea and the possibility of fracking have returned to the political debate. From another perspective, those who defend the switch to alternative forms of energy creation see the current banning or phasing out of Russian oil and gas as an opportunity to embrace the "green agenda" thus putting in motion the decisions made at COP 26 in Glasgow last year, which seems to have been put on the back burner!



Here in the UK the war and the energy crises have somehow overshadowed the scandal of the parties which were held in Downing Street during the pandemic. Many families, who made enormous sacrifices during the lockdowns, have not forgotten how they could not be with their loved ones when they were seriously ill and most in need of comfort, or worse even, when they were dying. At the same time, the government, responsible for putting in place and implementing appropriate restrictions, was flaunting these same restrictions, having parties in government departments, even at number 10 Downing Street, as if the pandemic did not exist. These actions have provoked in many the idea that “for us one rule, for them, another!” taking place.

We might ask, but what has all this to do with us in Drumchapel? The reality is that, first and foremost as human beings but also as a community, we feel and live with the effects of this situation. War displaces people, creating refugees and asylum seekers, and many have found a home in Drumchapel. Currently between Drumchapel, Knightswood and Anniesland there are 220 asylum seekers, almost 40 of whom are families with children, without counting the refugees. The people of Drumchapel have rallied round, showing solidarity and hope indiscriminately, by supporting asylum seekers and refugees with ESOL classes twice a week, coupled with two weekly “get together” meetings, one at Friendship House on a Wednesday and another with the Drumchapel Asian Forum on a Saturday.

people to deal with their financial problems, many of which stem from this global energy crisis. Thriving Places contributes with some ALDI vouchers to families that are struggling, so that they can channel more of their income to paying their electricity and gas bills.



These are all important contributions to tackling problems which stem from and have global dimensions, and it is crucial that we do not lose this global dimension, situating our local activities within the global context. At times, much of what is happening can be overwhelming and generate sentiments of hopelessness and impotence making us ask ourselves what can we do? We must start from where we are, understanding that all these activities are important and part of a greater struggle for global social justice. We should always try to link in with broader initiatives taking place in Glasgow and Scotland to understand, know and feel that we are not alone. Through promoting initiatives of solidarity and hope we will be making our contribution in a world that is in dire need of peace, solidarity, and hope.



Many local people have donated clothes and toys to Friendship House and the volunteers then distribute these to families most in need. The Thriving Places team at the shop support several asylum seekers and refugees daily, helping to fill in forms and signposting to relevant support agencies and organisations. Many local people are feeling the effects of the steep increase in their electricity and gas bills. Drumchapel Foodbank is trying hard to support people with their bills, but always depend on donations from the public. Drumchapel Money Advice Centre supports local



Activate Course – Building Communities

Thrivng Places established a partnership with the University of Glasgow to deliver the Activate Course. The course focuses on community development, where community activists can further develop their skills and knowledge in community work. Initially there were 18 local people registered and the course concluded with 12 participants as some had to leave because of family and work commitments. The course has a duration of 40 hours spread over 10 weeks, but due to lockdown restrictions it took over a year to finally deliver the course.

The 12 remaining participants held firm and must be recommended for their determination and resilience.

“It was amazing and I loved it, it’s a good feeling knowing I have the chance to go to Glasgow University. It has made me more confident and am keen to build on my experience on community activism. I enjoyed working with the group and met a lot of nice people and loved going to Glasgow University for my certificate”.

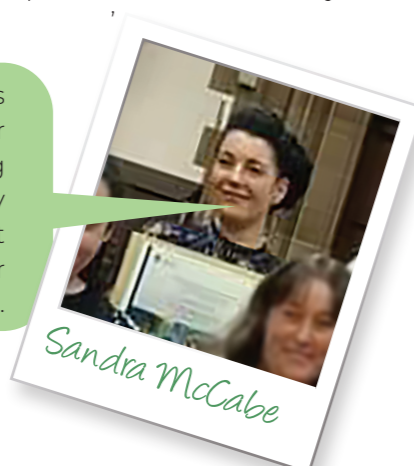


Vicki Melvin

For those who concluded the course, an interview at the University of Glasgow is guaranteed with the possibility of enrolling in the BA degree in Community Development. On the 10th February, of the 12 who concluded the course, 10 received their certificate at a celebration at the University of Glasgow, together with another 60 community activists from different parts of Scotland. Felix and Khaoula, who also took part in the course in Drumchapel, couldn’t make it to the celebration at the university, although they did finish the course and certificates were posted to them. Of the 12 who concluded the course, 4 have decided to apply to university and await the interview, but all want to continue to be actively involved in the community.

The quotes from the 10 participants speak for themselves and hopefully will stimulate other community activists to enrol on the next Activate course, which will probably take place in September or October this year.

“Doing the Activate course was brilliant, I never thought I would ever see inside a University but Thrivng Places helped me do that. I am so very proud of myself for the achievement and very thankful to Thrivng Places for helping me get there”.



Sandra McCabe



Helen Thompson

“For someone my age it was the most exciting thing I done and it gave me purpose and also helped with the recovery of lockdown. The best part was meeting the younger generation of the community and getting to know what was happening in the scheme”.



Joanne Barron

“I came onto the activate course by chance when a friend told me about it so I wasn’t really sure what to expect, it turned out to be an amazing opportunity that I’m so glad I stumbled upon. It’s given me an insight into what can be achieved within the community and opened doors to education that I’d otherwise never have had the confidence to explore. The course has given me the motivation to volunteer with Thrivng Places as well as well as for another organisation. Being included in the course and having this experience has massively boosted my confidence and it’s all thanks to Thrivng Places”

I thought it was great to interact with Drumchapel folk, working with the younger generation who were so positive and committed. I learnt things about Drumchapel for example, the history of Drumchapel train station and that the original train station was built in 1891. The discrimination in society project that we did individually was very powerful and emotional, which made us want to change what happens in society and put an end to discrimination particularly against those from working class backgrounds”

“It has boosted confidence and self-esteem making you feel that you can go to university, as long as you put your mind to it you can do anything. I was nervous about doing the essay but once started it was easy. At the beginning the place where we did the course was cold but once up at the Phoenix the course took off. It was interesting to find out what is going on in the community”.



Dionne Fraser

“This course has helped me to feel part of a community that I didn’t think I fitted into. I have met some really amazing people that I know we will continue to stay in touch with each other and I’m looking forward to continuing on the journey by moving on to study the Community Development course at the University of Glasgow”.



Andy Lynch

“Boosted my confidence to even apply for university. Found more about the community that you didn’t know before.

The research on the toilets was interesting finding out about what people think. Good to interact with different people out with the comfort zone. At the beginning there were more people but covid interrupted and some did not come back. People should try and go for it as it gives them a taste of what they can achieve”.



Veronica Buchanan

“A lot of satisfaction and met a lot of nice people who worked well together and still do. I would like to do another course with everyone. I learnt lots of stuff to do with the community and other things”.



Dianne MacMillan



Louise Timney



Jodie McCool

“I really enjoyed the activate course, it was good learning about things that had happened in Drumchapel’s past and getting peoples feedback about things they would like to change in the community. I met some lovely people and I’m looking forward to hopefully going on to do the university course”.

Drumchapel Community Council

You are probably aware of the recent demolition of its 2 large buildings at the top end of the shopping centre, The Mercat, and Jobs and Business Glasgow (Drumchapel Opportunities). These buildings were there to serve the people of the area and we are all wondering what the Council's plans are now as they are not noted for sharing information. When it suits them the Council use terms such as, "Community Empowerment" and "Community Engagement" as well as "Social Inclusion", but when it comes to the crunch, we often find the decisions are already made! The Community Council will press for answers and will fully inform you of any plans for that area.



Members of the Community Council and Thriving Places in front of The Mercat.

Picture: Kevin Harvey



A farewell to familiar landmark buildings at the top of Drumchapel Shopping Centre... Picture: Kevin Harvey

Community Issues:

Roads

At our last meeting in March, we discussed the dreadful state of our roads with potholes and poor drainage leading to excess surface water causing all sorts of problems not only with damage to cars but pedestrians also being soaked by passing traffic. We will contact the appropriate department responsible for these works. If you wish to report potholes, you can download the GCC app which gives quick access to reporting this type of issue.

Park Railings

It was also brought to our attention about the deterioration of Drumchapel parks railings. We contacted Glasgow City Council who have now agreed to upgrade the railings to a more suitable standard and the work will commence soon.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Anti-social behaviour such as fire raising to wheelie bins and fly-tipping continue to be a problem in the area. The Community Council will be discussing this further with the Police and Fire service to try and combat this issue.

Covid 19 Memorial

We are pleased to inform you that the rainbow bench and tree have been chosen and ordered.

The Covid -19 memorial event will take place when the Parks Department has completed the groundworks such as, the laying of golden gravel, perimeter borders and a marble stone which we hope to see completed by the month of May. The memorial represents the loss of loved ones through the pandemic and will be a space to go to reflect and remember those who have passed.

Community Council Meetings

Due to the lack of premises we are meeting in the Goodyear Social Club every second Monday evening at 6pm, all welcome.

On the 2nd of March the Community Council, Thriving Places and some local activists met with 2 members from the People Make Glasgow Communities office to discuss the work we have done so far on the community hub and bounce ideas of each other. We discussed the facilities that Drumchapel used to have and the conversations we have been having with the public so far. Local people would like to regain some of these facilities, and we hope the new hub will provide them. We agreed that we would try to visit as many unused buildings when possible, such as, Garscadden House, Stonedyke Centre, Open Gate, Community Centre, and the Soft Play building. We will also look into how long the process of the hub could possibly take so we can share with the community what to expect and when.



Recent meeting of the Community Council and Activate participants

Picture: Kevin Harvey

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COMPETITION TIME!!

Some Easter Fun

Find the missing words and colour the page to win a prize. The winner will be picked from a hat and if you can send your entries into the shop or send it to our facebook page. Closing date is 30th April. Have fun and good luck

EASTER WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

FIND 20 WORDS HIDDEN IN THIS PUZZLE



S G S E A R C H S R J K J G E
 S Y A B D A F F O D I L E C C
 R Q R H W U H F S J F X L H H
 T P A I N T B A S K E T L O I
 H O O V F P I A H W K E Y C C
 L S D I W D O J U P Q A B O K
 A U E S M H O W X P A S E L S
 F N C U I Q G F U N M T A A G
 B D O I E G G D G X S E N T Z
 U A R N P B O N N E T R P E I
 N Y A N R A B B I T D N A U U
 N R T H U N T G R G M N R D F
 Y F E M S P R I N G A K A I I
 N S D W M Y H V S C A N D Y N
 F V K S C S R L S X A R E H D

Word List

- BASKET
- BUNNY
- CANDY
- CHOCOLATE
- EASTER
- EGG
- FUN
- HUNT
- SUNDAY
- RABBIT
- SPRING
- DAFFODIL
- JELLYBEAN
- PARADE
- BONNET
- CHICKS
- SEARCH
- FIND
- DECORATED
- PAINT

Search the puzzle for the words shown in the word list. Circle each word that you find until you find all of the words in the whole puzzle!



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